

Minutes of Copake Police Commission April 13, 2006

Attendance: Commissioner James Blass
Commission Member/Councilwoman Linda Gabaccia
Commission Member/Councilman Carl Ritchie
Police Chief Thomas Kane
Officer Dickie Michaels
Luann Varney

Commission nominated and unanimously appointed James Blass as Chairman.

Discussed the fact that by creating the three member Police Commission the Copake Town

Board had effectively shifted control of the Police Department to the Commission from the Town Board. Commissioner Blass had conferred with the Rosendale Police Department in regard to this issue.

Established that the regular monthly meeting of the Copake Police Commission would be the second Thursday of every month at 5:30 prior to the monthly Town Board Meeting. Councilwoman Gabaccia had already submitted the meeting time and date to the official town newspapers, the Register Star and the Independent for publication in the weekly calender.

Commissioners Ritchie and Gabaccia voted to hire Lu Ann Varney to the Copake Police Department. Commissioner James Blass recused himself from the vote.

Commission discussed the ticketing by Officer Jan Near of a 17 year old girl and her boyfriend near Copake Lake for public exposure. Commissioner Ritchie asked new hiree Lu Ann Varney how she would handle two kids making out in a car. Commissioner Blass explained that this was a violation and therefore the girl's name could be released to the paper. Commissioner Ritchie commented that since it was only a first offense they should have received only a warning. Commissioner Blass said the girl was only two weeks in age passed the point of it being a statutory rape. Commissioner Gabaccia pointed out that the girl in question was indeed 17 which made the statutory rape argument irrelevant. Commissioner Gabaccia also commented that the job of the police department is to "protect and serve" and that the case possibly required a softer touch. Commissioner Gabaccia raised the concept of Community Policing and its application to law enforcement in Copake.

Commission discussed the scheduling of the Memorial Day Parade for Saturday this year. Commissioner Blass indicated that Commander Arnold Anderson of the VFW sent out

notice of the parade without properly contacting the county or the Town of Copake. Chief Kane pointed out that everybody wants the parade on Monday. Commissioner Blass indicated that he had a letter from Mr. Anderson indicating what he wanted. Discussed the parade being on Monday from now on Commissioner Blass indicated that the parade had not been cleared with the Park Commission. Chief Kane commented on the problem of getting men for Saturday on such short notice. Chief Kane also emphasized that he needs men on Monday for flag placement. Commissioner Gabaccia asked Chief Kane how much notification he felt he needed for the scheduling of special events to obtain the necessary manpower. Chief Kane suggested two months. Police Commission unanimously voted to establish a policy of two month prior notification to the Police Commission for the scheduling of any special event. Commissioner Blass said he would speak to Mr. Anderson.

Commissioner Ritchie inquired about Commission badges and was informed they are not in yet.

Commission discussed speeding in the town of Copake.

Commissioner Gabaccia raised the issue of certification of all officers for breathalyzer and inquired if all officers were up to date. Chief Kane responded that everybody is current and that recertification takes place every two years. Certification for radar is to be scheduled with Chatham.

Commission discussed moving the Copake Police Commission to its new office at the police station. Commissioner Blass will maintain his office at Town Hall as inventory technician, but Police Commission will have its office in the Deputy Chief's office and the Deputy Chief will be asked to share the Chief's office.

Commissioner Blass raised the issue that the Police Department is paying rent to utilize space in the rescue squad building and that he hoped that since Commissioners Gabaccia and Ritchie toured the police station they were more aware of the need for a new building. Commissioner Gabaccia commented on the fact that the rent was \$850/month and that space was limited. The Commission will continue to examine the issue of a new building for the police department including its financing and location and the issue will ultimately have to be considered by the Town Board.

Commissioner Blass mentioned the white town car which is available for use for town business and also mentioned the need for storage space for vehicles.

Commissioner Blass informed the Commission that Supervisor Valentino had authorized the police department to work at Taconic Hills School and that the school pays the town police directly. The Commission discussed a contract for supplemental patrol. Commissioner Ritchie

inquired if man power at the school was for crowd control. Commissioner Blass said it was used for the Pow Wow, Earth Angels, and any special events and also for every home basketball games. Discussed that a fee cannot be put into the contract and that two officers would receive \$100. Commissioner Ritchie inquired about paying their mileage and stated that the officers could be paid directly. Commissioner Ritchie inquired about a record of hours and also commented that he felt members of the Town Board should not deduct for mileage. Mileage deduction is available whether using your own vehicle or not and is the standard mileage deduction.

Commisioner Gabaccia asked Chief Kane why the police department had exceeded its 2005 budget in the amount of \$13,000 for manpower. Chief Kane said he thought that was because of Town budget cuts to the department and that special details take manpower away from regular patrols. Commissioner Ritchie inquired if this overrun was the Town Board's fault for not budgetting properly. Chief Kane said, "we're going to run into it." Commissioner Blass said, "It's always somewhere." Chief Kane pointed out that Jan (Near) and Dickie (Michaels) have 2 grand forgeries and larcenies they have . been working on. Chief Kane said, "That's extra money right there." Officer Michaels commented that it's busy and good arrests take some hours. Commissioner Blass referred to problems with the budget process and suggested that Commissioners Gabaccia and Ritchie bring it to the Town Board.

Meeting adjourned.