**BERLIN POLICE COMMISSION**

**MONTHLY MEETING**

**PUBLIC SESSION**

**DATE: THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 2017**

**TIME: 7:30 A.M.**

**PLACE: BERLIN POLICE DEPARTMENT CONFERENCE ROOM**

**I. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Comm. Nault at 7:30 a.m.

**II. Roll Call:** Commissioners Jerry Nault, Marc Tremblay, and Pierre Morin were present.

**Others Present:**  Chief Morency, Deputy Chief Buteau, Jenn Cloutier, and Councilor Roland Théberge

**Recorded by:** Lisa Arguin

**III. Acceptance of Minutes of March 2, 2017:** Minutes were unanimously accepted as printed, on a motion by Comm. Morin, seconded by Comm. Tremblay.

**IV**. **Monthly Financial Reports:** The budget appears to be running ahead, but this is the time of year when $5,000-$6,000 in training and ammunition expenses is expected. Reimbursement of $9,000 for the defective sights is also still in the budget, and replacements will be purchased shortly. There has been an increase in vehicle repair costs surrounding the Explorer exhaust issues, and that problem is still being addressed. Ford has not claimed responsibility, and the PD has been notified of a pending class action lawsuit.

If possible, the chief intends to purchase radios; this will lessen next year’s CIP request. The report was unanimously accepted as printed, on a motion by Comm. Tremblay, seconded by Comm. Morin.

**V. Old Business**

1. **COPsync:** A meeting with a company rep is scheduled for April 18. The PD’s grant period ends in June; if nothing changes, the PD will not continue with COPsync.

1. **Bathroom Project:** Both bathroom projects have been completed. Moe Croteau is the contractor, and he did an excellent job.

1. **Budget:**  The budget meeting went well. The cost of the maintenance agreement for the new dispatch console and radio equipment was the biggest surprise to the Council. The equipment is the heart of communications for emergency services in the North Country, as well as for City departments. Comm. Nault noted that he has seen many critical equipment maintenance agreements in his experience at the hospital, and a four-hour response time at less than 4% of the equipment’s cost is a bargain; typically, costs run 10-15%. The risk of not having coverage if the system goes down is too great. As requested by the mayor, he and the chief will have a follow-up meeting for additional review of the budget.
2. **Telephone System:** Information has been forwarded to the city manager for the bid process, but there has been no progress yet. This is a complex, technical project, and it is important that the system have the capability to be integrated with other City departments.
3. **Rifle Sight Replacement:** Replacement sights have been ordered.
4. **Cruiser Issues**: Crown Vics are no longer being made, and the chief believes Explorers are currently the best police vehicles on the market; he is hoping Ford will admit to the exhaust problem. The new Explorers will need to be fitted with new equipment, as current equipment in the remaining Crown Vics cannot be adapted to fit.
5. **Primex**: Chief Morency addressed his concerns with Primex; they have since reopened two cases, and he was pleased with their response. During their conversations, the chief also learned of a proposed bill pertaining to WC coverage which may increase Primex’s responsibility regarding exposure for emergency workers. This may have an impact on rates, but other cost-saving measures are being looked into. By meeting the criteria of a ten-step evaluation process established by Primex, the City could earn percentage savings.
6. **E-Ticket:** The department was able to purchase e-ticket equipment under a grant. The equipment is in, will work in conjunction with the MDTs, and will hopefully be operational by summer.
7. **Drug-Free Community Grant:** There has been no movement since the last meeting. The application is being handled by Pam Laflamme and is intended to focus on drug prevention education and area activities geared at 12-18 year olds.
8. **Other**: 538 Burgess St. continues to be a work in progress. Landlords are trying to do the right thing, and eviction notices have been served.
   * OHRV trails and connector trails are closed for mud season until May 23. The deputy chief will meet with the Traffic Safety Committee on proposed changes to youth operator language.

**VI. New Business**

1. **DRED & Nansen Ski Jump**: DRED has once again approached the Council asking them to sign an agreement for the PD to police the Nansen Ski Jump. Mayor and Council previously agreed that DRED should address the subject with Chief Morency and the Commission. The chief called Ben Wilson at DRED, asking that he return the call or attend a Commission meeting to discuss DRED’s intentions, but Mr. Wilson did not respond. As it stands, Berlin already provides coverage through its contract with Milan.
2. **Detective Sergeant Promotion**: Detective Wade Goulet was promoted to detective sergeant, and the detective position has not yet been posted. These are not new positions. Previously, all detectives worked juvenile cases and held the title of juvenile officer, but to maintain consistency, one detective will now be responsible for all juvenile cases.
3. **Juvenile Diversion Grant:** The State previously cut the Juvenile Diversion program, but the School Department may have new funding available, and a meeting to discuss the opportunity will be scheduled.
4. **SOP Updates:**  The deputy chief is in the process of updating department SOPs. All employees have different expertise and are being asked for input on the modifications.
5. **First Net:** This is a national project where federal funds are provided to set up a dedicated broadband network for public safety communications. Each state has the choice to follow the national project or do their own. The project is in a strictly informational stage at this point.
6. **Warrant Sweep:** The sweep was successful; nine people were picked up on outstanding warrants.
7. **Training:** The department will soon conduct its annual liability and firearms training.
8. **Drug Drop Box:**  The box has received approval from the DEA and AG’s Office. It is located in the PD lobby, as it must be monitored.
9. **Felony First:** This is a new program requiring that felony paperwork be submitted to the County Attorney immediately, no later than 8 a.m. the next morning following the arrest. This will put some added pressure on the officers and may result in a little more overtime.
10. **Granite Hammer Funding:** The current grant award is $17,000 for Coös County. The State is aware of the issues facing the North Country, and there is a possibility that this figure will be doubled for the next grant award.
11. **Gorham Warrant Articles**: The warrant articles for a study of the Berlin PD providing police and dispatch services for Gorham passed. A five-member committee to conduct the study is being organized, exclusive of the town manager and Chief Cyr, who will act in advisory roles to the committee. Chief Morency was invited to and attended a Gorham town meeting at which he stated this is an opportunity to at least look at the possibilities; while there may be potential benefits for both communities, he could not say what would be best for Gorham. If there is an interest in moving forward, the chief will need to meet with the selectmen to discuss what they expect for services. Subsequent meetings would involve everyone at the same table: commissioners, mayor, councilors, and selectmen. Comm. Tremblay inquired if there were any instances in the state where this type of agreement between two communities has been successfully accomplished. The chief stated agreements have been made in Maine and Waterville Valley, and the PD currently has a similar agreement in place with Milan. Comm. Nault thanked Chief Morency for representing the community and applauded the PD for being approached by another community to entertain assistance; he asked that his sentiments be shared with the entire department. Comm. Tremblay expressed the same sentiments.
12. **Monthly Statistics**: Statistics were reviewed; while calls for service are up, it appears that several areas have been successfully addressed. Councilor Théberge asked that a copy of this report be sent to Sue Tremblay on a monthly basis, to be included with the councilors’ agendas.
13. **Correspondence**: Joe Priest’s baby has numerous health issues, and the family has been traveling to multiple hospitals including Dartmouth, Boston, and Cincinnati. Chief Morency expressed gratitude for Midge Deblois and Nancy Malone who have organized a committee and have been working very hard at raising funds to assist the Priests with their medical trips.
    * Invitations were received for the Traffic Safety Conference and to training for meth lab, Lynx, elderly abuse and exploitation, and domestic violence leadership liability.
    * Jenn Cloutier wrote a great article for the NHEDA on life after dispatching.
    * The Law Enforcement Memorial Service will take place in Concord on May 6.
    * The City’s gas pumps are being removed; departments will gas up at Irving.
    * Thank you notes were received from Ethan Enman for the way he was his treated during an arrest; the Salvas family for assistance rendered; and Special Olympians for the PD escort into the city. Cpl. Daisey also received thanks from patrons at the Gold House restaurant for the PD’s recent drug-related arrests.
    * There is a proposed State bill that would prevent PDs from effecting a seizure unless it exceeds $100,000 in currency.
    * Roseaux (Main Street drug bust last year) threw himself onto the mercy of the court and only received 1.5 years; the mayor intends to let the judges know his opinion about this.
    * The NH Special Olympics Torch Run will take place on May 20.
14. **Other**: Baby Safe Haven: Councilor Théberge is the Knights of Columbus Chair on this project; he highlighted the national proposal, asking for the PD to consider being a safe haven for unwanted babies. This would essentially make the PD one of the areas designated drop-off points for unwanted babies under eight days old. The chief stated the PD will do whatever possible to assist, but a protocol must first be established, liability considered, and resources available through DCYF must be explored.

**Drug Arrest**: A recent arrest resulted in the removal of one child, 14 cats, neglected dogs, several snakes, and many mice; 88 charges are pending. The people involved had also tried to start a Go Fund Me page, but they eventually removed it.

1. **Public Comments**: Councilor Théberge thanked the department employees for their professionalism and hard, dedicated work, stating people don’t really realize what the department does until it has a personal impact.
2. **Adjournment of Public Meeting:** Comm. Morin motioned to adjourn at 9:05 a.m. The motion was seconded by Comm. Tremblay and carried unanimously by Comm. Nault. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 4, 2017 at 7:30 a.m.