

Town of Olive
County of Ulster
State of New York

Thursday, January 22, 2015

Minutes of the special workshop meeting of the Town Board and the Police Commission, held Thursday, January 22, 2015, 7:30 pm at the Town Meeting Hall in Shokan, NY.

Members Present: Sylvia Rozzelle, Supervisor
Scott Kelder, Board Member
James Sofranko, Board Member
Donald VanBuren, Board Member
Peter Friedel, Board Member

Recording Secretary: Dawn Giuditta, Town Clerk

Others Present: Rich Ostrander, Police Commissioner; Thomas Vasta, Police Chief; Bill Cook, Assessor

Sylvia Rozzelle, Town Supervisor, called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

Supervisor Rozzelle stated that this joint meeting was called for the purpose of getting on the same page between the Commission and the Town Board. Supervisor Rozzelle had a list of topics to be addressed concerning various issues.

Bills & Budget-

1. The Police Commissioners should be approving all expenditures and signing off on vouchers prior to being presented to Town Board. If the Town Board would like, the Police Commission Policy can be revised to include approving vouchers.
2. Items to be purchased should be approved by Commission and in the budget before they are bought. Telephone quote sheets should be used when necessary.
3. The State Bid # should be on the front of the voucher if a State Bid is used.
4. Approval should be given by the Commission for purchases of \$250.00 or more, if the item is not in the budget, Supervisor's Office might need to be contacted for availability of funds.

Personnel-

1. Pay vouchers need to be filled out by the employee and approved by Police Chief or Commissioner.
2. All Officers should be clocking in and out, altering time cards is not acceptable practice.
3. All payroll vouchers should be turned in on a timely manner for the pay period that one worked.

Personnel Issue-

1. Supervisor Rozzelle was concerned about an appearance of impropriety between Department Head & Subordinate. The issue is: Chief Vasta and Sergeant Buchinger are employed by the Ulster

County Sheriff Department with Sergeant Buchinger being Chief Vasta's supervisor at the County, and Chief Vasta being Sergeant Buchinger's Supervisor in Olive. Michael Richardson feels strongly that the Town Board be candid about the appearance of impropriety, and preferential treatment. Supervisor Rozzelle spoke with the County and there was no issue with them. The Town Board would like to make it very public and transparent that it could be a labor issue or possible employee issue.

Board Member Kelder stated that the issue would not necessarily arise between you two, but probably from one of the other officers.

2. Workplace Violence Prevention Policy requires Police transport monies to the bank, when full time officer is not on duty the officer filling in needs to stop at the Town Office for bank deposits.

Direction of Police Department-

Supervisor Rozzelle asked the Town Board members what direction they want the Police Department to go. She asked them what they wanted the public perception of the Police Department to be.

Board Member Sofranko responded to that question. He stated he believes that there is a need for a Police Department but it should be kept at a small scale or small scope. He has found that people like the personal touches with the Police Department. Board Member Sofranko had specific questions on the Police Commission Policy.

* The policy does not allow for a chairman. Do we want one or not? Supervisor Rozzelle stated that it was discussed previously and the Town Board agreed to leave it as a Commission of three with no chairperson.

* In going over the Emergency Management Plan Board Member Sofranko was concerned about all officers being compliant with NIMS/ICS training. Chief Vasta confirmed that all officers are in the process of getting certified.

* He was concerned about communication on how money is being spent, the Police Department should be consistent with budget line items. Chief Vasta stated he had discussed all purchases in the past with the Commission. He stated that with the new Police Commission he will make sure there is better communication.

Discussed Cost Saving Measures-

Board Member Kelder was concerned about duplicating training. Chief Vasta advised the Town Board that there is a training log for each officer so they won't duplicate training.

Board Member Kelder wanted to know if it was necessary to have 3 police cars. Board Member Sofranko suggested staggering the cars for the purpose of mileage.

Supervisor Rozzelle brought up the possibility of the Chief and the Sergeant doing a patrol. Board Member Sofranko requested getting a breakdown of calls for when the Olive Police are not on duty. Board Member Kelder requested response times.

Board Member Kelder would like to look into the cost of hiring another full timer.

Supervisor Rozzelle again asked the Town Board what direction the Board would like to see the Police Department go.

Board Member Kelder stated her question is hard to answer. We want them to be professional and as good as they can be, but I think at a Town level we have to see where that ends. Board Member VanBuren said we have to see how aggressive we want them to be. Board Member Sofranko stated it's very situational.

Police Chief Vasta responded that the officers they have right now are all up on their training and they know how to act in this Town. They all know when to be aggressive and when not to, but I need them to be able to respond as if they are working in the City of Newburgh when the need arises.

Board Member Sofranko stated that the issue is more of where does the Town want the Police Department to be overall. From my perspective it's a department that we want to keep somewhat contained we don't want it to keep expanding. We don't want to be chasing the neighboring town, if they get this and that, we don't need to be that kind of Police Department. I think it's very important for the Town Board to voice that to you guys and you to understand that very clearly on what we feel the tone of the Police Department should be in terms of sizing.

Supervisor Rozzelle suggested that the Police Commission change their meeting dates to the 4th Thursday of the month for the purpose of vouchers.

On a Van Buren/ Ostrander motion the Police Commission switched their meeting from the 3rd Thursday to the 4th Thursday at 7:00 pm. All Commissioners were in favor.

All pertinent business having been discussed on a Rozzelle/Kelder motion the Town Board meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

The meeting was called back to order at 8:44 pm on Friedel/VanBuren motion to approve the hiring of Joshua Caliendo as a new Police Officer.

AYE- VanBuren, Kelder, Sofranko, Friedel, Rozzelle **Nay**

The meeting was then closed on a Friedel/Rozzelle motion at 8:45 pm.

Dawn Giuditta, Town Clerk