

PORTSMOUTH POLICE COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE MARCH 8TH, 2016 WORK SESSION MEETING OF THE POLICE COMMISSION

10:00 a.m. Public Session – Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers, City Hall

Brenna Cavanaugh, Chair
Joseph J. Onosko
Joe Plaia

UNAPPROVED

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** The March 8th, 2016 work session meeting of the police commission was called to order at 10:00 a.m. in the Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers.

(A video archive of the entire meeting can be viewed online by going to the city's website and clicking "Channel 22" in the yellow ribbon just under the mast head, and then clicking on "Archived 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016 meetings.")

Present during the public session: Commissioners Cavanaugh, Onosko, and Plaia, Chief Mara, (joined the meeting about half-way through), and members of the public.

- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Commissioner Onosko led the Pledge of Allegiance.

- III. PUBLIC COMMENT:** (The following is a brief summary of each person's comments and represents the speaker's personal opinion. The entire meeting can be viewed online by going to the city's website and clicking "Channel 22", and then clicking on "Archived 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016 meetings.")

Mr. Brendan DuBois: Exeter – Mr. DuBois commended Commissioner Plaia for his public apology to Acting Deputy Chief Frank Warchol at the February 16th police commission meeting. He criticized the commission's lack of progress in starting the search for a new chief of police, noting that more than five months have lapsed since Chief DuBois, Mr. DuBois' brother, announced his retirement. He compared that timeline to that of Exeter, New Hampshire, where an evening public forum for citizen input had taken place within 8 weeks of the retirement announcement of the outgoing chief. Mr. DuBois took issue with the commissions' actions at its February 16th meeting, to change Mr. DuBois own comments as recorded in the minutes of the January 12th meeting.

Mr. John Palriero – 23 Blue Heron Drive – Mr. Palriero said the commission needs to find resources to keep citizens and visitors safe in this city. He referred specifically to Uber ride services. Mr. Palriero said the city passed an ordinance on September 17th. He again referred to situations where patrol officer have identified Uber drivers but have not cited them for operating. He compared Uber drivers to thieves. Mr. Palriero said taxi drivers have provided the identity of Uber drivers to the police.

Assistant Mayor Jim Splaine – 201 Oriental Gardens – The assistant mayor made four points:

- Encouraged the commission to hold meetings in public places such as coffee shops and schools;
- Addressed the current Uber situation in the city and urged the policing of unregistered drivers;
- Commended the police commission for wanting to seek public input in the search process for a new chief. Mr. Splaine told the commission what he would like to see in a new chief, and said he would like to see someone like Chief Mara, who listens and shows respect.
- Felt the commission should be looking at body cameras and cruiser cameras. He felt the costs of video storage and management were insignificant compared to the benefit he felt would come from having them.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

A. POLICE COMMISSION:

1. Commissioner Cavanaugh explained this meeting was a work session, and that no actions or votes would be taken. This was a meeting to discuss administrative type of issues. The chair reviewed calendar items in addition to the scheduled work sessions and the scheduled regular monthly meetings.
2. Commissioner Onosko:
 - a. Discussed variations of the PPD mission statement; discussed having a new mission statement drafted for the next police commission meeting.
 - b. Discussed the draft of guiding principles for the police commission.
(At this time Chief Mara joined the meeting.)
 - c. Discussion of what the hiring process would look like for the new chief of police. Chief Mara talked about what the process might look like. Commissioner Plaia said the commission should identify attributes and hire a professional search firm and defer to their expertise to whittle down the numbers of candidates.

Commissioner Cavanaugh said she clarified the questions about the fee structure of Public Safety Strategies Group (PSSG), and explained she met with Attorney Sullivan and a representative of PSSG. She encouraged the other commissioners to contact PSSG directly if they had any similar questions.

Chief Mara indicated he had an additional company in mind for the commission to consider as well. Commissioner Plaia said he was open to looking at all four companies.

There was further discussion on the sequence of events in the hiring process and what entities should comprise the stakeholder group.

Chief Mara and the commissioners discussed the attributes they would look for in a successful candidate.

- d. Uber – Commissioner Plaia recapped statements made by both John Palriero and Assistant Mayor Splaine in the public comment session. Chief Mara said the officers will cite the offender; if they see a violation, they will cite.

MISCELLANEOUS/OTHER BUSINESS:

All three commissioners called for Judge Cassavechia to unseal the bill for services from Attorney Eby submitted for costs associated with the probate court hearing on the Goodwin/Webber matter.

There being no further business before the commission, the chair indicated the next regular public meeting of the police commission would be on March 22nd in council chambers, and closed the March 8th work session at 12:00 p.m.

Kathe

Respectfully Submitted By Kathleen Levesque, Executive Assistant

Joe Plaia

Clerk of the Commission