

LACONIA POLICE COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
MAY 20, 2020  
3:00 P.M.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Whittum called the meeting to Order at the above date and time.

**2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

Chairman Whittum lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. RECORDING SECRETARY**

Executive Assistant Lori A. Marsh

**4. ROLL CALL**

4.A. Chairman Whittum recognized Commissioners present - Chairman Douglas Whittum, Commissioner Frank Mello and Commissioner Scott Davis.

4.B. Chairman Whittum recognized Staff present - Chief Matthew Canfield

4.C. Chairman Whittum recognized a quorum has been established and there are three Commission Members present.

**5. PERSONNEL MATTERS**

5.A. Commendations & Awards

Chairman Whittum recognized Chief Canfield. Chief Canfield advised the annual awards ceremony had been canceled and will hopefully be rescheduled in the fall.

5.B. Resignations/Retirement

No discussion.

5.C. Promotions/Classification Change

No discussion.

**6. COMMAND STAFF REPORTS**

6.A. Chief - Support Division

Chairman Whittum recognized Chief Canfield. Chief Canfield advised we are working on the finishing touches to the third car that was part of CIP request last year due to the cars from Ford being backlogged by over a year. He advised we are just getting it online now and it will be squared away. He advised installing carpet has resumed and should be complete by Sunday night or early next week. Chief Canfield recognized Lieutenant Gary Hubbard, who has put in an incredible amount of work on his own, above and beyond, working 12-13 hour days moving furniture and assisting the workers. He advised this involved a tremendous amount of work, as every room had to be cleared out, the previous carpet had to be stripped out, and then the new carpet installed, and he has done it without complaint. Chief Canfield advised the radio system upgrade is 90% complete and is just on hold due to the Covid pandemic and we are just waiting on fixing a couple of dead spots that don't quite work to our satisfaction before it gets signed off on. He advised we are also working on a Covid grant that was awarded to us and funded 100% by the Department of Justice to provide two electronic sign boards and some type of utility uniform for the officers when dealing with pandemic situations. He advised the details of this grant will be coming before the Commission before it is submitted.

6.A.i. Orders & Bulletins

6.B. Chief - Operations Division

Chairman Whittum recognized Chief Canfield. Chief Canfield advised the weekend brings Memorial Day; however, it's unfortunate that there will be no parade or ceremony. He advised he anticipates it to be a busy weekend with the nice weather. He encourages everyone to maintain social distancing, but get outside and enjoy the fresh air. He indicated the beaches will be open; however, we will do our best to encourage social distancing on the beaches and in all public areas.

Chief Canfield advised the 4th of July ceremony at Opechee Park, as well as 4th of July parade, have been canceled. He advised the City is looking at doing some type of fireworks from a barge over Lake Opechee, which would be a Class B firework that can be seen from many different locations, which will keep people from congregating.

Chief Canfield advised Patrol Officers have done a number of recognition parades for birthdays and just to recognize some who are locked in and can't have friends visit. He advised we have received numerous requests for these and it's a joy for us to participate and make people smile during these tough times.

He further advised we are still working on the patrol schedule. He indicated that when the pandemic started, we switched to 12 hours shifts and Detectives are working patrol. He indicated we are set to go back to the regular schedule on June 1st; however, there is a lot of interest in continuing with the 12 hours shifts permanently. He advised we are working on the logistics of that to see if it would be possible.

Commissioner Mello inquired if the Weirs bridge is open. Chief Canfield advised it is not, as the deck is not quite complete. He advised they are aiming at next Thursday to have at least one-way traffic, but right now it's completely closed. He further explained that the target date was to have it finished by Memorial Day; however, due to Covid, the materials were delayed from Vermont.

Commissioner Davis inquired if staff only works 40 hours and Chief Canfield responded yes. Commissioner Davis inquired how the 12 hour shifts work and if they are able to make up the difference. Chief Canfield advised that is one of the details we are working on going forward.

#### 6.B.i. Hirings

### 7. COMMISSION ACTION

#### 7.A. Acceptance of minutes from previous meeting

On a Motion by Commissioner Mello, seconded by Commissioner Davis, and passed unanimously, the meeting minutes of February 19, 2020 were accepted as distributed with no discussion.

### 8. REVIEW OF MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORTS

#### 8.A. Department Monthly Highlights

Chairman Whittum recognized Chief Canfield. Chief Canfield reviewed the Department Monthly Highlights Report for April. He noted the reason for the decline in traffic stops was the obvious pandemic and the re-assigning of our officers and encouraging them to have high visibility in certain areas and not have as much outright contact with people in order to keep them safe. He advised that in looking at traffic stops year-to-date, in March there were a total of 2,220 motor vehicle stops as compared to the prior year-to-date where there were 1,153. He indicated overall our motor vehicle stops are up by 92%. He also noted volunteer hours were at zero due to pandemic.

Chairman Whittum inquired why domestic violence disturbances stayed steady, but there was an increase in all other disturbances (83 to 105), and what that would include. Chief Canfield advised there are probably a number of reasons, whether it's just loud music that would be

classified as a disturbance, and yelling and screaming types of calls, but that people are certainly home more and confined in their houses and kids are home. He advised we didn't really see a huge spike in domestic violence, which other parts of the State and Country are experiencing.

8.B. Criminal Investigative Unit Statistics  
No discussion.

8.C. Budget Reports  
Chairman Whittum recognized Chief Canfield. Chief Canfield advised we are doing very well overall with the budget, being at 82.28% and being at 84.61% through the budget year, so we're definitely on track to be under budget.

8.D. Monthly Traffic Statistics

Chairman Whittum recognized Chief Canfield. Chief Canfield reviewed the Monthly Traffic Statistics report, noting the number of motor vehicle stops and the reason for the decline.

Commissioner Mello advised trees were being taken down on North Main Street and there was a big van parked on the sidewalk across the street from where they were being removed and cones out in the road. He inquired how pedestrians were supposed to get around that. Chief Canfield advised that is incumbent on the tree company to accommodate that.

8.E. Monthly Fleet Report  
No discussion.

## 9. CORRESPONDENCE TO AND FROM THE DEPARTMENT

Chairman Whittum recognized Chief Canfield.

Thanks Dept. for changes and flexibility - all staff accommodating. Speaks volumes of people we have and type of dept.

## 10. CHIEF'S REPORT

Chairman Whittum recognized Chief Canfield. Chief Canfield wished to thank the department for everyone's understanding and hard work in the ever changing time of this pandemic. He advised he has never seen anything like it before and there have been a lot of changes and a lot of flexibility and all of our staff have been very accommodating to work and make it happen. He advised this speaks volumes of the people employed by us and the type of department we operate as.

Chief Canfield reviewed the Overdose Statistics report. He noted the decline in numbers, which is good.

He also advised that contained in the Commissioners' packets is an evidence room inspection that was completed. He indicated periodically throughout the year there are spot evidence inspections that take place, as well as an annual compliance inspection report, which is included for review. He noted the report was very good and we are very fortunate to have Dennis Ashley work part time in the evidence room and he is meticulous in tracking evidence and is the primary reason for the audits being spot on.

He advised the budget presentation is scheduled for Tuesday night at 6:00 pm via Zoom. He advised they have asked for a very condensed version.

He also indicated he has been working with the Principal at the High School, the Superintendents office, and the Fire Department, as well as a group from the City, as far as a task force for high school graduation. He advised a plan was discussed and presented last night at the school board meeting and will be going back for more work as far as what is safe and acceptable by today's standards for the

pandemic, while still affording students the opportunity to graduate with their friends and families. He advised it has been a tough year for the students who are graduating who want to go be with their friends and walk across the stage in a traditional graduation, and hard for parents to watch the kids. He advised safety also has to be considered and the group is trying to find the right balance on how that will take place. He advised they are aiming at June 12th as the graduation date.

Chief Canfield advised months ago we applied for a Homeland Security Grant to fund a command post vehicle. He advised we have received preliminary approval from Homeland Security that we will be awarded that grant contingent upon Federal Homeland Security grant money. He advised we should know by September and it will fund a command post vehicle that could be used for crime scenes and the accident reconstruction team, as well as many other uses, and will be funded by Federal tax dollars.

He advised that also included in the Commissioners' packets is a list of donations to the department that were received during the pandemic. He advised this speaks volumes about what the community is all about and the people in it. He indicated there have been many donations of food, thank you's and just letters of appreciation, and this is very much appreciated by the department and makes the officers feel appreciated.

Chief Canfield advised that in the latter part of May we will have our on-line annual accreditation review of our files. He indicated most importantly is our CALEA four-year re-assessment, which will take place in July. He indicated we are working on the details of that and have a conference call scheduled for the beginning of June to figure out how this is going to work. He advised normally it is an in-person review where someone from the Commission on Accreditation comes to the department to do a physical inspection, interviews and a public hearing to see if we should be re-granted our accreditation. He advised they have changed that due to the pandemic and they are looking at doing it on-line virtually and through conference calls.

Chairman Whittum inquired where Chief Canfield will be during the budget presentation and Chief Canfield advised he will be remote from his office. Commissioner Davis inquired if the public will be able to participate and Chief Canfield advised they will.

Commissioner Davis advised that even though traffic stops are down, he sees pretty good visibility. Chief Canfield thanked him and advised one of the goals is to keep officers safe and not expose them two feet away from many drivers' windows, but in the same token we also know how lack of enforcement changes behavior and not for the positive. He advised one of our goals was to maintain high visibility and encourage them to park somewhere meaningful that might be a problem area to deter driving behaviors.

Commissioner David advised he rides the WOW trail a lot and was with Allen Beetle the other day and talked with some officers about the homeless compound down by Messer Street. He advised that was cleaned up right around the same time and he saw in paper that there was a dumpster there. He inquired who may have cleaned it up. Chief Canfield advised Public Works was responsible for the clean up. He advised someone brought this to Councilor Cheney's attention and he reached out to me and we sent some officers down there and asked them to pack up their items and leave. Commissioner Davis advised to be sure to thank them, as it looks much better.

Chairman Whittum inquired about sex offender registrations going from 56 to 79 to 106 in the last three month period. Chief Canfield advised a lot can be due to new people moving in who had to register or the last month we haven't been doing in-person registrations, so we are catching up and those numbers do fluctuate. Chairman Whittum inquired if those would include the people from the former State School property and Chief Canfield responded no. He advised these are ones who have served their sentences and are out.

11. **OLD BUSINESS**

No discussion.

12. **NEW BUSINESS**

No discussion.

**13. OTHER BUSINESS**

No discussion.

**14. CONFIRMATION OF NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next Regular or Special Meeting date of June 17, 2020 was confirmed.

**15. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

**16. NON-PUBLIC SESSION (According To RSA 91-A:3, II)**

RSA 91-A:3,II(a) - The dismissal, promotion or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him/her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a public meeting, and (2) request that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted.

On a Motion by Commissioner Mello, seconded by Commissioner Davis, and passed unanimously, in accordance with RSA 91-A:3,II(a), the Laconia Police commissioner entered into Non-Public Session at 3:27 pm.

Roll Call vote to enter Non-Public Session:

Chairman Douglas Whittum            Yes

Commissioner Frank Mello            Yes

Commissioner Scott Davis            Yes

At 3:47 pm, the Non-Public Session ended on a Motion by Commissioner Mello, seconded by Commissioner Davis, with a unanimous vote.

Public Session reconvened at 3:47 pm.

Chairman Whittum entertained a Motion to seal the Minutes, moved by Commissioner Mello, seconded by Commissioner Davis, and passed unanimously, because it is determined that divulgence of this information likely would affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of this Board.

Roll Call vote to seal the Minutes:

Chairman Douglas Whittum            Yes

Commissioner Frank Mello            Yes

Commissioner Scott Davis            Yes

**17. ADJOURNMENT**

On a Motion made by Commissioner Mello, seconded by Commissioner Davis, and passed unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 3:50 pm.