

ST. JOHN POLICE COMMISSION

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING ON FEBRUARY 8, 2005

The February 2005 Regular Meeting of the Board of Metropolitan Police Commissioners of the Town of St. John was held on February 8, 2005 at 7:00 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, Rose Hejl, and Ronald Vale. Also present was Police Chief Fred Frego. Commissioners Donald Farris and Robert Long were not present at tonight's meeting. Attorney Timothy Kuiper, from the Law Firm of Austgen, Decker and Phillips, was also not present at tonight's meeting.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MONTH'S MINUTES

Commissioner Hejl made a motion to approve and accept the minutes from the January 10, 2005 Regular Meeting as written. With a second by Commissioner Vale, the motion carried unanimously (3-0).

CORRESPONDENCE / COMMUNICATIONS

There were no items of "Correspondence or Communications" brought before the Commission at tonight's meeting.

POLICE DEPARTMENT'S MONTHLY REPORT

Chief Frego read the monthly report for January 2005. Chief Frego stated that from January 1, 2005 through January 31, 2005, the members of the St. John Police Department logged 20,729 duty miles and responded to 364 incidents. The investigation of these incidents resulted in 3 adult arrests with a total of 5 charges, and 2 juvenile arrests with a total of 2 charges. There were 138 traffic citations issued along with 69 written warnings and 19 parking violations. The grand total of citations issued during the month of January 2005 is 226 citations. Vehicle thefts totaled \$6,500.00 during the month of January 2005. All other thefts totaled \$11,101.00. Total value of recovered property was \$20.00. In response to Commissioner Dodaro's question, Chief Frego stated that the losses reported during the month of January 2005 were mainly due to thefts from construction sites. Regarding grant activity, Chief Frego stated that the officers of the St. John Police Department, while working the OPO / DUI Taskforce Grants, issued 34 traffic citations and 118 written warnings for a total of 152 citations being issued on the grants during the month of January 2005. The investigation of these violations resulted in 6 adult arrests with 12 charges being filed and 0 juvenile arrests with 0 charges being filed on the grants for the month of January 2005. Chief Frego advised that the grant report has been modified slightly so that the individual charges are now listed.

2004 YEAR END REPORT

Chief Frego stated that the report contains some notable items, as listed in his letter. There were declines in several major areas, which was the national trend as well. Chief Frego noted that the

incidents indicate a substantial increase over 2003. While it is true that incidents did rise in 2004, Chief Frego stated the number is higher than it actually should be as the former chief of police was piling on the numbers (i.e., an officer taking his squad for a car wash was classified as an incident, a traffic stop was considered an incident, a request for a 10-28 was an incident, etc.). The former chief was attempting to create a "human CAD system." However, this practice was discontinued in early 2004. Some discussion ensued. Chief Frego stated the number of tickets issued increased in 2004; however, an additional officer was on the street, as well as Officer Andersen was on the street for the entire year. The number of duty miles driven was up approximately by 30,000 miles. The expense for the fuel consumed was up by approximately \$10,000 over 2003. Chief Frego stated that in 2003, the numbers were based on human reporting wherein 2004, the majority of the numbers are metered through the new system. Chief Frego stated it is his opinion that there will be a better comparison at the end of Year 2005 than this year, and it looks to him like something was going on with the gas consumption in the past. Some discussion ensued. The Commissioners commended Chief Frego for an excellent report, and complimented all who worked on compiling this report. Chief Frego stated the report indicates the officers are doing a good job. The officers had more arrests and more incidents in 2004. Crime has gone down in Town, and Chief Frego stated he believes this is a result of the "zone" system that he implemented with patrol officers in 2004.

OLD BUSINESS

There were no matters of "Old Business" brought before the Commission at tonight's meeting.

REPORTS

Budget – There was nothing new to report on this topic.

Physical Plant – Chief Frego stated he has viewed a copy of the preliminary plans, and it is his opinion that the floor plans are excellent and very impressive. Chief Frego advised there have been several meetings scheduled with the architect to fine tune the structure. The Police Department will have a lot of room, and there will be a large area that will be finished at a later date, which will provide future offices, storage, etc., that the department will need later down the road. Commissioner Dodaro asked Chief Frego to have the blueprints available for viewing at the Commission's regular meeting in March. Chief Frego stated that it is hoped to break ground on the new police station by the end of 2005.

HUMAN RESOURCES

New Officer Update – Chief Frego stated the two (2) new officers, Officer N. Stamate and Officer M. Moffitt, are currently attending on-site training in Michigan City, Indiana. On Monday, February 14, 2005, they begin their training at the Academy in Plainfield, Indiana. Commissioner Hejl stated she knew the addition of two (2) officers would be beneficial during the week as there would be more officers on duty, but she was wondering if their presence would be beneficial on the weekends and evenings as well. Chief Frego stated that one officer each would be assigned to the two existing crews, which would strengthen the shifts. Chief Frego advised that just one extra officer really does make a world of difference as far as granting personal time, compensatory time, vacation time, etc., and it would assist the Department with having a minimum of two (2)

officers working at all times. Commissioner Hejl was advised the schedule has been made to include the new officers. However, the two new officers are on 8-hour days while they are at the academy. Upon their return from the academy, they will be in a very short FTO Program. Some discussion ensued.

Commissioner Dodaro inquired as to how many applications for Reserve Police Officer have been received to date. Chief Frego stated the response has been minimal with maybe only 6 or so applications having been received. Some discussion ensued. Chief Frego advised that advertising in the newspapers was considered until it was learned how expensive that would be. Applications are being accepted through February 21, 2005.

NEW BUSINESS

There were no items of "New Business" brought before the Commission at tonight's meeting.

CHIEF'S COMMENTS

Chief Frego advised that he attended a 2-day conference in Indianapolis, with Rocky Killion of Lake Central High School. The Justice Department was responsible for providing this conference. Chief Frego stated the conference was excellent and very informative. The conference was about "Missing and Exploited Children, and it focused on the School Resource Officer. Chief Frego stated that Rocky Killion does realize the importance of having an officer in the school. Chief Frego advised that the people involved with this conference were at Columbine a week before it happened. They advised that statistics show an ideal school population is 1200 students. Lake Central High School has approximately 2700-2800, which, in their words, is too large of a school to control, especially without an officer inside. Chief Frego stated he has voiced his opinion to the powers that be, and he feels Schererville and Dyer should be involved with supporting an officer in school, since a good portion of the school's population comes from their towns. Chief Frego stated he hopes the school corporation can find a way to re-implement this program. The Justice Department does provide a 4-day training program that both the chief of police and the school resource officer attend. Some discussion ensued.

Chief Frego advised he met with Mr. Tim Moore, owner of a surveillance camera service, and he is in the process of proposing a surveillance system at Lake Central High School. This system would include the installation of monitors at the St. John Police Department so that the Police Department could monitor the school should a situation be in progress at that location. Mr. Moore has just completed a similar installation at the Merrillville High School and the Merrillville Police Department. There would be basically no cost, or very little cost, to the St. John Police Department for this surveillance system. Some discussion ensued.

Chief Frego commented he attended the Indiana Chiefs of Police conference last week. He stated he found the conference very interesting. There were approximately 200 chiefs in attendance, with only a few Lake County chiefs being present.

Commissioner Vale asked if there was anything new to report on the vests for the officers. Commissioner Vale expressed concern that the grant providing monies for the vests would expire soon. Chief Frego explained that the material in the vests they were considering was found to be faulty. Further, Chief Frego explained that this matter has been put "on the back burner" as

they have been busy with the new squad cars. Chief Frego stated the new squad cars have been striped, the radios are installed, and they are just waiting for the lights. Chief Frego advised that the lights are LEDs, similar to Squad 14's lights. Chief Frego advised that the original LED lights ordered from Federal Signal cost approximately \$2500 each. While he was at the conference in Indianapolis, he met a representative from Federal Signal who showed him a different LED light that was almost identical to the lights on order, but they cost \$800 less. Chief Frego stated he cancelled the original order, and they are now waiting for the arrival of the less expensive lights. Some discussion ensued.

ANY AND ALL

Ms. Joan Kolodziej invited the Commission to a surprise luncheon for Commander Frank Chapranda that was going to be held on Thursday, February 10, 2005, at 11:30 A.M. in the Police Department's Training Room. The luncheon was to celebrate Commander Chapranda's 30th anniversary with the St. John Police Department.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments received from the public.

MEETING SCHEDULE

The next Regular Meeting will be on Monday, March 14, 2005. There will be no Work Study Session held on March 14, 2005, so the Regular Public Meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. Any and all other Executive Sessions will be advertised pursuant to law.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Hejl 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

Rose Hejl, Secretary

ATTEST:

Joan M. Kolodziej, Recording Secretary