

C.A.B. MEETING MINUTES – July 21, 2021

Present:

Jim Stabler
Chief David Birk
Sgt. Earl Nelson
Det Jason Wargo
Officer Holly Owens
Rick Pearce
Rev. Enorris Thomas
Jeff Wilder
Paul Gomia
Dora Bronston
Katrina Wilson
Vanessa Clark
Mike Sullivan (citizen)

Excused Absences:

Dr. Celeste Didlick-Davis
Ruth Kelly
Dan Allnutt
Stefan Wannemacher

Jelani Johnson *(unexcused)

- Jim Stabler called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone in attendance at 1732 hours.
- The minutes from the May 21st meeting were approved.

FOP REPORT

- Det. Jason Wargo gave the update on negotiations between the City and the FOP in reference to emergency pay during the pandemic. The final arguments are set for July 23rd. There has also been another grievance filed over the disciplinary action of an officer.

CHIEF'S REPORT

- Chief Birk expressed how much Ed Dobrozsi will be greatly missed due to his sudden passing. Ed was an outstanding community leader that served on several different boards and clubs, as well as ran the annual Fenwick Festival. The community lost a great man & friend.
- A new Vice-Chairman of the Board will be nominated at the next meeting.
- We have two new Patrol Officers in the FTO program since the last meeting. Officer Brian Singleton and Officer Jonathan Hilgendorf both have military experience and are progressing very well.
- Our next Police Officer examination will be the third week of September.
- Sgt. Nelson will become the head supervisor in the Detective section upon the retirement of Major Reeve in September. This will phase out one of the Deputy Chief positions and replace it with a Patrol Officer. We may also be receiving funding from the Middletown Municipal Court for an additional traffic officer on the street.
- Excessive speeding is of concern in our city. OSP wrote 234 tickets throughout the City in three days. We need to be a bigger deterrent against speeding.
- The C.O.P. Unit, Officer Owens & Officer Birch, have began to work with Victoria Butler from One City Recovery & The Hope Line, to start building relationships with the homeless, particularly downtown. It was reiterated that it is not illegal to be homeless. You cannot be trespassed off for solely being in a public place (i.e. Governor's Square, public City parks).

- Today legal updates training with the Butler County Prosecutor's Office was held over changes in laws pertaining to search and seizure.
- Our four Police K9s will have their State certification on August 11th.
- Chief Birk gave the Discipline Report that consisted of written reprimands given to an Officer due to a traffic accident and a Sergeant for extensive lunch breaks. There was also a one-day suspension an officer received for Operation of Vehicles & Motor Vehicle Pursuits.
- Chief Birk went over our current pursuit policy. Two videos were shown as illustrations.
- Officer Owens reminded everyone of National Night Out on Tuesday, August 3, 2021, at Smith Park. Please get the word out and if any groups are interested, have them contact Holly directly. There will be a CAB table once again, please let her know your t-shirt sizes ASAP.
- Neighborhood Watch at Central Connections is not officially up and running again yet.
- Our homeless outreach effects have interacted with 80 people so far in the past month and a half. Some have been referred to treatment and some the Hope House. Officer Owens advised the Board that the Crisis Care Committee will begin their monthly meetings next month.
- We are looking for a candidate to fill the vacancy of one of the Part-Time Court Liaison positions that will work three days a week. If anyone has an interest in any of our positions at the MPD, please have them fill out a job interest card on the City website: www.cityofmiddletown.org.
- Sgt. Nelson advised that the Detective section is still seeing numerous stolen catalytic converters. There are also several guns in the City. The guns we get rid of are sent to a Federal Firearms dealer (i.e. Kieslers or Vances) to be parted out. In some instances, our officers buy back their duty weapons from the dealers.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

- Mike Sullivan inquired as to when the last use of force and pursuit policy revisions were completed and why our complaint form does not have our departmental name on it. We do not put "police" on our complaint form because some people feel intimidated by that term. Several other police departments do not either for the same reason. Mr. Sullivan commended us in reference to our pursuit policy. He also commented that most people that are homeless are that way because of self-medication. Chief Birk advised that 88% of the homeless have a mental illness or chemical dependency, or both. Sullivan also stated that the current CAB roster and minutes need attention in the City's internet page.

BOARD COMMENTS

- Jeff Wilder is interested in seeing a Junior Kids Police Academy once a year. Officer Owens advised that she can be contacted to give tours of the department and speak to the kids.
- Katrina Wilson expressed her appreciation for the shared videos. The illustrations gave a better understanding of the situation. Chief Birk urged the Board to call anytime there is a question.

The meeting adjourned at 1840 hours. The next board meeting will be **Wednesday, September 15, 2021, at 1730 hours.**

Respectfully Submitted,
Vanessa Clark