

**MADISON DEPARTMENT OF POLICE SERVICES
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
5:30 PM
Held via Zoom Video Conference
August 12, 2021
SUBJECT TO APPROVAL**

Attendees: Chairman Ed Dowling; Vice-Chairman Marietta Lee; Commissioner Thom Cartledge; Commissioner Ann Rumberger; Commissioner Christina Cewe.

Also Present: Chief John “Jack” Drumm; Captain Joseph Race; Captain Douglas Harkins; Al Goldberg – Board of Selectmen liaison.

CALL TO ORDER - REGULAR SESSION

Chairman Dowling called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. and all rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

ACCEPTANCE – MEETING MINUTES

MOTION by Lee, second by Cartledge to approve the minutes of the July 8th Regular meeting of the Madison Board of Police Commissioners. All in favor; none opposed. So moved.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Gerry Birnbaum spoke regarding safety and signage around town. He proposed the Board of Police Commissioners (BOPC) consider adding a stop sign at the intersection of West Wharf Road and Middle Beach Road. He was concerned about some hedges and overhang of bushes impeding sightlines. He feels the introduction of the four-way stop signs on Island Avenue was confusing with them being covered for a period of time. He expressed his belief that the Share the Road signs on Island Avenue are visual pollution. He also requested a pedestrian crosswalk sign by Tuxis Road. On East Wharf Road he said the signage is confusing stating both no parking anytime and residents parking only. On East Wharf his recommendation is to install a 15 mph sign where there is a dangerous curve approaching. He congratulated the police department on stopping speeders on East Wharf this past weekend. He would like a pedestrian walk by East Wharf Road and Birnbaum Lane (Old Boston Post Road).

Chief Drumm: We receive requests from citizens who live on those roads regarding speeders. The signs placed on Island Avenue and additional stop signs at the intersection were part of study conducted by the State of Connecticut last year which continued into this year and a discussion with some of the residents. When those stops signs are placed they are covered for a minimum of 30 days. They were unveiled this past weekend with police presence giving warnings to educate the public about the intersection.

The overhang of bushes this will be conveyed to Public Works Director.

A lot of signs we have placed disappear. The sign about slowing down for pedestrians, particularly in the area of Tuxis Road disappeared, as well as signs marking the public parking/access. We did replace the public access signs. We will look into additional pedestrian signs but cannot guarantee they will stay there. Generally, every year in the spring we have to replace most of our signs along the beach roads.

Gerry Birnbaum: He would like a walkway by Birnbaum Lane and East Wharf Road.

Chief Drumm: Birnbaum Lane and East Wharf Road are currently under study. The DOT recently replaced the signage and stop light with a new system; cameras that record the traffic when you come to the intersection.

For East Wharf Road we are going to mark the curve 15 mph, north and south. We would like to have a speed device before entering the curve. We currently have two in inventory and will make a request to Board of Finance for additional 12 speed devices; this has been an ongoing conversation.

Chairman Dowling: We will record these requests into our traffic log and update at the next meeting.

Jim Ferenci of 47 Seaview Avenue spoke. He was looking for an update on the ongoing car theft issue. He along with others from Seaview Association met with Captain Harkins and Lieutenant Mulhern regarding this issue.

Captain Harkins: He and Lieutenant Mulhern met with some members of the association to discuss ways to inform the public. One possibility is to place digital signs in strategic neighborhoods with a slogan to lock their car and secure their valuables. Nancy Karas has been in contact with 2 Ems regarding the printing of flyers and signs. The Police Department will assist with distributing flyers in mailboxes. Another suggestion was a town-wide text alert with a public safety reminder. The group will meet again to decide on the appropriate slogan.

Chief Drumm: \$2,500 from the Police Department budget has been allocated for Public Safety Awareness Program.

Andrew Wood of Seaview Avenue asked about the possibility of having more patrols added in multiple areas from 12:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m. three nights a week.

Chief Drumm: We are down four officers and actively recruiting. We have a general patrol on a regular basis. We don't have more personnel at this time to add more patrols.

Commissioner Dowling: The Commission will review and consider the expectations for public safety. This will be a regular agenda item going forward.

Jim Ferenci to Al Goldberg: In terms of the Chief stating he is trying to find more budget dollars to address the Police Department shortage, how does this get reviewed with the Board of Selectmen?

Al Goldberg: The selected officials will take this into serious consideration. He encouraged the members of the public to come out in support of the budget.

Chief Drumm: We will request money in the budget for additional officers. We recently retired three officers and have another officer out due to injury. It is a process of finding the right candidates and fit for the Town of Madison. For now, we will use some overtime to cover the shortage. We predicate our budget based on need and not on wishes,

End of public comments.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Budget / Financial Report: Chief Drumm provided an update on the budget. Our expenses are front loaded for annual contracts. A snapshot of what we spend from July 1 through August 1 includes annual contracts for the Marine Division with Town of Clinton, Range agreement with Town of Clinton, mutual aid in our sharing of the Animal Control Center with Clinton and Westbrook in the Town of Clinton, some sharing of the radio system with Town of Clinton, NextGen contract, which is our computer aided dispatch that we have in the vehicles. This puts together our statistics, information and report writing. We also contribute annual fees for the regional traffic squad and regional emergency response team.

Commissioner Dowling: He has been working with Chief Drumm on a budget summary in order to provide a clearer way to look at some items and have more productive discussions. By September or October, we will have a draft of the budget summary and look for input from the Board of Police Commissioners. The Chief also has budget responsibility for the Animal Control Center and the Emergency Dispatch Center.

Activity / Statistics: Captain Harkins: There were 207 traffic stops and 11 arrests in July. A new stop sign at the intersection of Island Avenue and Middle Beach Road was activated. Officers were put there for educational purposes. Warnings were handed out, but no tickets were issued. Public appreciated this.

When we discover an area in town where we receive complaints of speeding and reckless driving, we assign an officer specifically to patrol that area. We are able to assign Officer Palmer who is assigned to motorcycle to move into those areas of concern.

Last BOPC meeting we discussed taking key fobs inside and locking doors has paid off. We only had one stolen car to date in August.

Training Report: Captain Race provided the training update. Training typically light in July as far as available opportunities. Department participated in a total of 80 training hours. Training consisted of 48 hours SWAT training and 32 hours K-9 training. Department is on pace to recertify 2/3 of the department by June 20, 2022. Past 18 months we have leveraged the online component as much as possible.

Commissioner Dowling: Asked Captain Race to conduct an assessment in 2022 of the meaningful effect of online training.

Monthly Traffic Report: Captain Race: The summer is busy. There were 27 MVA with 3 involving injuries. The leading causes were following too closely and unsafe movement. There were no DWI accidents and no fatalities. The public is reminded to slow down.

Community Calendar: Captain Race: Madison Jaycees Triathlon and Closer to Free Ride are both scheduled for September 11, 2021. The Connecticut Gran Fondo bike ride is scheduled for October 2, 2021. Trunk or Treat is tentatively scheduled for October 31, 2021 and the Turkey Trot is scheduled for November 25th.

Regional Shared Services: Chief Drumm: Discussed mandates for social services and implementation for psychologists or clinical social workers within police departments to respond to people in crisis. The approximate cost of \$90,000-\$100,000 could be astronomical throughout the communities. We are looking at aspects to share some of the services. Also, discussed with the subcommittee for Police Transparency &

Accountability Task Force the possibility of implementing a model for our town. Sharing services with some of the other communities may be a better approach.

CHIEF'S CORRESPONDENCE: Received two letters regarding traffic issues.

TRAFFIC ISSUES

John Iennaco, Director of Public Works joined the call.

Commissioner Dowling: Are there some traffic items that we are ready to bring closure to?

Chief Drumm: He called engineering at Department of Transportation (DOT) to ask for urgency on completion of paving project. He asked John Iennaco to follow up with DOT as to when the paving project from the Town line of Guilford to the center of Madison will be complete; marking of the crosswalks, lane lines and shoulder areas of Rt. 1.

Commissioner Cartledge: Asked John Iennaco to follow up weekly with DOT on completion of projects. He asked to stress this is a major part of town that the traffic goes through and it is dangerous not to have the markings. We put several new signs up in the area of Beach Club and Island Avenue. The new stop sign at the intersection of Middle Beach Road and Island Avenue, there is trimming that needs to be done on both sides of the street. Coming down Island Avenue the overhang of branches diminishes the ability to see that sign. There are a number of new signs that need to be addressed. It would be helpful if when we install new signs Public Works could look at the sightlines and make sure visibility is clear.

John Iennaco: He requested a list of the locations. These locations will be trimmed.

Chief Drumm: The new signs were installed by the Police Department's sub-contractor. He asked the State to cover the MUTCD requirements for Rt. 1, which includes the crosswalks. He asked for a set of strobes on Rt. 1 and was told they are up in the area. He encouraged John Iennaco if he talks with DOT to encourage them to approve for safety, especially by West Wharf Rd and the car dealership. We need closure on this.

John Iennaco: Requested a copy of the pending traffic issues.

Commissioner Cartledge: We received two letters regarding recent traffic issues that did not make the traffic log. One letter addressed the speed limit on Rt. 1 in certain areas. He called the person who wrote the letter to explain Rt. 1 is a State road for which DOT has responsibility. We will follow up. The second letter focused on a stop sign at the intersection of Dudley Rd. and Cottage Rd. He drove there and it appears to be very good visibility where the stop sign is. He will call the person who sent in the letter for further clarification.

NEW BUSINESS: None at this time.

COVID Updates: Commissioner Dowling: Public is required to wear masks in the Police Department.

LIASON WITH STATE AGENCIES

Chief Drumm: Voted on general law for some of the changes with regards to primary and secondary stops for policing. Also, accept some of the strategies/suggestions for dealing with disabled and special need communities going forward.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Chairman Cartledge: Several residents of Seaview Avenue were publicly very complimentary to the department with regards to the response they received from July's meeting on auto thefts.

MOTION TO ADJOURN to Executive Session by Rumberger; second by Lee. All in favor; none opposed. So moved. Meeting adjourned by 6:45 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION adjourned at 7:06 p.m.