

MADISON DEPARTMENT OF POLICE

July 11, 2019

COMMUNITY/TRAINING ROOM – 5:30 PM

Attendees: Chairman Ed Dowling; Vice Chairman Marietta Lee; Commissioner Peggy Lyons

Also Present: Capt. Joe Race; Lt. Rich Perron; Al Goldberg, Board of Selectmen Liaison

Absent: Chief Jack Drumm; Commissioner Thom Cartledge; Commissioner Steve Shaw;
Ken Kaminsky, Board of Finance Liaison; John Iennaco, Town Engineer

CALL TO ORDER

Opening and Call to Order at 5:30 PM by Chairman Dowling.

REGULAR SESSION

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Based on the other active town meetings we will be reorganizing the agenda order. Chief Drumm is away this week.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

MOTION by Lyons, second by Lee to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 13, 2019. All in favor. None opposed. So moved.

Capt. Race was asked for an overview of the police related issues over the holiday. He reported this is our biggest weekend of the year; fireworks and parade went very well. Challenges were on 7/4; parade starts at 11:00 and traffic backs up. In that it was very hot that day Hammonasset Park was full before the parade ended. Signboards on I-95 were indicating the park was closed but that presents a challenge for those who have driven a distance. We used the temporary signboards we had to announce Hammonasset was closed. Traffic was backed up along Route 1. We had a lot of officers on hand from the parade detail; we had 5 state police troopers on the Connector, at the top of the Connector and at Signal Hill. We had 15+ officers working the crowds. When people drive this far they intend to go to the beach which led to Signal Hill double parking issues to the extent only 1 car could pass. Webster Point and Pent Road had cars parked all along and people were parking along the Connector. Officers started directing people to park at Salt Meadow Park which meant a 2 mile walk to the beach at Hammonasset.

Parking and traffic issues were extreme and occurred very quickly. We closed Signal Hill down on both ends; wrote several dozen tickets for parking on the Connector - one officer alone wrote 23 tickets on the Connector on 7/4. There were challenges at all town beaches. We got calls from Beach & Rec that the Surf Club was full; we were going to close the park but we cannot have an officer off his/her post to be in place at the Surf Club to let cars in as others left. Directing traffic is very tense with thousands of vehicles moving. Lt. Perron said we didn't allow people to have choices to come down the Connector and turn left or right. People were not happy.

Chairman Dowling asked if there were a number of calls about the Surf Club jamming up as well as complaints about parking along Middle Beach. Capt. Race responded West Wharf has always been a problem – we still had parade units moving through. Lt. Perron added, Middle Beach and Middle Beach West were still posted for no parking from the parade so that wasn't a problem. Commissioner Lyons asked, regarding planning, what is the strategy? Is it worse than previous years? Capt. Race said troopers were coming from Lyme; all the officers, including ours, were on the job. Some future planning issues should be to consider no parking along all the roads in proximity, same as what we have on the beach roads. If we don't tell people what to expect they don't know. If we have 'no parking' posted, a tow zone is needed. People were willing to take a \$75 ticket; there weren't enough trucks in the region to tow all the cars parked illegally.

Commissioner Lyons asked if there are other alternatives and said she thought Salt Meadow Park for parking was a great idea; perhaps someone could offer off-site parking for pay (Stop and Shop)? Capt. Race said when using private parking lots, such as Lenny & Joes, there is a danger of crossing the traffic. Commissioner Lyons asked if this volume of beach goers was just because it was so hot or it is a trend. Capt. Race answered when the state went to this program we knew there would be repercussions based on no charges for vehicles. Hammonasset is the best park in the state; we want them economically to succeed and not dissuade them but it is a problem. Commissioner Lyons added the state has enough property to set up a shuttle system. Chairman Dowling acknowledged the frustration and asked how can we pull together to explore ideas for parking? Shuttle buses? He suggested a meeting with police, Beach & Rec, town and state park officials, state police, legislators, Clinton and Guilford representatives. Set up a coalition to discuss this over the next 9 months.

Mr. Goldberg added, a 4th of July plan is in place for fireworks, communications, etc. Informing the public is handled. We need a plan to include all the appropriate town departments; take the skills we've developed from other situations aside from the fireworks/parade; Labor Day is very close and we need to coordinate with state agencies. Capt. Race said we have an outstanding relationship with DEEP and the CT State Police; to manage the intersection of Rte. 1 at the Connector requires at least 6 officers. Mr. Goldberg thinks the plan needs to be figured out in advance, not on the spot. Chairman Dowling noted we need to request 6 more programmable signs from the state, 6 state police troopers. Commissioner Lyons said the state can look at the pricing structure - look at special event pricing. A lot of people talked about how smoothly the fireworks exiting occurred. Lt. Perron said traffic, as a whole, cleared the Surf Club in one hour and 15 minutes. Mr. Goldberg noted the state needs to understand there are costs to Madison; it is time to persuade state officials there are costs to us. Chairman Dowling added this does not affect just Madison residents; thousands of state residents who are heading to Hammonasset are affected as well and they were all affected by the management of the traffic situation. Commissioner Lyons asked if Clinton has the same issue at their town beach that we had at the Surf Club. Capt. Race said he was not aware.

Goldberg leaves at 5:54 to attend Board of Selectmen meeting.

Chairman Dowling concluded this is a serious and complex traffic control issue to discuss throughout the year...whether it's the Turkey Trot, July 4th activities, Labor Day.. It was a very active week.

CHIEF'S REPORT

BUDGET/FINANCIAL: Capt. Race reported we are now 11 days into the new budget. One line which shows reduction is Staff Uniforms because officers receive a dry cleaning stipend. Regarding Special Events, we haven't even started to add up the costs; that will be reflected next month. Commissioner Lyons asked – separate accounting? Capt. Race said they didn't give us any more money in that line although we asked for it. Commissioner Lyons asked didn't we talk about tracking hours? Capt. Race said yes and when the OT starts to come in we will keep a spreadsheet. Chairman Dowling said that can be reflected in the August report. Capt. Race continued we are waiting on the out-of-town officer invoices– Clinton, Branford, North Branford, Guilford, in addition to all our officers and the state police. More and more people are taking the fireworks shuttles. The shuttle post is the last one to close; this is truly a regional event with no major incidents.

ACTIVITY/STATISTICS: No Report

TRAINING: Capt. Race reported for June we did our standard emergency response training; K-9s are in training and our newest K-9 will begin training in the fall. In the spring K-9 Paco will probably retire. Chairman Dowling asked why we think we need 3 K-9 units. Capt. Race answered for building searches the dog is trained to enter. Chairman Dowling said he understands the value; question is trying to weigh the value of 3 K-9 units; would 6 units be even better? At some point we will ask why we need 3. Lt. Perron said 1 unit is strictly narcotics, 2 units are patrol but they are not on the shift together; 1 is on at midnight, 1 is on for the evening shift. During the day we have a lot of resources. It's like having another officer on duty. Capt. Race said at some point we will look at how we utilize

the K-9s, specialized training, etc. On the other hand, the training report indicates a significant investment for K-9 and officer time. Capt. Race continued, we held major training for the month and had active shooter training in this room. We had Officer Strickland, EMS and the Fire Marshal conducting training – it is called the ALICE Program. Officer Strickland presented one of the best sessions I've ever seen; we have had tremendous responses. All our civilian staff, records and dispatch personnel participated as well.

TRAFFIC: There was a head on collision on Rte. 80 on Saturday; fortunately there were no fatalities; this is a reminder to everyone to slow down – there are walkers, bikers, etc. on the road.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR: Capt. Race reported our focus now turns to bike rides through town; Closer to Free, Ride for Autism, those rides travel with the flow of traffic. Coming up is the Madison Triathlon (9/6) which requires manpower; it is a big event for the Jaycees. It is being held the same date as the Closer to Free ride but the Triathlon participants will be off the bikes before the Closer to Free riders come through.

REGIONAL SHARED SERVICES STATUS REPORT: Capt. Race said there is nothing other than to acknowledge the very effective coordination with the area towns for the holiday events. We worked closely with the Clinton chief and deputy chief to use their resources for traffic control. Chairman Dowling said it is becoming more apparent that any incident on I-95, particularly in the summer, becomes a Rte. 1/Madison issue for the volume of traffic which is diverted. Commissioner Lyons said everyone has WAZE and finds the 'perfect' back road.

CHIEF'S CORRESPONDENCE: None

TRAFFIC ISSUES: Capt. Race noted 32 accidents in June, no fatalities, 9 reported injuries. "Failure to Drive in the Established Lane" was the leading cause of accidents, accounting for 12. There were no DWI accidents and one Speed/Condition related accident.

Commissioner Lee commented that Capt. Race has spoken with both public works and the town engineer and we are trying to figure out the design of the signs. She asked if we can ask Mr. Iennaco for an update for the next meeting. Chairman Dowling said the positioning of the signs will take judgement – to be put on its own post or added to an existing post as well as the design; if we could, trigger this 2 weeks before the August 8th meeting. He continued, when the Chief returns collaborate with him and the Commission to direct this to the town engineer or go to the First Selectman for assistance. It is frustrating – this is not tough stuff to design/ install signs. It is disappointing.

NEW BUSINESS

Current Issues: None

Capt. Race noted a letter was sent by the Chief to DOT regarding a request to inspect the I-95 Northbound off ramp at Exit 61. When asked by Chairman Dowling how long it takes for a response Capt. Race responded roughly 60-90 days. Capt. Race concluded two solar speed signs have been delivered.

Update: Ad Hoc School Safety Committee: Chairman Dowling reported the committee is still in the development process; no response yet from the superintendent.

OLD BUSINESS: None

CORRESPONDENCE: None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

- Commissioner Lyons thanked the department for getting us through July 4th; it is appreciated;
- Commissioner Lee agreed;
- Chairman Dowling echoed the comments of both commissioners and added he appreciates the hard work of the officers over the long weekend.

MOTION by Lee, second by Lyons, to adjourn at 6:21 PM to Executive Session. All in favor. None opposed. So moved.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Present: Dowling, Lyons, Lee

Absent: Cartledge, Shaw, Drumm

- **Discussion:** Personnel Issues

Return to Open Session at 6:30 PM

MOTION by Lee, second by Lyons to adjourn the regular meeting at 6:31 PM. All in favor. None opposed. So moved.

Minutes accepted: August 8, 2019