

## **ST. JOHN POLICE COMMISSION**

### **MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING ON APRIL 12, 2004**

The April 2004 Regular Meeting of the Board of Metropolitan Police Commissioners of the Town of St. John was held on April 12, 2004 at 7:30 P.M., as advertised, pursuant to law. Commissioner Dodaro called the meeting to order and then led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call was taken with the following members of the Police Commission being present; namely, William Dodaro, Donald Farris, Rose Hejl, Robert Long, and Ronald Vale. Also present were Assistant Chief Bernard Johnsen and Town Council Liaison Charles Pearson. Representing the Law Firm of Austgen, Decker and Phillips PC was Attorney David Austgen, who had to leave at the end of the Work Study Session.

### **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MONTH'S MINUTES**

Commissioner Farris made a motion to approve and accept the March 8, 2004 Regular Meeting Minutes, the March 26, 2004 Executive Session Minutes, the March 26, 2004 Special Meeting Minutes and the April 6, 2004 Executive Session Minutes as presented. With a second by Commissioner Vale, the motion carried unanimously.

### **CORRESPONDENCE / COMMUNICATIONS**

Commissioner Dodaro read a letter from Patricia and Leonard Rompka, of 3048 Brampton Lane, Dyer, Indiana addressed to Police Commission Chairman William Dodaro and Police Commission members. Said letter highly commended Captain Bernard Johnsen for his assistance regarding a situation between their son and Lake Central High School. The Rompkas stated they felt they would never be able to thank Captain Johnsen for his extraordinary efforts. Commissioner Dodaro advised Captain Johnsen that a copy of this letter has already been placed in his personnel file, and the entire Commission applauded his efforts and commended him as well for a job well done.

Commissioner Farris read a letter regarding a "Job Well Done" addressed to Sergeant Michael Fryzel from Assistant Chief Bernard Johnsen dated April 5, 2004. Said letter was reference Case Number 2004-0001285 and commended Sergeant Fryzel for responding to a call of an 18-year old male MS patient who was not breathing. Sergeant Fryzel was not on duty when the call came in, yet he responded. Due to his quick response and through his efforts, Sergeant Fryzel was able to help the patient begin breathing and was able to sustain the patient's life until the St. John Fire Department arrived and were able to take over. Commissioner Farris stated a copy of this letter has been placed in Sergeant Fryzel's file, and he commented, "Good job, Mike!"

### **POLICE DEPARTMENT'S MONTHLY REPORT**

Commissioner Dodaro read the monthly report for March 2004. Commissioner Dodaro stated that from March 1, 2004 through March 31, 2004, the members of the St. John Police Department logged 15,157 duty miles and responded to 325 incidents. The investigation of these incidents resulted in 23 adult arrests with a total of 37 charges, and 7 juvenile arrests with a total of 14 charges. There were 319 traffic citations issued along with 58 written

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warnings and 0 parking violations. The grand total of citations issued during the month of March 2004 is 377 citations. Vehicle thefts totaled \$0.00 during the month of March 2004. All other thefts totaled \$5,075.00. Total value of recovered property was \$0.00. Commissioner Hejl made a motion to accept the Police Department's Monthly Report for March 2004 as presented. With a second by Commissioner Long, the motion carried unanimously. Some discussion ensued regarding the recovery of a ferret and a Chihuahua that had been stolen from Alsip Home and Nursery. Regarding an issue involving limousines being parked on Ventura Drive, Commissioner Dodaro advised that numerous citations have been issued, and the party involved is currently in compliance. However, the Police Department will monitor that area to ensure they stay in compliance.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

**Budget** – Commissioner Dodaro stated there was nothing to report on this matter.

**Physical Plant** – Commissioner Dodaro asked Assistant Chief Johnsen to comment on the condition of the Police Department building. Assistant Chief Johnsen advised the roof is not leaking, but it has not been raining either. He also stated the building needs help as it is an old building which is overcrowded and needs to be replaced.

**DARE – Graduation Dates** – Commissioner Dodaro stated the DARE Graduation Programs, for Kolling Elementary and St. John Evangelist schools, were both held on April 8, 2004 at Kolling Elementary School at 10:00 A.M. Officers Eric Andersen and James Turturillo organized and conducted the DARE Graduation Program. Commissioner Hejl stated she was in attendance at the graduation program as both a parent and a commissioner. Town Council Member Jerri Teibel was also present. Commissioner Hejl stated the officers should be commended for a job well done as the program was very organized, and it was obvious the children enjoyed the officers coming to their schools throughout the year. She stated the program was both fun and informative.

**Human Resources – Final Examination Register** – Commissioner Dodaro advised the Final Register was posted on March 30, 2004 at 6:00 P.M. Copies are posted at the both the Town Hall and the Police Department.

**Human Resources – Recommend Police Officer Candidate for Hire** – Commissioner Dodaro stated he recommended the hiring of the first person on the Final Examination Register; namely, Steven Flores. Commissioner Dodaro stated he believes all other aspects (physical examination, psychological evaluation, background investigation, etc.) have been completed regarding hiring Mr. Flores, and everything is pending approval from PERF. Some discussion ensued. Commissioner Vale made a motion to recommend the hiring of Steven Flores to the Town Council. With a second by Commissioner Hejl, the motion carried unanimously.

**Human Resources – Proceed with Filling the Chief of Police Position** – Commissioner Farris made a motion to proceed with advertising for applicants for the position of Chief of Police. With a second by Commissioner Long, the motion carried unanimously.

**Human Resources – Reserve Officer Program** – Commissioner Long made a motion to proceed with the hiring of four (4) additional reserve officers and that those positions be offered first to the candidates on the Final Examination Register. With a second by Commissioner Farris, the motion carried unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Revised G.O. 11.01 – Care and Use of Departmental Owned Vehicles** – Commissioner Farris made a motion to amend General Order 11.01 – Care and Use of Departmental Owned Vehicles, to state that unmarked police vehicles will be limited to a 50 mile radius and all marked vehicles will be limited to Lake County, Indiana. With a second by Commissioner Vale, the motion carried unanimously.

**Grant Application for Departmental Equipment** – Commissioner Hejl made a motion to authorize Officer Steven Rudzinski to proceed with the ordering of new equipment, namely a state of the art radar unit and two (2) Genius K-band radios for the Police Department under the proposed grant application. The total cost of equipment is \$6,435.00 with the Police Department's responsibility being \$1,608.75. With a second by Commissioner Long, the motion carried unanimously.

**Uniform Change for Ranking Officers (Sergeants and Above)** – Commissioner Vale made a motion to change the uniform policy for sergeants wherein the sergeants will wear white shirts when working the day shift and on the afternoon and night shifts, white shirts will be optional. With a second by Commissioner Farris, the motion carried unanimously.

**Indiana NENA (9-1-1) Fund Raiser – Cell Phone Recycling – Advertise in Newspaper** - Commissioner Dodaro advised that donations are coming in very slowly and stated he would like to advertise the program in the newspaper in an effort to inform residents of this program. Commissioner Hejl then made a motion to authorize advertising of the Indiana NENA (9-1-1) Fund Raiser involving cell phone recycling. With a second by Commissioner long, the motion carried unanimously.

**Chase Stingers** – Commissioner Hejl stated she received a memorandum from Corporal Timothy Gardenhire reference the Stinger Spike System, which is a tire deflation device system that slows down and puts an end to dangerous, high-speed pursuits that endangers pedestrians, as well as motorists. In the last month, St. John has had three (3) high-speed pursuits that came through Town, each of which could have resulted in injury or the loss of innocent life due to the pursuit. There are four (4) ways to stop a pursuit; those being:

1. Lights and Sirens
2. Stop Stick (Chase Stingers)
3. PIT Maneuver (Precision Immobilization Technique)
4. Deadly Force

The St. John Police Department has Options #1 and #4 available to the officers, and Corporal T. Gardenhire, being an EVOG Instructor, is the only officer of the St. John Police Department who is certified to perform the PIT Maneuver, which involves contact between two (2) vehicles, causing the violator to spin out. Corporal Gardenhire states in his memorandum that he believes the acquisition of the chase stingers would provide the officers with another tool to put an end to a possibly deadly high-speed pursuit. The 15' Trooper Spike System costs approximately \$450.00 per system, and it was suggested that a set be purchased for each squad car. Some discussion ensued. Commissioner Farris made a motion to approve the purchase of the 15' Trooper Spike System for each full-time patrol officer's squad car. With a second by Commissioner Vale, the motion carried unanimously.

**Revise G.O. 16.01 – Authorized Firearms & Ammunition** – Commissioner Long made a motion to authorize the officers, who so desire, to trade in their current Department issued Glock Model 35 for an upgraded version (Model 22) at a cost of \$50.00 each, which is to be paid for by the individual officers. With a second by Commissioner Farris, the motion carried unanimously.

**ANY AND ALL**

Town Council Member Jerri Teibel commented that tonight was the first she has heard about the Indiana NENA (9-1-1) Fund Raiser – Cell Phone Recycling. She stated she had no idea this program existed. Commissioner Dodaro advised that this matter came before the Commission at last month's regular meeting. Mrs. Teibel suggested that this program be included on the Town's website and stated she would bring the matter to the Network Analyst's attention.

Mr. James Curran, of 8780 Patterson Street, advised that the problem of overweight trucks traveling on Patterson Street is still continuing. Mr. Curran stated that Patterson Street has been ruined by this truck traffic. Construction has started up again, and the truck traffic on Patterson Street has greatly increased again. The trucks are carrying heavy equipment and heavy loads of sand and stone. The most frequent times of this truck traffic is between 7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. Mr. Curran stated he had brought this matter to the ex-Police Chief's attention prior to his departure, but he never saw any efforts made by the St. John Police Department to curtail these ordinance violations. Much discussion ensued, inclusive of discussion regarding the fines for overweight truck violations. Commissioner Dodaro suggested installing signs on Patterson Street that include the fines for violations. More discussion ensued, including discussion on who to cite (driver and/or company) and the fee schedule. It was determined that the ordinance governing this matter needs to be reviewed and possibly amended. Assistant Chief Johnsen advised he would make the patrol officers aware of this problem and they will make a conscientious effort to curtail these ordinance violations.

Assistant Chief Johnsen commented that he feels the Reserve Program the St. John Police Department has is a good program. However, there is a problem with the current program; that being it is taking almost nine (9) months to get new reserves trained and out on their own. Due to this being a volunteer program wherein there is no compensation, it makes it even more difficult to get the reserves through the program in a timely manner. Assistant Chief Johnsen advised he is going to send out letters to the eight (8) current reserve officers and inform them that the Reserve Program is not a social club. Instead, it is a privilege to a member of the Reserve Program and if their schedules do not allow for participation on a regular basis, then they need to turn in their equipment and resign.

Further, Assistant Chief Johnsen stated he feels the FTO Program for the Reserves needs to be tweaked. Assistant Chief Johnsen then explained the changes in training that he feels are necessary, and he stated he felt it would be the training should concentrate on the following four (4) main areas:

1. Safety for the Reserve Officer.
2. Safety for the officers that the Reserve is working with.
3. Traffic laws.
4. Defensive tactics and firearms.

Assistant Chief Johnsen stated he spoke with the FTOs, and they are in favor in modifying the training program for the reserves in an effort to shorten the process and basically, to work on just “the meat and potatoes” of the job. Some discussion ensued.

Assistant Chief Johnsen commented on another area that he feels needs attention regarding the reserves; that being: firearms training. Basically, if the reserve officer does not come to firearms training, then they are out. He stated the liability issue here is too great and if the reserve cannot qualify, then “the juice is not worth the squeeze.” More discussion ensued.

### **MEETING SCHEDULE**

The next Regular Meeting will be on Monday, May 10, 2004, with the Work Study Session being held at 7:00 P.M. and the Regular Meeting at 7:30 P.M. in the Town Hall meeting room. Any and all other Executive Sessions will be advertised pursuant to law.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Long made a motion for adjournment. With a second by Commissioner Vale, the meeting was adjourned.

Town of St. John, Lake County  
Indiana, Board of Metropolitan  
Police Commissioners

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Rose Hejl, Secretary

ATTEST:

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Joan M. Kolodziej, Recording Secretary