

## **ST. JOHN POLICE COMMISSION**

### **MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING APRIL 14, 2014**

The April 2014 Regular Meeting of the Board of Metropolitan Police Commissioners of the Town of St. John was held on April 14, 2014 at 6:30 P.M., as advertised, pursuant to law. Commissioner Vale called the meeting to order promptly at 6:30 P.M. 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, Ronald Vale, Frank Chapranda, Paul Haluska, Rose Hejl, and Robert Long. Also present were Chief of Police Fred Frego and Town Councilman Kenneth Gembala. Town Council President Mike Forbes was also in attendance. No legal representation was in attendance at the meeting.

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

**March 10, 2014 Regular Meeting** - Commissioner Chapranda moved to approve the minutes as written from the March 10, 2014 Regular Meeting. With a second by Commissioner Haluska, the motion carried unanimously (5-0).

### **CORRESPONDENCE / COMMUNICATIONS**

There were no items of "Correspondence/Communications" at tonight's meeting.

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

Chief Frego read the monthly report for March 2014. Chief Frego stated that from March 1, 2014 through March 31, 2014, the members of the St. John Police Department logged 19,515 miles and responded to 434 law incidents. The investigation of these incidents led to 21 adult arrests with 35 charges being filed, and 0 juvenile arrests with 0 charges being filed. There were 288 traffic citations issued along with 56 written warnings for a total of 344 citations being issued during the month of March 2014 by the officers of the St. John Police Department. Also during the month of March, vehicle thefts totaled \$0.00, and all other thefts totaled \$1,000.00. The total value of recovered property was \$0.00.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

**Police Department's Accreditation Process** – Commissioner Vale advised this topic was covered during the Work Study Session that was held prior to the start of tonight's meeting. Those in attendance at the Work Study Session, which began at 6:00 P.M., were Commissioners Ron Vale, Frank Chapranda, Pau Haluska, Rose Hejl and Bob Long, along with Chief Frego and Town Councilman Mike Forbes and Ken Gembala.

**HUMAN RESOURCES**

**New Hire** – Chief Frego advised at last month's meeting, the Commission was informed that a conditional offer of employment was made to, and accepted by, the next candidate on the list; namely, Ronald Olson. Mr. Olson has been approved by PERF and is currently scheduled to be sworn in at the Town Council's Regular Meeting scheduled for Thursday, April 24, 2014, at 7:00 P.M.

**Sergeant's Test** – Chief Frego stated he still would like to have the Sergeant's test, but his question was whether the Commission had decided to use the same test as last time, or were they considering going somewhere else for testing. The firm used last time was Stannard and Associates, which is endorsed by the Indiana Chiefs of Police Association, and the test was very comprehensive. The officers were given a couple of months to study for the test. Commissioner Haluska commented both the Lake County Police Department and the Schererville Police Department used Police Consultants, Inc. Commissioner Long asked Chief Frego if he had reviewed the test used previously, as he knew people struggled with the test. Chief Frego commented the people who struggled were the people who did not study. Commissioner Long stated he looked at the test and thought it was going to be easier than it was, and he felt it was a tough exam. Chief Frego stated the test should be tough. Commissioner Long stated he agreed the test should be tough, but he wanted to know if Chief Frego thought it was fair. Commissioner Hejl advised study materials were provided for the officers who were taking the test, and they were given four (4) months to study. Chief Frego stated the books were purchased by the Department for the officers taking the test. Chief Frego stated he is a firm believer that they need a tough test.

Chief Frego advised there are only three (3) officers eligible to take the Sergeant's test. All three (3) officers have received at least the minimal 40 hours of supervisor training. Chief Frego stated he has no problem using Stannard and Associates again, but he did not know what the Commission wanted to do this time since they Commission was present at the last testing. Commissioner Long stated he could tell who did not study for the test, but he felt the question was whether the officers had enough time to prepare with their current work load and the amount of hours needed to study. Commissioner Long commented he did not recall the amount of books that were involved. Chief Frego stated there were three (3) books provided, and the officers had three (3) months to prepare. Also, Chief Frego commented the officers did not have to study the entire book, as it was noted as to what chapters of the book were on the test.

Commissioner Long stated since Chief Frego felt the officers had proper study materials and ample time to prepare, they should agree to do it again with Stannard and Associates. Commissioner Haluska stated County did the same thing, and there never were any problems. Further, Commissioner Haluska commented if they (the officers) are serious about this, they are going to study, and they are going to learn it. The officers are going to take notes, and then they will go over those notes. Commissioner Long commented that all the men are adults, and they should take the time to study; however, he wanted to make sure the Commission coaches them appropriately because one of the biggest failures the Commission could have would be not assisting the officers enough to help them achieve their goals. Commissioner Long suggested the possibility of a couple of study sessions being scheduled with persons who have taken the test previously in an effort to aid the officers in studying and preparing for the test. Commissioner Haluska stated he could give the officers some clues on how to study and how to

prepare but unless he reads all the books, he would not be able to help them with the particular items they need to study. Some discussion ensued.

Commissioner Long queried as to how many officers took the test the last time. It was determined that four (4) officers took the test, and two (2) passed and two (2) failed. Some discussion was held regarding the scoring of the test (pass/fail, minimum score, seniority, military points, etc.). Commissioner Haluska stated points could be assigned according to the score the officer receives on the test. Sergeant Turturillo, who was one of the officers to take the test previously and who was present in the audience, was asked what he thought about the scoring of the test. Sergeant Turturillo stated he felt it would be okay if they used the score that is received on the test to assign points. Sergeant Turturillo felt if the Commission does a "pass/fail," then there is no list. More discussion ensued.

Commissioner Chapranda stated feedback he had received indicated the officers were expecting to be tested on material related to the St. John Police Department, such as general orders, to demonstrate their knowledge of the Department itself. Commissioner Chapranda added the officers felt the test that was used came out of "left field." Commissioner Long stated the officers who felt like that were the ones that did not study. Chief Frego stated it would be impossible to incorporate the St. John Police Department's Policies and Procedures in the test from Stannard and Associates. Chief Frego suggested questions about the Department's Policies and Procedures could be incorporated into the Oral Interviews. More discussion ensued.

Commissioner Vale stated the Commission agreed the test from Stannard and Associates is the test the Commission will continue to use for the Sergeant's Test. As far as scoring, the Commission decided to use the criteria in the upcoming Promotion Policy that is being written as part of the Department's Accreditation. Sergeant Turturillo advised the Commission could utilize the criteria even though it had not yet been approved by the Commission. With utilizing the new Promotion (scoring) criteria, Chief Frego stated there is no pass/fail on the test. More discussion ensued.

Commissioner Vale stated the Commission had approved Chief Frego to proceed with the Sergeant's Test months ago; therefore, there was no reason to vote on the matter at tonight's meeting. Chief Frego stated he had wanted to know the Commission's preference on the testing process. Commissioner Long suggested when the books are passed out for the test, the Commission be given the responsibility of providing the officers the instructions for the test, in order to avoid the complaints that were received last time after the test. Further, Commissioner Long stated it was just standard operating procedure to complain about the test when people fail the test. By having the Commission handle the testing and instructions for the test, this would allow the officers to come to the Commission with their complaints about why they failed rather than go to the Chief or other people. Commissioner Haluska commented that someone is always going to complain that it is unfair. More discussion ensued.

In response to Chief Frego's question, the Commission confirmed it would be up to Chief Frego to determine the timeframe for the test. Chief Frego stated since summer is approaching, the Sergeant's test will be held off until the end of summer, maybe the end of August, when most of the vacations are over with, as he felt the officers will be too distracted at this time to study and take the test.

**NEW BUSINESS**

There were no matters of "New Business."

**CHIEF'S COMMENTS**

Chief Frego stated he had not more comments for tonight's meeting.

**ANY AND ALL**

There were no matters of "Any and All."

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chief Frego stated he would like to thank Sergeant James Turturillo for all the work he has done on the Accreditation. Chief Frego said he has been alongside Sergeant Turturillo working on the policies, and it has been a long process with a long ways yet to go. Further, Chief Frego added it is going to be even more work maintaining the Accreditation. The Commission thanked Sergeant Turturillo for his work.

Sergeant Turturillo stated regarding the Sergeant's test, the test did not have lot of the Department's policies on it, but when he went back on the road, he did utilize some of the knowledge he gained while studying for the test. Sergeant Turturillo stated he felt the information on the test is very important knowledge an officer needs to have if they are a first line supervisor.

**MEETING SCHEDULE**

The next Regular Meeting should be held on Monday, May 12, 2014. The Regular Public Meeting will begin at 6:30 P.M. There will be a Work Study Session only if deemed necessary. Any and all Executive Sessions will be advertised pursuant to law.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Haluska moved for adjournment. With a second by Commissioner Chapranda, the motion carried (5-0). The meeting was adjourned at 6:57 P.M.

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

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Paul Haluska, Secretary

ATTEST:

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Joan M. Gorcos, Recording Secretary