

Rutland City Police Commission
April 10, 2023

Present: Chairman Sean Sargeant, Commissioners Tony Romeo, Luther Brown and Peg Flory.

Also attending: Chief Kilcullen, Commander Matt Prouty, Crime Analyst Nathan Thibodeau, Mayor Doenges, Aldermen Cupoli and Talbott, Staff Operations Specialist Brady, Dispatcher Emily Leinoff, Officer Kelsey Parker, Officer Tim Rice and SRO LaGuardia.

Call to order by Chairman Sargeant at 6 pm.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Romeo moved to approve the minutes of March 13, 2023. Commissioner Flory seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

Public Comment

Chairman Sargeant said he spoke with Max Richards, manager of Rental Cars of VT, who complained that after an investigation and judge's order to impound a vehicle he was charged for two tows of his rental vehicle, and he believes he should only be responsible for one. Chairman Sargeant consulted with the Chief and the Mayor and found that the RCPD acted in response to a valid order of a judge and inline with policies and procedures, and the City is not responsible for the second tow. Mr. Richards will be sending a letter of appeal to the office of the Mayor.

Mayor Doenges said he is accessible and to email him if needed.

Commissioner Brown responded to a call from Gene Cook, but has not heard back. Chief Kilcullen said Mr. Cook has reached out to numerous people and while most of his issues have been dealt with, some have not been to his satisfaction.

Chief Kilcullen said it is National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week and he thanked them for their service and sacrifice, saying they are truly the first responders. Chief Kilcullen read a letter of appreciation for Dispatcher Emily Leinoff from members of the Rutland City fire department following a fatal fire on March 18. Chief Kilcullen read an email thanking Officer McGuire for his assistance in locating her stolen purse. He also read an email from Connor O'Brien who appreciated the assistance provided by Officer Carapezza recently. Chief Kilcullen will place those letters in the officers' files.

Commander Prouty discussed the First Responder Wellness Conference that will be held at Castleton University in partnership with The Center for Social Justice, Trauma and Informed Care. He said it is impressive seeing RCPD staff taking the lead on wellness.

Introduction/Recognition of Police Department Members

Chief Kilcullen administered the oath of probationary police officer to Kelsey Parker.

Communications from the Union

Chairman Sargeant said he was in receipt of the proposed physical fitness Directive 305 and thanked the work of Officer Rice and Commissioner Flory to create a policy that works for everyone. The next step will be having the City Attorney and Mayor review the policy. Officer Rice thanked Commissioner Flory for her help saying she was a joy to work with. Officer Rice said the current policy is based off of the Cooper's Standard and it has been found that there are rare occasions when officers are running a mile ½ after someone followed by push-ups and sit-ups etc. Instead, a practical yearly assessment for the work officers do was researched and the proposed policy is modeled after a successful Montpelier policy, where they have seen 100% participation and no issues with the Union. The obstacle based course reflects what is happening in the field.

Commissioner Flory provided handouts of the proposed policy. Chairman Sargeant asked if Montpelier's participation rate was all sworn officers or includes civilian staff. Officer Rice said only sworn staff, they are part of the Fraternal Order of Police which is a different Union. Chairman Sargeant said under procedures, only sworn officers who receive an injury during the PT test shall be covered under workman's comp. He asked if all employees are encouraged to participate, why aren't they all covered under workman's comp. Officer Rice said that would be a question for the City Attorney. Commissioner Flory said there is no objection to everyone being covered. Chairman Sargeant said the Union had issue with the former proposal because it was a departure from the VT Criminal Justice Council and what is used at the Academy. He said this proposed policy is also a departure. Officer Rice said the former policy was a combination of Cooper's Standard and the Academy and not modeled after anything. This proposal is modeled after state policies that have been tested, vetted and is successful. Chairman Sargeant asked where does the pass/fail score of 2:06 originate and why isn't it age specific. Officer Rice said the time comes from South Carolina and is an average for everyone. Commissioner Flory said it did not appear that someone older would have difficulty with the time. Chairman Sargeant asked if the City needs to build the obstacle course. Officer Rice said Montpelier tests at their local high school and only 4-5 obstacles are needed. The window and stair obstacles need storage. The obstacle course could be set up indoors or outside. Chairman Sargeant asked if the equipment would be available on demand for members of the department to train, or is it only set up for the official test twice a year. Officer Rice said only twice a year and there would be someone to demonstrate the course prior to the test. Commissioner Flory suggested that initially there should be time available to run the course prior to the actual test. Chairman Sargeant said there is a \$500 bonus, twice a year, for each successful pass. Officer Rice confirmed his understanding of the bonus as straight cash instead of paid time off. Commissioner Brown asked which aspects of the proposed policy conform to the CALEA Standards. Chief Kilcullen said that is just a header, they are not seeking accreditation through CALEA. Commissioner Flory said these changes

seemed to make a lot more sense. Chief Kilcullen asked how this proposed policy reconciles the concerns that the recruits at the Academy were struggling with the PT because they still have to run the mile ½. Officer Rice said this is the RCPD physical fitness program and is separate from the VT Police Academy. Commissioner Flory said they weren't sure where to add that statement and would defer to the City Attorney. Chief Kilcullen said he is in favor of the proposed policy, but has concerns with storage of the obstacles and awards being paid in a separate check. He does not believe this would change someone's tax liability or withholdings. Officer Rice said the separate check was to prevent employees from not taking overtime shifts, but it is not a make or break issue. Commissioner Romeo asked if there are officers that could build the obstacles to spec. Officer Rice said the Union would not want the liability. Chairman Sargeant will ask the City Attorney the question regarding construction off of spec. Officer LaGuardia asked if the course would fit next to the range. Chairman Sargeant will send the packet to the City Attorney.

Commanders' Report

Commander Prouty said he would like to see the mile ½ run added at the end of the obstacle course to provide cardio vascular test. The Chief will be making a decision next week regarding a new commander and that will allow Commander Prouty a partner and also to be able to focus on Project VISION. There has been excellent feedback from public on the officers' work and he is impressed with the proactive police work. Commander Prouty has been hearing good things about Arun Dongle at the Academy. In VISION, the first of two Combating Compassionate Team Trainings with Monika Ganguly-Keifner to assess provider mapping was held. The next training will be on the 20th with something bigger in the fall. Chief Kilcullen said these trainings tie in with the Opioid Settlement money as an appropriate use for additional training costs. Commander Prouty has been discussing with the VISION leaders about a provider retreat where professionals working with this population can network over a meal. Commissioner Flory reminded Commander Prouty that he volunteered to discuss the Flatty Bear with Project VISION.

Mapping Update

Nate Thibodeau presented the January – March 31 quarter end report. The forecasted call volume predicted accurately for January, lower in February and March was 50 off with the grand total 2745. April is forecasted at 995 calls. The shopping plaza had 73 calls in March, grand total 177. The year to date call volume comparison is 17% higher than last year. The comparison to other Marchs, is 150 calls over already. In 2023 the calls have already reach 1,000. The map showed the hot spots for calls with the majority at the plaza, Grove Street and the hotels. The actual case volume is at 3,086 calls a 31% increase over last year with March 1,161. Commissioner Flory asked if weather is considered when comparing the months. Chief Kilcullen said that is why they track the 5 year average to account for such anomalies. Commissioner Romeo asked if the increase of calls is due to more people reporting. Chief Kilcullen said most of the

increase is for actual police service. Nate discussed the surface data saying that NCI was down 1%.

He continued with the March 2023 crime comparison saying: Homicide 5 year avg. 0, 2022 0, 2023 is 1, Robbery five-year avg. 3, 2022 -3, 2023 is 1, Aggravated Assault 2023 - 22, five-year avg. 9.6, 2022- 10, Burglary 2023 – 10, five-year avg.- 13, 2022- 9. He continued Larceny Comparison: Automobile 2022 – 14, five-year avg. 4.2, 2023 - 14, larceny from motor vehicle 2022- 80, five-year avg. 28, 2023- 37, larceny from buildings 2022-19, five-year avg.- 9.4, 2023- 16. Retail theft 2022 - 38, five-year avg.- 28, 2023-61. Nate will be adding trespassing and is roughly 25 calls this year. If he adds vandalism to larceny from vehicle could account for smashed windows where nothing was taken. Weapons theft grand total 61 from Rutland City with 2021 – 25, 2022 - 29 and 2023 – 7. The gun theft from vehicle has gone up from last year. Commander Prouty said there needs to be a PSA regarding gun theft from unlocked vehicles. Commissioner Brown said cooperation from insurance companies is needed to deny claims for unlocked cars. Catalytic converter thefts grand total 2021- 73, 2022 – 64 and 2023 – 28. Thefts are increasing over the past 3 months. There have been 153,000 catalytic converters stolen in the U.S. Nate continued with Retail Theft statistics 2023 – 61, 2022 – 378, 2021 – 124, 2020 – 66. The monthly retail theft is Jan. – 24, Feb. – 15 and March – 22 with the top 5 locations, TJ Maxx, Wal-Mart, Price Chopper, Dollar General South and North. The ID rate is 34% and 96% are known narcotics users.

Nate continued with Narcotics related information: substance use overdose comparison 2022 -20 and 2023 – 32 with 28 non-fatal and 4 fatal this year. March had 17 overdoses with 3 unconfirmed. Age range 30-39, residents 24 and 6 non-residents, 56% received Narcan, only 5% accepted transportation to hospital. Nate will report on the Community Resource Specialist at the next meeting.

Budget Report

Chief Kilcullen reported that at 75% through the budget, expenses are at 72%.

Chief's Report

Chief Kilcullen thanked the Board of Aldermen and Mayor for approving the Killington Ski Passes for recruitment efforts for next year and memberships to the premier health facility in the area. He discussed the leave of absence request from one of the dispatchers, which would be normally difficult to approve, but this individual is looking to transition to the CRS position. She will finish her degree in December and in two years be licensed and potentially a crisis and mental health counselor for City employees. Chief Kilcullen will go to the Board of Aldermen for approval of a half-time leave of absence. Chief Kilcullen said he believes 3-4 CRS positions could be supported and there are some good external candidates. He said on March 20 there was a Dismas House Legislative Breakfast, on March 29 he met with the HR director and City Attorney regarding personnel implications, and April 6 two commander interviews were held with

an announcement to be made later in the week. He added that the position needs to be filled to enable getting back to the traffic safety mapping, as well as other initiatives. On April 14 there is a meeting with the hotels, a vicious dog hearing is scheduled for April 25 and on March 12 Emily Leinoff picked up additional duties in the Communications Center, interviews were held for dispatcher and paperwork was passed to B.C.I. for an offer of employment and background check. There are some good candidates interested in the dispatcher position that will be created from the leave of absence. Officer Parker started March 31 and was attracted to the Rutland PD to do real police work and the sign on bonus. On April 3 Misty Jax was hired as records clerk and is also interested in a part-time sworn capacity. Commander Prouty said he has two interviews on Wednesday and one on Friday for the CRS position. Chief Kilcullen said Crystal Murray is going back to dispatch on April 23.

Trainings

March 30-31 – Officer Rajda attended ARIDE Training

April 3-7 - Officer LaGuardia attended Developing Emergency Operation Training K-12

Upcoming – CRS Kyle Dawson and Tim Jones will be attending a VIN training

Upcoming – CRS Kyle Dawson will be trained in fingerprinting

April 11-18 – All sworn officers mandatory CPR and First Aid Training

May 10 – All sworn officers mandatory firearms qualification

May 22-26 – Officer Dumas attending Patrol Rifle Instructor Course in Bennington

June 5-9 – Cpl. Tavares will attend FBI LEEDA Supervisory Leadership Institute Training

July – Officer Dumas and Corporal Lucia will attend Tactical Breaching Class for Building Entry

Adjournment

Commissioner Flory moved to adjourn. Commissioner Brown seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Meeting called to a close at 7:21 pm.

Submitted by: Barbara Spaulding

cc: Chief Brian Kilcullen
Mayor Mike Doenges
Police Commission
Interim City Clerk Tracy Kapusta
Board of Aldermen
Union President