PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2022 VIA WEBEX

1. Chairman Ford Calls Meeting to Order at 6:31 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councilman Darnell Ford, Chairman
            Councilwoman Linda Salafia
            Councilman Anthony Mangiafico
            Councilwoman Meghan Carta
            Councilman Philip Pessina

STAFF PRESENT: Erik M. Costa – Chief of Police

2. Approval of Minutes – January 24th, 2022
Councilman Mangiafico made a motion to approve the PSC Minutes for January 24th, 2022:
Seconded by Councilwoman Carta. Councilman Pessina abstained. There being no further
discussion or objection, Motion passed.

3. Public Hearing – Matters on the Agenda Only
None

4. Correspondence
   a. Officer’s Accolades
Councilman Pessina praised Chief Costa and the officers for the great work that has been done;
especially with the removal of illegal weapons within the city. Chief Costa thanked councilman
Pessina and also stated that a lot of these weapons are coming from out of town. The department is
working with community members to help determine who is here to do wrong or right. Chief Costa
thanked community members for partnering with the department. Chief Costa advised the members
of the board about the promotional ceremony of Deputy Chief Richard E. Davis & Sergeant Aura
Smith and Awards presentation to MPD officers which was taking place on Wednesday, March 2,
2022. He extended the invite to all members of the board. Councilman Pessina also thanked Chief
Costa for the response to calls of Rapallo Ave in reference to drug dealing/prostitution.

5. Monthly Reports (Attached)
   a. Overtime Balances
Chief Costa reported the department’s overtime numbers have raised/fluctuated due to sickness &
people switching to light duty.
   b. Community Reports
   “To proudly serve in partnership with the community through a commitment to excellence, professionalism and integrity.”
The Special Olympics requested Chief Costa to be a judge for the 2022 Polar Plunge. He reported Middletown as a whole, raised around $50,000.00 towards the cause. Chief Costa commended Ofc. Bodell, K9 Bear, and all other participants for taking the plunge into 10-degree water.

Chief Costa reported that he met with Youth Ministry early in January towards building a path to partnership to mentorship. Also met with Mayors task force of Anti-Racism looking to build pathways to meet more groups & community members that focus on challenges in the community.

c. Incident Statistics Reports
Chief Costa reported having approximately, 4,400 incidents in the month of January. Out of those incidents, 2,600 were patrol checks, 1,700 were calls for service and incidents reports. Councilman Ford then addressed Chief Costa about CIT. Chief Costa asked if he could report more in depth about how CIT is working out as this was the first month with their involvement in the department. Chief Costa stated he is thankful for the partnership, and is looking forward to working out any kinks they might have come across in the past month. Councilman Ford agreed but asked how CIT would impact the incident statistic report and how they would be found. Chief Costa assured Councilman Ford that that is going to be worked out this coming month. The department is trying to be able to isolate those incidents into a separate list in Nexgen.

6. Old Business
   a. Civilian Complaints
Chief Costed reported that we do not have any current civilian complaints to report.

7. New Business
   a. Fiscal Year 2022 Programs: CIT/Explorers/P.A.L.
Chief Costa reported he has submitted the department budgets and he wanted to advise that the structure of the budget involving CIT, Explorers, P.A.L. and Body Worn Camera Project which was not added to the agenda. The Chief apologized but stated that he did want to touch on that within the meeting. Chief Costa then reported on Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) and how he would like more consistency having an officer with the CIT program to help build a better relationship between the department and those served. The Chief has noticed a good repore between CIT professionals and the citizens that need our help. He has asked with this upcoming budget, to Supply One Captain & two officers. One officer to be assigned to CIT and the homelessness & the opioid crisis. The second officer being dedicated to programming and specialized units including all Emergency response teams. Emergency response teams include Marine Unit, Mountain Bike Unit, Traffic Unit, Motorcycle Unit, SRO’s (School Resource Officers). With one officer being dedicated to those units it would ensure funding, grants, and maintaining expensive equipment to avoid having to replace items or making repairs. Chief Costa reported that our fleet is old, the oldest car being a 2009.

The Captain’s position will be the most important. Said Captain would be in charge of a newly produced division, Community Services Unit. This Captain would be overseeing the budgetary and inspection portion of equipment which is going to support the Department’s Accreditation. Chief Costa then explained the importance of keeping up on the equipment that is department owned. Accreditation reports need to be completed monthly. The Accreditation Manager position will be responsible for preparing policies, maintain States Regulatory requirements, POST certification requirements, and eventually the structure of Evaluations of our personnel.

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Chief Costa then moved on to Explorers & P.A.L. P.A.L. is waiting on 501(c)(3) approval from the state. May 7th is the startup date. Department of Children & Families & Community Health Center are on board and both have been working hand in hand with the department to providing known students and children in the community that need these services. He said that some children have made it clear that they just want to spend time with the department and learn about the job and officers. There is an executive board in place that will begin May 7th. Chief Costa then went back to the dedicated officer with CIT program. He is optimistic that with them working together, it will provide better training within the rest of the department.

Lastly, Chief Costa moved on to The Body Worn Camera Project which will be a big part of the upcoming budget. This program has to be instituted by July 1st according to the State’s accountability act. The Chief is working towards getting up and running with the help of two new IT professionals. Starting fiscal year 2022, The Body Worn Camera Project has a (5) year of payments in the budget, which is around $400,000.00. After the original 5 years there still may be increases due to maintenance of the program, cloud service and seizure of evidence. Chief Costa then stated that the Accreditation Manager and being accredited by Calea is also going to be a big part of the budget. The Chief believes that Middletown Police Department absolutely should be Calea standard. Councilwoman Linda Salafia then reference past action to accreditation and asked if any of that has been successful or if we are starting from scratch. Chief Costa responded that in the past, the department worked with a program called Power DMS. He said that the current structure is in a good place, but just needs some tweaking to be sure we are in alignment with Calea. This is including cameras in the cellblocks which need to be equipped with audio and working correctly. This is to ensure officer and prisoner safety. The Chief stated it will take at least 3 years as the department is behind on the process. Councilwoman Linda Salafia then asked if the Body cameras were already in the budget. Chief Costa advised her that they are and that we already have them in the building. He said that we are just waiting on Axon to schedule training of our officers.

8. Public Hearing Re-Opened - Other Matters
None

9. Meeting Adjourned
Councilman Mangiafico made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Pessina. There being no discussion or objection, Motion approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:53 PM.

Next Public Safety Commission Meeting, Monday, March 21, 2022 at 6:30 pm.
TO VIEW THIS MEETING IN IT’S ENTIRETY, PLEASE VISIT THE FOLLOWING WEBSITE:
www.cityofmiddletown.com
Public Meeting Videos
Available Archives
2022
Public Safety Commission (PSC)

Respectfully Submitted,

Stacey Wilson
Recording Secretary

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