

## PORTSMOUTH POLICE COMMISSION

### MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 10<sup>th</sup>, 2004 SPECIAL MEETING PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FY '05 POLICE BUDGET

City Council Chambers  
John D. Kelley, Chairman  
William F. Devine  
Gerald W. Howe

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The Chairman called the February 10th, 2004 special police commission meeting to order at 5:01 PM.

**Present:** Commissioners Kelley, Devine, and Howe, Chief Magnant, Deputy Chief Dave Young, Captain Len DiSesa, Budget Coordinator Karen Senecal, IT Manager Felicia Donovan, Executive Assistant Kathe Hoyt, Councilor Harold Whitehouse members of the press, and via cable access television, residents of Portsmouth.

II. **Public Hearing**

Police Commission Chairman Jack Kelley welcomed the residents of Portsmouth to the hearing. In his opening remarks, Chairman Kelley thanked the Chief and his staff for the preparation work that went into producing the Powerpoint presentation. Using references to Internet crime and homeland security, the Chairman went on to illustrate the widening range of public safety challenges the police department must meet while continuing to embrace all the traditional roles of law enforcement and maintain our very effective community policing model. Chairman Kelley then turned the meeting over to Chief Magnant.

Using the Powerpoint presentation, the Chief took the public on an informative tour of the work of the police department, from patrol and special investigations, to evidence and records. The police department has worked hard to stay within the joint budget committee's guidelines of fixed costs only. Through photographs of the department at work and with the aid of color visual graphs, Chief Magnant explained the how and why of the police budget. With the aid of a color pie chart, the Chief illustrated the significant pressure the department faces this year from increased personnel expenses.

In an effort to save expenses to stay within the budgetary guidelines of FY '03-'04 the hiring of officers federally mandated by certain grants was postponed to the last part of the fiscal year. That means the full brunt of the City's portion of their salary and benefits must be realized in this budget. That, combined with increased contractual expenses has resulted in an increase of 9.45% over last year's budget.

Two of the vacancies will continue to remain unfilled, along with a ranking officer's position and no new full-time or part-time positions have been created.

A copy of the budget was available as a handout to everyone attending the hearing. In closing, the Chief stated that the expanding role of police officers in today's community is a sign of the times we live in. The Police Department continues to be responsible for traditional policing such as motor vehicle enforcement, responding to calls for service, foot patrols, responding to alarms, etc. In addition to that, they now deal with computer fraud, identity theft, Internet crimes against children and homeland security. These have all imposed increased demands upon the department's public safety obligations.

Much of this added burden warrants enhanced training in order for officers to remain current and capable of handling and investigating all that is required of them. The police department's obligation to ensure the personal safety of every officer also requires that they receive necessary training.

At the end of the presentation, the Chief and Commissioners took questions from those in attendance.

**III.** The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:30 PM.

*Respectfully Submitted By Kathleen Hoyt, Administrative Aide  
Reviewed By Commissioner Gerald Howe, Clerk*