

**MADISON DEPARTMENT OF POLICE SERVICES
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
5:30 PM
Held via Zoom Video Conference
September 9, 2021
SUBJECT TO APPROVAL**

Attendees: Chairman Ed Dowling; Vice-Chairman Marietta Lee; Commissioner Thom Cartledge; Commissioner Ann Rumberger; Commissioner Christina Cewe.

Also Present: Chief John “Jack” Drumm; Captain Joseph Race; Lieutenant Neal Mulhern; Al Goldberg – Board of Selectmen liaison.

CALL TO ORDER - REGULAR SESSION

Chairman Dowling called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. and all rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

ACCEPTANCE – MEETING MINUTES

MOTION by Cartledge, second by Lee to approve the minutes of the August 12th Regular meeting of the Madison Board of Police Commissioners. All in favor; none opposed. So moved.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Rob Card of 2 Bradley Road spoke. It was confirmed that the Madison Board of Police Commissioners in conjunction with the Madison Police Department is the local traffic authority for issues relating to traffic. He read a letter from residents of Bradley Road that was submitted in July requesting assistance of the Police Commission regarding increased traffic volume and excessive traffic speed. Bradley and Copse Roads have long been known by Madison residents as a shortcut to avoid Rt. 79 and Rt. 1 to lights and the associated traffic. The implication of increased traffic volume and excessive speed is the overall safety of residents, vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. Several enhancements have been made on the East end of Bradley Road, including sidewalks increased and stop signs added, but no additional support was made to the West end of Bradley Road. He suggested possible solutions, including radar signs, 3-ways stop signs, posted signs for No Commercial Vehicles Except for Delivery, speed bumps. He requested a brief meeting with residents to discuss Bradley Road West to come up with a collaborative approach to an agreeable and reasonable solution.

Chairman Dowling: This is a comprehensive and thoughtful assessment of the concerns that you have. This issue will be incorporated into our Traffic Log. This might take both the direct expertise and assessment within the Madison Police Department as well as integrate our review with the Town Engineering function.

Chief Drumm: There are challenges to this road. Where cars come over the hill by Copse the sightlines are not sufficient for a 3-way stop sign. Best we can do a 2-way stop. Perhaps some sort of warning device. Very difficult because we are dealing with driver behaviors. We understand your concerns and will do what we can to work with it. We will probably do another study on it. Most readily available lacking a patrol vehicle presence are speed signs. They seem to work for us in these types of situations. We will get back to you. We will make an application for another stop sign south bound on Copse, and a sign stating traffic does not stop in the oncoming

direction. This is the best application with the resources that we have. He is happy to talk with Rob Card or the neighborhood group at another time at their convenience.

Chairman Dowling asked Rob Card to forward the letter to Chief Drumm or his assistant, Holly Berke.

Chief Drumm: He has been to the location with Engineering and the concern was the sightline coming up over Copse. He will meet with the group and discuss with Lieutenant Mulhern to try and get closure for Mr. Card.

Peter Roos of 518 Boston Post Road spoke. Until he did some research he did not appreciate that the Madison Police Department had a CALEA certification. Only 19 of 123 towns have their Police Department's CALEA certified. We should be very proud of that and kudos to Chief Drumm and all the others on this Zoom call for getting our standards up so high. He believes we need to make traffic enforcement a greater priority in this town. We have a speed monitor between Cherry and West Wharf that looks like it is solar powered but clearly inoperable right now. We need to get that fixed and move it closer to the Country Club so people can see it long before they pass West Wharf Road. He wanted to point out that the Town of Clinton's Historic District as well as downtown has a 25-mph speed limit and wonders if we could do something like that. Also, believes we need more stop sign enforcement. We need to have people posted to try and pull over folks to get tickets. He knows we are down 5 people in our staffing. He has read about the auto thefts with cars left unlocked and valuables left inside. His belief is the police only have so much responsibility to protect the citizens who won't do anything to protect themselves. Believes a lot of it is commonsense to stop the thefts. Believes we need to prioritize traffic over theft.

Chairman Dowling: There are some solutions that we are looking at, including enhancing signage, digital radar monitoring, and looking at additional resources. It is a concern of this Police Department. The Commission is prepared to understand the resource needs from both additional operating resources in terms of patrol staff and also capital resources in terms of certain upgrades in technology, including traffic monitoring.

Commissioner Cartledge: Rt. 1 not properly signed for lanes after paving; he believes has caused some people to think they can go terribly fast. Within next 72 hours, weather permitting, it is expected the Post Road will be properly lined and marked. Hopefully, with the addition of bike lane markings and proper markings for the middle of the road, this will cause some people to think of how fast they are going.

Chief Drumm: Concur 110% with Mr. Roos. The sign going westbound prior to downtown is being moved up to the vicinity of Mr. Roos' after Copse Road. The sign coming up from the west is being moved away from Cherry Lane and put prior to the golf course by the curve. We are working on it. When we get closer to the schedule of officers we had last year we will probably pick up some of the enforcement in the area. We are using the tools and resources we are given. There is a cross walk going in by West Wharf. We will keep the pressure up to accomplish the tasks.

End of public comments.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Budget / Financial Report: Chief Drumm provided an update on the budget. Nothing extraordinary in the budget absent some of the funding for some of the positions. Will be asking for special appropriations to the Board of

Finance and Board of Selectmen in the next three weeks; asking that they fully fund the current positions and not delay funding them until after January 1st. Also, will be requesting additional signs that we need to address some of the concerns we hear weekly or monthly from concerned citizens.

Chairman Dowling: Is this because when we moved from fiscal 2021 to fiscal 2022 some of our current budgeted positions were not fully funded from a wage line?

Chief Drumm: Yes, post audit they will be. I will be making requests for additional officers in the next budget year so that we have regular enforcement throughout the town on a regular basis for traffic.

Chairman Dowling: First, it would be helpful to look at a summary for the October meeting; here are the patrol resources that we think are needed to meet some basic public safety and traffic management issues that we are facing. Secondly, we have talked about capital requirements in the past and you have shared with us that the digital radar stations are expensive with an additional cost to maintain. We may conclude we want them to be mobile so we can move them to different locations. If we could put those two pieces together and have a discussion as a Commission, then when we can endorse them and move forward in an organized, supportive way in the budget season.

Chief Drumm: I've enjoyed a good rapport with the Board of Finance and the Board of Selectman since the day I walked in here. We gained their trust, their respect. We predicated what we ask for on need and not on wish. When we identified something that may be a wish we clearly explained it to both Boards as to why we think this would enhance us in law enforcement and the Town. The bottom line is we have to provide a service to the Town of Madison. We need to have the bodies and the equipment to provide that service. We have hired multiple lateral transfers to save the expense of training. When we ask for these positions It is very frustrating when we continually ask for them, year after year, with all the information we need. I hate to say no to folks that show up to meetings or send letters. We are working the best that we can. Despite doing more with less resources we maintain a certification nationwide, we do better than most other agencies comparably our size. We need to get the resources we need to do the job that is required to maintain the public safety of this town. We are now seeing in this community what has affected the cities for years. It has now come to the suburbs whether in the form of auto thefts, home invasions, burglaries, other thefts, larcenies or assaults. Every person in this department, including the Chief, works in the streets.

Commissioner Cartledge: There should never be a nay vote from Board of Selectmen or Board of Finance in relation to what we want today. We have too many residents making regular complaints about things that could be fixed. We do not have the staffing we need. We have had more residents speak to the Chief, come to meetings, send emails in the last year than in the past five years.

Commissioner Lee: How do we officially endorse the Chief's requests? What is the best way to do so?

Chief Drumm: If you do a comparative analysis of the budget from the day I walked in here in January 2010 to where the budget is today, and you take the HR component of the money we saved, the budget is less than the day I walked in.

Commissioner Cewe: We can do a simple slide format with car break-ins, traffic requests and what the budget amount is. If we have to go to the meetings we can bring the one slide, which is concise and to the point.

Commissioner Cartledge: What we should do is print out all the requests from the residents of the town.

Chairman Dowling: We can work with AI to say this is going to be a very transparent process. The Board of Selectmen is likely aware we are coming in with additional resource requests.

Al Goldberg: I think the recipe for success is a logical data-oriented presentation at budget season, important to remind the public officials how much the public is behind this request, and Board of Police Commissioners need to unanimously vote and get behind the budget, and show up at Board of Finance meeting when they review the budget.

Activity / Statistics: Lieutenant Mulhern: Received numerous emails regarding Island Avenue and East Wharf Road. From 9/1/21-9/8/21 we had 1-hour mandatory traffic patrols doing enforcement on those streets. 4 tickets were issued on Island Avenue. There were 157 traffic stops and 17 arrests in August, including 1 DUI and 1 prisoner that was extradited from Massachusetts. There were 6 verbal warnings, 134 written warnings, 11 infractions and 6 misdemeanors. As far as car thefts, they died down a little but there has been a recent uptick. There have been 4 auto thefts to date for September: 9/6 Kelsey Springs, 9/7 Grove, both of these vehicles recovered. Today there were 2 auto thefts: 1 on Lantern Hill, where the garage was accessed and vehicle removed from there, and 1 on 5th Street, where access was gained through the front door and keys were taken from the kitchen table. There has been an uptick in every community. We are working with neighborhood groups and they are in process of developing slogans they want to use on the digital signs; hopefully implementing by the beginning of next week. They are looking at getting lawn signs printed. The biggest deterrent to prevent any crime is for people to lock their cars. They will not target us any longer if you simply lock your car. People will stop coming into neighborhoods, if we alter our behavior and lock our cars.

Training Report: Captain Race provided the training update. Department participated in a total of 160 training hours. Training consisted of 48 hours SWAT training, which included Sergeant Roy and Sergeant Hoffman attending a 3-day CT SWAT challenge, nationally renowned, in lieu of training. K-9 training completed standard 32 hours. Officer Phillips finished Phase 3 of Accident Reconstruction Training, which consisted of 80 hours. He is now a member of the South-Central Regional Traffic Team. Additionally, all officers completed policy review of Pursuit & Emergency Driving and all officers completed Stop Stick Training to include classroom and practical application.

Monthly Traffic Report: Chief Drumm: There were 35 MVA with 6 involving injuries. The leading causes were following too closely and unsafe movement, a lot of that involved hand-held phone devices. There were no DWI accidents and no fatalities. We did assist the CT State Police with incidents on I-95, particularly on the weekends.

Community Calendar: Captain Race: The next two weekends are busy in the Town. Madison Jaycees Triathlon is this weekend and anywhere between West Wharf and the center of town, there will be traffic delays from approximately 7:00 a.m. until 10:00 a.m., also including detours. The Surf Club will not be open to vehicle traffic until 10:00 a.m. Parents dropping athletes off are to use Lowrey Field. All coaches have been made aware of this. There will be a 911 ceremony on the Green at 5:00 p.m. September 18-19, 2021 we will host the Madison Invitational Soccer Tournament, which will include 65 teams. The Connecticut Gran Fondo bike ride is scheduled for October 2, 2021. Trunk or Treat is tentatively scheduled for October 31, 2021 at the Green and the Turkey Trot is also scheduled at the Green for November 25, 2021.

Regional Shared Services: Chief Drumm: Radio Dispatch meeting coming up this week.

Chairman Dowling: The Chief has connected with the Chief in Guilford. Guilford is looking at emergency radio equipment and we will have a preliminary discussion to share our experience with Emergency Dispatch equipment.

CHIEF'S CORRESPONDENCE: None.

TRAFFIC ISSUES:

Commissioner Cartledge: Worked with John Iennaco on a list of new signage that visibility was affected by overgrowth. John had a crew out about 10 days ago and managed to get a lot of it. The Beach Club did some trimming on their own by Middle Beach and intersection of Island Avenue. The golf course has taken the responsibility of the sign at the intersection of West Wharf and one of the golf holes going across down by the restaurant.

Chief Drumm: Off of I95 and Rt. 79 the lights are appearing. This has been in the works for about two and a half years.

NEW BUSINESS: None at this time.

COVID Updates: Chief Drumm: The Town instituting policy on COVID, essentially you have option to get vaccinated and have it paid for, or submit to regular testing and submit information to HR. This will take affect the second week of October. This is subject to change depending on what comes out of State and Federal Government.

Chief Drumm: Sam Thorall joins the ranks, effectively starts Training Academy tomorrow to become a Madison Police Officer. She was a former Amtrak police officer. We have two seats to follow with additional personnel.

LIASON WITH STATE AGENCIES

Chief Drumm: Police Accountability Transparency Act and also the Racial Profiling Provision Project we voted on and submitted to the legislature recommendations of what motor vehicle stops would become primary and what would become secondary. On the Accountability Task Force, one of the subcommittees is dealing with and accommodating those with special needs or in need of psychological help. We are trying to address all of the concerns coming from different groups.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS: None.

MOTION TO ADJOURN to Executive Session by Cartledge; second by Lee. All in favor; none opposed. So moved. Meeting adjourned by 6:47 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION adjourned at 7:10 p.m.