

**Southern Police Commission
Monthly Meeting
February 7, 2018**

A public meeting of the Southern Police Commission was held on Wednesday, February 7, 2018 at the New Freedom Borough Council Chambers, 49 East High Street, New Freedom, PA 17349.

Commission Members Present: Robert Herzberger, Buck Buchanan, John Trout, Bruce Merrill, Roy Burkins, Larry O'Brien, John-Paul Whitmore (seated alternate), and Andrew Stewart

Solicitor: Peter Ruth

Police Department Staff: Chief James Boddington, Financial Administrator Gail Prego, Officer Heffner, Sgt. Teague, Officer Hanson

Members Seated in Audience: Mike Sharkey

Alternate Members Present: Nick Wagner

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Trout at 19:00 with the pledge of allegiance to the flag and a moment of silence for fallen police officers, Marshalls, firefighters, and EMT's who lost their lives in the line of duty.

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Trout introduced Andrew Stewart from Glen Rock Borough and swore him in as a Commissioner. Financial Interest Statement forms are available to each Commissioner and Chairman Trout asked each Commissioner to complete their forms. A list of Commissioners contact information has been provided to each Commissioner.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Douglas Brent of New Freedom had a question regarding the New Freedom withdrawal and efforts to establish common ground. Solicitor Ruth answered that the decision to withdraw is New Freedom's and that the other municipalities are committed to the continuance of SRPD. The question should be addressed to New Freedom Borough officials rather than the Commission. Doug asked if a figure had been arrived at regarding the cost to withdraw. Solicitor Ruth answered that a separation agreement is being drawn up with a July 1 deadline. Analysis of the details are work in process. Commissioner Buchanan answered that New Freedom's Council meeting is next Monday and that those questions be direct to them at that time.

Don Miller from New Freedom asked if there was anyone at the meeting from New Freedom that could give an idea of why New Freedom was withdrawing. Commissioner Merrill answered that they were concerned over financial stability, stability of the staff, and that they want to affiliate with a larger department. Mr. Miller mentioned that Southwestern was not a larger department. Commissioner Merrill answered that, with a merger, that department would have doubled. If they'd merged with Northern it would be much larger. Mr. Miller asked if the financial concerns were the consideration or the safety of the public. Commissioner Merrill answered that public safety is a concern and that's why we have a police department. There's been a police department in New Freedom since July of 1873 and that New Freedom expects to have a police department on an on-going basis. Mr. Miller stated that he doesn't agree at all and provided analogies as he sees them. There was further discussion.

Commissioner Merrill said that SRPD has done a good job for the community and that their concerns are for New Freedom's future needs.

Commissioner O'Brien said that changes to SRPD require agreement of all of the municipalities. If there was agreement that the other municipalities agreed that a larger force was appropriate then New Freedom might be served by that as well.

The Chairman recognized Brian Antkowiak. Brian asked why New Freedom residents were picking up more of the tab on police services than Shrewsbury Borough. Commissioner O'Brien and Chairman Trout answered that the funding formula has been changed and that Brian's information is out of date. Commissioner Buchanan provided an overview of the previous funding formula and the changes that have been made that were intended to mitigate the issue.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- Chairman Trout requested a motion to allow the alternate members to attend the Executive Session. Commissioner Merrill made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Herzberger. There was an Aye vote to confirm the alternate members attending the executive session. The Commission members and alternates moved their executive session to another conference room.
- The executive session began at 19:14 and ended at 19:50. A personnel matter had been discussed.

REVIEW & APPROVAL OF JANUARY 2018 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

An addition was made to the Chairman's announcements that Bruce Merrill was now a commission member and that Jeff Blum as now an alternate member. A motion was made by Commissioner Buchanan, seconded by Commissioner Burkins, that the minutes be approved with the changes. The motion was approved by an Aye vote of members who voted.

REVIEW & APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 2017 EXPENDITURES

- Expenses for December 2017 were presented with Chief Boddington asking Finance Administrator Prego to lead the discussion.
- We were under budget on health insurance.
- The number of mobile computers is being downsized.
- Payroll was up slightly due to holiday premium.
- Overtime has been managed by the Sergeants to keep it down. The Sergeants were recognized for their efforts in this regard.
- A motion was made by Commissioner Buchanan, seconded by Commissioner Herzberger, to approve expenditures for check numbers 10645 through 10681 in the amount of \$185,467.08 for the month of December. The motion carries with an Aye vote unanimously.
- Chairman Trout discussed a letter that may have been received from New Freedom Borough by the member Municipalities. It has to do with charges for the services of Consultant Smeal. The issue has been resolved and no action is necessary other than informing the municipal administrators of that status.
- Commissioner Buchanan opened the vehicle status discussion. The plan had been trading 2 used for one new this fiscal year. The discussion was opened due to New Freedom's letter. Chairman Trout said that he'd been contacted by other Commission members regarding avoiding major purchases. Commissioner Merrill suggested postponing such a purchase until the situation settles a bit. Commissioner Herzberger said that we don't know how many officers we'll have and what the vehicle configuration will be to support that size force. He's in favor of waiting. Commissioner Whitmore suggested that we expect to continue the department and that ultimately we'll need to continue with the vehicle replacement program that's been established. Commissioner Herzberger asked about the status of the vehicles and if a

breakdown could result in being unable to operate or the potential of an accident. Chief Boddington explained that the vehicles are aging and that maintenance costs are increasing. Inspections find problems that require relatively expensive repairs. The matter will be discussed again at a subsequent meeting.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Boddington discussed the report that had been provided. It includes a 3 year average incident report for each municipality. There was a discussion of the 3 year report, including why there were more incidents in 2016. Chief Boddington explained that different time periods will have different incident count results due a variety of factors, including crime prevention efforts. Sgt. Teague provided details on how the changes in reporting have changed what's counted as in incident somewhat.

Chief Boddington explained that there's a slightly different format for significant call reporting.

Chief Boddington reported the following highlights:

- Shrewsbury Borough Jan 14 at 03:00 there was a robbery at the Rutter's at North Main Street and Plank Road. Investigation is ongoing.
- Last weekend in January there was an incident in Railroad Borough of an individual under the influence of LSD running down the street in just his underwear. It took 3 officers to subdue him, including the use of a Taser.
- The next night there was a response to a domestic with an intoxicated 20 y/o male. He got into a vehicle and ran into one of our police vehicles. This call required multiple officer response.
- There was a call that a subject was behind the Shrewsbury Elementary School with a rifle. There was a 3-officer response as it's difficult to establish a perimeter with only one officer. It turned to be a youngster with a pellet rifle who was supposedly hunting.

Chief Boddington reported that Sgt. Teague had completed Police Executive Training and has received the certification. It's a 2 week course offered by Penn State.

Commissioner Merrill inquired about Detective Shafer. Chief Boddington reported that he's back on light duty. He's continuing with rehab.

Officer Storeman reinjured his right wrist in the altercation with the Railroad LSD incident. He's on light duty until that heals up.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

INSURANCE & PENSION

- No report.

PERSONNEL

- No report.

FACILITIES & EQUIPMENT

- We are looking for a different location for the police station. Several of us looked at the old Shrewsbury Library / Bank building and it will require considerable renovation. There's another property up for consideration in Shrewsbury Borough, and investigation will continue.

CONTROL AND TRACKING DOCUMENT

- No report.

Chairman Trout asked the Commissioners to continue to consider the committee(s) that they wish to be assigned to. Alternate Commissioner Whitmore has been in contact with him and there's been discussion with several others. Please send an email to Chairman Trout. He also asked members to consider assignment to the Contract Committee.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

- No action items.
- Keep in mind that the Chairman has the authority to assign Commissioners to committees so it's important that each Commissioner make their desires known to the Chairman.

OLD BUSINESS

- Commissioner Herzberger asked the Chief to start to form a suggested budget and plan based on \$600K less income due to the departure of New Freedom. This is to include staffing levels and number of vehicles given that we want 2 officers on duty at all times. He asked for information by March 1.
- There was discussion regarding facility costs. Alternatives include use of the old basement station in Stewartstown. The renter in what had been the new station in Stewartstown intends to stay there.
- The finance Committee was assigned: Commissioners Buchanan, Stewart, Herzberger and Merrill.
- There was further discussion regarding facility relocation.

NEW BUSINESS

- None

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Commissioner Buchanan, seconded by Commissioner Whitmore, to adjourn. The motion passed.