



Chief of Police
Peter Morency

BERLIN POLICE DEPARTMENT

135 Green Street
Berlin, New Hampshire 03570



Police Commission
Jerry Nault
Marc Tremblay
Pierre Morin

DATE: THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 2021
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 7:33 a.m.
- II. Roll Call:** Commissioners Nault, Tremblay, and Morin were present. Jenn Cloutier and Lisa Arguin participated via Zoom.

Others Present: Chief Morency, Deputy Chief Buteau, and Captain Jeff Lemoine

Recorded by: Kimberly Bijeau

- III. Acceptance of Minutes of December 3, 2020.** Comm. Morin requested clarification on the proposed drug ordinance and whether the intention was to reduce subjects to a violation level offense. Chief Morency indicated that due to the delay in cases going to court, the PD looked into violation level offenses advising that he is still doing research on the matter. Chief Morency provided an update on the status of his research and provided some discussion on how Nashua and Lebanon implemented the ordinance. Chief Morency advised that he has assigned the task to the drug task force and advised that the intent was to not tie up the labs and to deal with it on another level. Comm. Nault commented on the wording in section VIII reference the Commission unanimously agreeing that the chief move forward with a succession plan for Department administrative personnel. Comm. Nault expressed concern that it may appear that the Commission was fully aware of the details of the plan. Comm. Nault clarified that the Commission was not stamping a plan they were approving the process of moving ahead. Minutes were unanimously accepted as printed on motion by Comm. Morin, seconded by Comm. Tremblay.
- IV. Monthly Financial Report:** Chief Morency discussed the creation of a captain's position and advised the Commission that Jeff Lemoine has been promoted to that position. Discussion ensued in reference to the fact that the position created a new line item in the budget. Chief Morency advised that the finance department at city hall questioned whether the Commission authorized the new position and the transfer of funds for the position. Chief Morency indicated that there had also been an issue with the reimbursement of Covid-19 monies with City Hall stating that the PD can't take a revenue and turn it back to the department. Discussion ensued reference reflecting same in the budget and the fact that Covid-19 related expenses are effecting the budget by a 1/2%. Chief Morency request that with the acceptance of the minutes there be a motion that authorized the Chief of Police to control the expenditures and department

appropriations with the ability to transfer funds and control line items which are in the best interest of the department and more accurately depict the department expenses. There was further discussion reference Covid-19 related expenses and creating a separate line item that would more accurately reflect each expense as everything is currently falling under overtime. After some discussion the Commission reaffirmed that they have no issue with the reclassification of staff as it is routine and normal, indicating that in the past the chief and his staff have always had the authority to reallocate and transfer funds within the budget as well as introduce new line items. The financial report was unanimously accepted on a motion by Comm. Morin, seconded by Comm. Tremblay.

V. Old Business

- A. Department Meeting:** Major Russ Conte provided training on mental health with discussion about how to continue to push the issue with the State in reference to IEA's staying 20-30 days. Training topics included emotional and psychological disorders and emotionally disturbed persons including a Police One online training class. Discussion ensued in reference to the correlation between drug use and mental health issues.

Chief Morency advised that a portion of the meeting included several different categories of topics that were suggested by the employees. Deputy Chief Buteau noted that despite it being a rough year with Covid-19 related issues and such the tone of the meeting was positive and the department showed great resilience and morale was good.

- B. COVID-19 Task Force:** Chief Morency advised that the department continued with the current Mayor and Councils resolution and that there are still no fines in place with reference to compliance with mask use, indicating the plan to continue to follow the Governors guidelines at this point.

Chief Morency advised that vaccinations for first responders are starting on the 13th for those who want it. Vaccinations for the general public will follow starting with the nursing homes and most vulnerable part of the population.

Chief Morency brought up the concern reference the potential for employees to abuse the Covid-19 guidelines resulting in being out of work numerous times. A policy had been put in place stating that if an employee elects to travel outside the Northeast the cost for them being out of work is on them. Chief Morency advised that he would like to take the policy a step further stating that if an employee is conducting in behavior that is against the CDC guidelines and putting themselves in a position where they need to be out on leave, the cost is on them. Comm. Nault brought up the guidelines that employees at AVH follow and advised on the importance of them being very specific. Suggested that the PD reach out to the HR department at the hospital for assistance with the modifications.

Comm. Nault made the suggestion that the Commission jump ahead in the meeting to the department awards under New Business.

Lt William Daisey, Sgt. Zach Howry, and K9 Officer Gale were brought into the meeting.

Lt Daisey was awarded with the Officer of the Year Award with emphasis on the fact that this award is an honor as it is mainly based off of peer votes.

Lisa Arguin was awarded with the Employee of the Year Award.

K9 Officer Dennis Gale was awarded with the Call to Duty Crime Fighting Award.

Sgt. Zach Howry was awarded with the Call to Duty Community Service Award.

- C. **Sewer Line Project:** The project was put out to bid and received two bids. One was in the amount of \$10,900 and the other \$11,400. Mikem, Inc. will be completing the project and it should be completed within the next couple days.
- D. **NHPSTC Department Certification:** Grant certification policies and changes were sent out December 29th and the PD is awaiting confirmation.
- E. **Hiring Process:** Two candidates passed the written, and oral boards. However, one of the candidates had an issue with the PT and was awaiting a medical release. The second candidate did pass the PT and was issued a conditional offer. Another process will be starting on January 16th. Plan to continue to test candidates every one to two months.

Jenn provided an update on the dispatch hiring process advising that testing was done on Monday and a number of candidates passed. Interviews will be done on Tuesday and Jenn is confident that out of the three being interviewed there will be a good candidate.

Adam Sperlonga is currently in the academy and started Monday. The Commission was advised that two weeks have been added to the academy.

- F. **Budget:** Discussion reference the two week increase in the academy lead to questions about the 164% increase in the budgets training and schools line item. Chief Morency advised the Commission of the circumstances surrounding the increase. Discussion ensued reference the increases in the budget pertaining to retirement, health insurance, and radio repairs and the 19% decrease in utility cost. There was discussion reference moving \$7500 from the radio repairs line item to Capital improvements.
- G. **Other:** Comm. Nault signed the extension of the Milan Contract and made the Commission aware of same. Chief Morency advised the Commission that John Jefferson started with the PD Monday and was sworn in by the A.G. as the newest task force member.

VI. New Business

- A. **Department Awards:** Comm. Nault acknowledged that awards were given out earlier in the meeting and offered his congratulations to all. He thanked Chief Morency and the staff for their selection.

- B. Promotion:** Chief Morency advised the Commission further on the promotion of Cpt. Jeff Lemoine. Cpt. Lemoine is currently still overseeing the task force and detective division along with his new roles and responsibilities.
- C. Cruiser Accident:** Chief Morency advised the Commission on the circumstances of the accident involving the K9 Cruiser.
- D. Dish-mount Antenna:** Chief Morency advised the Commission on damage that was done to the dish-mount that had been strapped to the chimney on the roof of the PD. Jenn advised the Commission on the status and cost of the repairs. A claim in the amount of \$3700 was submitted to Primex and they are going to cover the cost less the \$1000 deductible.
- E. Bail Reform:** Chief Morency advised the Commission that a committee has been set up and the state is looking into cases involving issues with bail reform. Chief Morency had limited new information at this time.
- F. Statistics:** Statistics were reviewed and discussed.
- G. Correspondence:** Chief Morency reiterated the two bids that the PD had received for the sewer project.
- Public Works is looking for an Administrative Clerk.
 - The CJIS audit committee is stating that two-thirds of the state has not complied with the FBI required audit and Chief Morency commended Jenn for getting the PD's done back in September.
 - A memo was received in reference to ice build-up over the garage. This creates a hazardous condition and is a liability and the PD is working on the issue.
 - Deputy Chief Buteau dealt with the traffic control reference the demolition of the Princess theater and everything went well.
 - A thank you was received from a woman who requested a drive-by for her son's birthday.
 - A woman dropped off an Officer Prayer plaque and it is on display in the Deputy Chief's office.
 - A letter was received asking if the PD would have an objection to the Mexican restaurant on Main St carrying a beverage and wine license.
 - Police Standards and Training put out a new Code of Ethics using a new format that will be going out to all the agencies.
 - There was a memo put out in reference to a moment of radio silence for officers lost and dispatch took care of same.

- There is an Advanced Virtual Internal Affairs training coming up.
- Nationwide there are more homicides this year then ever reported in previous years and the number of officers killed has increased by 37%. However, the suicide by officer rate had decreased from 239 to 162.
- A card was received from a woman thanking the department for the well wishes and money provided by the PD.
- There will be medical training in Twin Mtn.

H. Other: Cpl. Josh White just passed his 10 year mark at the PD.

- Lt Hollie Dube just passed 20 years and will be the first female officer to retire from the Berlin Police Department.
- Lt Dube will be organizing the Special Olympics Winnie Dip fundraiser.
- Chief Morency spoke with Jenn in reference to an email received from Pam Urban pertaining to grant funding for Homeland Security and the tower lease with AVH.

VII. Public Comments: None.

VIII. Adjournment of Public Meeting: Motion by Comm. Tremblay seconded by Comm. Morin, the Commission adjourned to non-public session by roll call vote per RSA 91-A:3 II (a), (b), (c), and (e) with each commissioner voting in the affirmative. There were no decisions made in non-public session. Public session reconvened at 10:17 a.m., at which time minutes were unanimously sealed on a motion by Comm. Nault, seconded by Comm. Tremblay, as the divulgence of information would adversely affect the reputation of a person(s) other than a member of the board. The public meeting then adjourned on a motion by Comm. Nault, seconded by Comm. Tremblay.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, February 4, 2021 at 7:30 a.m.