

## PORTSMOUTH POLICE COMMISSION

### MINUTES OF THE MARCH 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023 POLICE COMMISSION MEETING

5:30 p.m. Public Session – Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers

Stefany Shaheen, Chair  
Buzz Scherr, Commissioner  
Kate Coyle, Commissioner

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023 monthly Police Commission meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m. in the Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers. (An archived video of the meeting is available on the police department’s website and the city’s YouTube channel.)

**The following people were present for the public session:**

Commissioners Shaheen, Scherr and Coyle, Chief Mark Newport, Deputy Chief Michael Maloney, Business Ops. Manager Karen Senecal, Executive Assistant Jackie Burnett and members of the public.

- II. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Deputy Chief Maloney led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Chair asked for a moment of silence to remember former Police Commissioner Gerry Howe who recently passed away. Gerry was a steward in the Portsmouth Community and will be deeply missed. May he rest in peace.

The Chief took a brief moment to introduce one of the newest members of the department, Comfort Dog Mason. He and his handler, Officer Michael Nicoli, will be in training for the better part of the year. Chief Newport hopes to have Mason in full service by the end of 2023.

- III. **MOTION TO SUSPEND THE AGENDA:**

The Chair asked for a motion to suspend the agenda and move to item #1 “Swearing-In & Award Ceremony” under the Chief’s Report.

**Action:** Commissioner Scherr moved to suspend the rules for the purpose noted above.

**Seconded by Commissioner Coyle.**

**On a Roll Call Vote:** The motion passed as follows:

Commissioner Shaheen:	“Aye.”
Commissioner Scherr:	“Yes.”
Commissioner Coyle:	“Yes.”

### **Chief’s Report: Swearing-In & Award Ceremony**

Chief Newport swore in Officer Nicholas Young. Nick came to the Portsmouth Police Department as a certified officer who graduated from the 179<sup>th</sup> New Hampshire Police Academy. He brings with him four years of experience as an officer with the Epping Police Department and Milton Police Department.

Lieutenant Seth Tondreault led the award ceremony by recapping an incident that occurred at the Portsmouth Traffic Circle in the early morning hours on Thanksgiving in 2022. A motor vehicle had rolled over and several occupants were ejected and seriously injured. Unfortunately, one of the occupants ultimately succumbed to her injuries while at the hospital. Several Portsmouth police officers responded and provided immediate medical aid until EMTs arrived on scene. Lt. Tondreault honored the following officers with an award for their heroic efforts:

Sgt. Eric Krans – Life Saving Award  
Sgt. Max Webber – Letter of Commendation (not present)  
Officer Jeff Rohde – Life Saving Award  
Officer Zach Brandt – Life Saving Award  
Officer Michael Nicoli – Letter of Commendation  
Officer Mark Dente – Letter of Commendation (not present)

### **IV. ACCEPTANCE OF MEETING MINUTES:**

➤ February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**Action:** Commissioner Scherr moved to accept the minutes of the 2-27-23 Police Commission meeting.

**Seconded by Commissioner Coyle.**

**On a Roll Call Vote:** The motion passed as follows:

Commissioner Shaheen:	“Aye.”
Commissioner Scherr:	“Aye.”
Commissioner Coyle:	“Aye.”

### **V. PUBLIC COMMENT: None**

### **VI. NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **A. POLICE COMMISSION:**

##### **1. Facilities Update**

**a. Restoration**

Chief Newport provided an update on current remediation efforts. Work in two of the women's locker rooms in the basement has been completed. Between staffing and technical issues, work inside the dispatch center will be delayed until further notice.

**b. Next Steps for Public Safety Facility Planning**

Chief Newport reported that an architecture and design team has been selected to begin the planning phase of building a new community policing facility: Lavallee Brensinger Architects. The contract is being finalized through the city's Legal Department. A meet-and-greet is scheduled for tomorrow with the architects and city officials to establish the next steps.

**2. Community Priorities**

**a. Update on CAD/RMS Software**

Business Ops. Manager Karen Senecal reported that the department had its first meeting with the software company (Central Square). IT Manager Daisy Lavoie has scheduled a meeting to review specifications and discuss IT needs for smooth integration. The contract is still underway and in the beginning stages. Commissioner Scherr hopes the software integrates well with body and dash cam systems. Karen Senecal added that body and dash cam system compatibility was included in the specs.

**3. Discussion on Budget Work Session**

**a. Review of CIP Requests**

The city council recently approved the FY24 Capital Improvement Plan. Chief Newport added that the police department requested the following:

- Continued funding for a new police facility
- \$400,000 to continue with necessary updates to current facility
- Allocation of funds to allow the department to purchase body camera equipment (this item was moved up to FY25)

Commissioner Scherr pointed out for transparency's sake that it doesn't make sense to implement body cams until the CAD/RMS software is fully integrated. The Chair added that this topic is also tied into union negotiations, and it is her hope that contracts will be agreed upon in the next three months.

**B. CHIEF OF POLICE:**

1. **Swearing-In & Award Ceremony** (See Section V.)
2. **Monthly Traffic Stats**

Deputy Chief Maloney outlined the traffic statistics from the month of February 2023. There were 484 total motor vehicle stops. Of the 484 stops, 8 resulted in arrest, 33 summonses were written, 137 warnings were issued and 291 verbal warnings were given. The department handled 33 reportable motor vehicle crashes. The Deputy Chief feels the weather was likely an impacting factor in why the numbers from the month of February were statistically low. Commissioner Scherr added that low is good.

3. **Financial Report**

Karen Senecal reported that the department is tracking 6% below the cap for this period. She provided clarification as to why the city's financials for the police department may be different than what is reported publicly to the Commission. Karen gives up-to-the-minute financial information to the Commission that has not yet been processed by the city's finance department.

Karen will prepare the projection for the last quarter and what the surplus will be. Some of the surplus will go towards getting the back-up dispatch center up and running properly to allow for the remediation work in the in-house dispatch center to begin. The department's training unit is working to create a rolling stock replacement cycle for its tasers. The cost of tasers has increased drastically over the years due to technological advancements, so the department will add this to the FY25 CIP (roughly \$60,000 to replace 20 tasers annually). To start this process in the meantime, the department will use end-of-year money to get the ball rolling. The police department gets its tasers from a company named "Axon".

a. **Strategic Plan Update:** Almost complete.

b. **Grant Application Update:** No updates.

Commissioner Shaheen asked about funding needs for the NH Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Taskforce grant requests. Karen Senecal stated that this is moving through the process in Concord. The Chair added that she wishes to invite the NH ICAC Commander, Lieutenant Eric Kinsman, to provide the Commission with an update on their work at the April Police Commission Meeting.

The Chair requested an update on the budget process timeline. Karen reported that the department held a public hearing in February and also met with the City Manager to review the department's "asks" for this

budget cycle. In that meeting, City Manager Conard requested some cuts. In order to trim back the FY24 budget, the department agreed to delay hiring a social worker for 3 months and delay hiring a 10<sup>th</sup> dispatcher until the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter. The IT Manager also gave up a decent amount of money because certain projects came in at a lower cost than was originally anticipated.

**VII. PATROL DIVISION:**

a. This report was included in the commission meeting packet.

**VIII. COURT OFFICE REPORT:**

a. This confidential report was included in the commission meeting packet.

**IX. MISCELLANEOUS/OTHER BUSINESS:**

**A.** The Chair commended Portsmouth PD and Manchester PD teams for putting forward a piece of legislation that would enable onsite emergency response for EMT's and First Responders to be able to treat K9s injured in the line of duty. This bill is called Max's bill in honor of PPD's very own K9 Max who succumbed to injuries sustained during a training exercise. Thank you to Senator D'Allesandro's team who helped to sponsor this bill.

**X. NEXT REGULAR MEETING:**

The next regular commission meeting date is Tuesday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

**XI. MOTION TO ADJOURN:**

**Action: Commissioner Shaheen moved** to adjourn the March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023 Police Commission meeting at 6:09PM.

**Seconded by Commissioner Coyle.**

**On a Voice Vote:** The motion passed 3-0.

END OF MEETING

*Respectfully Submitted by Jacqueline Burnett, Executive Assistant*  
**Commissioner Buzz Scherr, Recording Clerk of the Commission**