

**BERLIN POLICE COMMISSION
MONTHLY MEETING
PUBLIC SESSION**

DATE: Thursday, May 13, 2021
TIME: 7:30 A.M.
PLACE: BERLIN POLICE DEPARTMENT CONFERENCE ROOM

I. Call to Order: 07:32 am

II. Roll Call: Commissioners Nault, Tremblay, and Morin were present.

Others Present: Chief Morency, Deputy Chief Buteau, and Captain Jeff Lemoine. Jennifer Cloutier was present via zoom.

Recorded by: Kimberly Bijeau

III. Acceptance of Minutes of April 1, 2021. A correction was made under Old Business: Other; and New Business: E; changing GMC to GNC. Minutes were unanimously accepted as amended on a motion from Comm. Tremblay seconded by Comm. Morin.

IV. Monthly Financial Report: reports were reviewed and discussed. The Commission brought up Special Enforcement expenditures. There was some discussion with reference to when Special Enforcement is used. There was some discussion in reference to several expenditures that still need to come out of the budget before the end of the fiscal year. The financial report was unanimously accepted on a motion by Comm. Morin, seconded by Comm. Tremblay.

V. Old Business

- A. Budget:** Chief Morency advised the Commission that the initial tax rate for the budget went in at 44.92. However, the projected tax rate on the last figures that they worked on with the City Manager was 37.80. Advising that there are a couple Council members that want the budget to be flat lined. Some of the other Council members argued that you can't flat line the budget when you have cost of living increases and an increase in retirement and insurance costs. This has been an unusual year and departments have been able to save some money with not being able to participate in some events due to Covid. Basing the tax rate on the money that will be turned back to the City is not realistic. Any reductions to CIP have not been included; the Ramp Extension project is still in there providing the potential for another \$60-\$75,000 in reductions. Chief Morency provided the Commission with an updated copy of the budget showing an

approx. \$76,000 in reductions. The public meeting is May 26th and the final budget meeting is June 21st.

- B. Contract Negotiations:** The City is in the position where they would like to see all the Union bodies under the same insurance. It would be a jump from a \$2,000 deductible to a \$3,000/\$9,000 deductible. A selling point to the employees is that they would get 1.5% per year for the next three years. The savings from the insurance, as well as their raises, can be used to offset either with a 457/pretax plan or an investment plan. The City would match \$1,500 / \$4,500 of the deductible(s). The decision needs to be made by Monday. If a decision is not made by Monday there would be an automatic renewal of the current plan. The Union would like to see their 4th week of vacation come sooner. They currently get the 4th week of vacation after 12 years of continuous service. The Union would like to bring the 12 years down to 10.
- C. Grant Applications and Resolutions:** The Highway Safety Grant, DTF Grant, ILO Grant, and F&G Grant(s) have all gone through the process and been submitted. The department has also submitted two additional Night Vision and CBRNE Grants that are currently going through the process and awaiting the resolution approval. The department received a close out letter in reference to the Stonegarden Grant.
- D. Cells and Toilet Repairs:** Repairs have been completed. The cell doors were strengthened and the toilets/drains are working efficiently. We are still looking into stainless steel benches but will see where the budget stands prior to moving forward with the project.
- E. Call to Duty Scholarships:** The department normally spends \$2,000 on the scholarships. Becca Pouliot, a Criminal Justice student, came in first after being evaluated by the committee. Makenna Balderrama, who is also a Criminal Justice student, came in second. Third was Libby Fortin; a Premed student. Fourth was Madisyn Buteau; an education student. Fifth was Nichole Reynolds; a nursing student. Chief Morency inquired with the Commission about giving out two \$750 scholarships and one \$500 scholarship. The Commission was on board with same.
- F. Other:** Evaluations have been completed. The department plans to put the second 1% of the bonus out. There were no surprises with the evaluations.
- There has been an issue with 40 Spring St. where the owner(s) of the property passed away and there are a number of squatters. Berlin Housing, Code Enforcement, and the Health Dept. have been dealing with the problem and there were a number of code violations. Lt Daisey was able to get a search warrant for the residence. The residents were supposed to be out last Friday but filed a motion with the courts and are scheduled for a hearing.
 - The Senate Finance Committee reinstated the Liquor Commission.

- HB 111; qualified immunity failed. They are now attempting to attach it to a budgetary bill.
- Opioid Litigation; The City received a letter from the State advising that they will be receiving \$3,149. HB 1639, relative to health care, states that the AG's Office has control over the Opioid Fund. The county will be receiving \$7,000 in total which will be divided based on population.

VI. New Business

- A. ATV Festival – Invasion:** The festival is now being held on private property. There was some discussion on how active a role the police department can take. There is another meeting scheduled for Tuesday with the ATV Club and City officials. The department has a couple of meetings planned internally to brainstorm on some of the issues we could be facing. The Deputy Chief did request an emergency action plan from the parties and has gone over some of the situations that could arise with them. The festival is scheduled for July 30th- 31st.
- B. PSTC Graduation / Recruit / Back in Service:** Adam Sperlonga graduated and the department was able to get Connor Kerivan in. Kerivan is now in his 2nd week at the academy. PSTC is now back full-time in person.
- C. Police Memorial Week:** May 9th through the 15th is Police Memorial Week. There is an online service and Deputy Chief Buteau has reached out to the families so they can watch. Friday is the memorial service in Concord. The event will consist of a motorcycle procession along with the committee members placing the flower wreath(s). 290 officers lost their life this year.
- D. Drug Operation Update:** Last Monday and Tuesday, May 3rd and 4th, the DEA, who has been working with DTF and the Berlin PD and other agencies including State Police, the Sheriff's Dept, Colebrook PD, Lancaster PD, and Whitefield PD, proceeded to take down an operation. County wide there were at least 13 arrested: 6 of the arrests were in Berlin. One of the arrests, that was not publicized, units went to execute a federal arrest warrant for drug sales; fentanyl, and found (developed) probable cause to obtain a search warrant. Agents seized over 100 grams of fentanyl along with some valium and marijuana.
- E. Conference Call with Judges Greenhalgh and Subers:** The judges were concerned about the calls they were receiving and the exigency of needing a search warrant. There was discussion about the circumstances where it may be a Friday night and the involved parties are demanding "much needed" items from their vehicles. There may also be personnel issues where the officer may be going off duty and not be returning until the following Tuesday and to pass that probable cause along to another officer, ties up additional dept resources. The judges were asking for us to work with them. The request was made to the judges to please at least listen to the officer as there may be a reason for the exigency. We agreed that they would listen and if it wasn't exigent then officers would wait and in turn the judges left the door open for communication.
- F. LAP Steering Committee:** Lethality Assessment Program. LAP is a form/questionnaire that officers go over during a domestic type situation to determine the danger level that they may be

in and to get them some services. The committee was looking for somebody from Berlin to be a part of it and Sgt. Howry as the prosecutor will be in charge of that for the department.

- G. NHCOP Training and Trade Show:** They will be doing a trade show in Manchester and courses will be based on the required six hours of mandatory training. The department is going to try to send down a few officers so they can get that six hours of mandatory training for the year.

The Commission was advised on a project that Lt Gendron has taken on, with minimal cost to the department, involving building a tactical team obstacle course for training at the firing range. Chapman donated some steel for the course and Eversource is planting a pole today.

- H. Statistics:** Statistics were reviewed and discussed.

I. Correspondence:

- Several training opportunities and thank you letters/cards were highlighted.
- Berlin High School 9th grade student, Aspen Langlois, as a member of Empower Coos Youth, a program of the NH Charitable Foundation and Tillotson, has picked 'Distracted Driving' as a project. Per her request, Tillotson is going to donate \$250 towards Hands Free Patrols.
- The department received another donation of helmets from the Kiwanis Club.
- OCDETF granted the department \$10,000 for use by DTF with investigations.
- The Berlin PD along with several other communities received a letter from F&G referencing the coverage of ATV accidents/incidents.
- Discussion on the Mason St bridge project
- \$275 in landscaping/mulching
- Telecommunications Week was the second week in April. Discussion ensued with reference to an increase in the dispatch pay.
- NH Driver's License photos are available again over SPOTS.
- Discussion with reference to the department promoting the numerous scam calls that are going around to help protect the elderly.
- A letter of recognition, written by a fellow officer, was read in reference to a mental health call that Lt Dube responded to.
- Cpl. Gale and Kodiak will be at the Berlin Public Library on July 8th.
- There was discussion on educating the public on calling 911 and all the capabilities that NH 911 offers.

I. Other:

- Drug take back; the PD had approx. 50 lbs in one day.
- The department dealt with a local subject that made threats towards Senator Maggie Hassan. Detective Goulet received a call from the Capitol Police in D. C. because the subject had left a threatening voice mail message on Senator Hassan's answer machine in Washington. Both Det. Goulet and patrol spoke with the involved subject and the report was forwarded to the Capitol Police who was satisfied with the investigation but wanted a copy of the report in case there were further issues with the subject.

- The issue with airbnb's was addressed by the City Council Monday night and a motion was made that it go to the Traffic Safety Committee with recommendations from the police department on laws, rules, and ordinances that could be affected and to put together a one-time registration process for the property owner(s).

VII. Public Comments: None.

VIII. Adjournment of Public Meeting: At 09:22 a.m. the meeting adjourned to Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (c), by roll call vote on a motion by Comm. Tremblay, seconded by Comm. Morin. Public Session reconvened at 09:33 a.m.; there were no decisions made in Non-Public Session, and minutes were sealed on a motion by Comm. Tremblay, seconded by Comm. Morin, as their release could adversely affect the reputation of a person other than a member of this Commission. The meeting adjourned unanimously on a motion by Comm. Tremblay, seconded by Comm. Morin. The next meeting will be held on **Thursday, June 10th at 7:30 a.m.**