

**Wolfeboro Police Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
COVID-19 Meeting - GoToMeeting  
May 7, 2020**

**Members present:** Chairman Steve Wood, Bob O'Brien and Vice-Chair Joe Balboni Jr.

**Staff present:** Chief Dean Rondeau, Captain Mark Livie, and Recording Secretary Sherri Moore

Chairman Wood called the GoToMeeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Chairman Wood read the following Preamble into the record:

**MEETING PREAMBLE DURING COVID-19 EMERGENCY**

*Good Evening, as Chairman of the Wolfeboro Police Commission, I am declaring that an emergency exists and I am invoking the provisions of RSA 91-A:2, III (b). Federal, state, and local officials have determined that gatherings of 10 or more people pose a substantial risk to our community in its continuing efforts to combat the spread of COVID- 19. In concurring with their determination, I also find that this meeting is imperative to the continued operation of town government and services, which are vital to public safety and confidence during this emergency. As such, this meeting will be conducted without a quorum of this body physically present in the same location.*

*At this time, I also welcome members of the public accessing this meeting remotely. Even though this meeting is being conducted in a unique manner under unusual circumstances, the usual rules of conduct and decorum apply. Any person found to be disrupting this meeting will be asked to cease the disruption. Should the disruptive behavior continue thereafter, that person will be removed from this meeting.*

*Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by Roll Call vote.*

*Let 's start the meeting by taking a Roll Call attendance. When each member states their name please state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know law.*

**The Commission Members gave a Roll Call vote, Chairman Steve Wood – present and alone in a room in his house, Commissioner Bob O'Brien – present and alone in a room in his house, Commissioner Joe Balboni, Jr. – present and alone in a room in his house, Chief Dean Rondeau – present and alone in a room in his house, Captain Mark Livie – present and alone in a room in his house, Sherri Moore – present and alone in a room in her house, Tom Bell – present and alone in a room in his house, Matthew Plache – present and alone in his car.**

**Consideration of Minutes**

**Chairman Steve Wood moved the Wolfeboro Police Commission to approve the public minutes from February 20, 2020. Commissioner Bob O'Brien seconded. Roll call vote: Joe Balboni Jr. – yes, Bob O'Brien – yes, and Steve Wood – yes, Members voted, the motion passed.**

## Activity Reports

Chief Rondeau reported on the following activity reports for the month of April:

**Incidents:** He reported 37 incidents.

**Offenses by month:** He reported 40 offenses last month.

**Arrest status report:** He reported a total of 16 arrests.

**Collisions YTD and Accidents by street name:** He reported 2 accidents during the month of April.

**Traffic stops YTD and location breakdown report:** He reported 25 traffic stops and 1 ticket was issued out of those stops.

**Personnel Analysis report:** The report is a synopsis of each officer's reporting for the month. Noted this report includes the Animal Control officer and you will note we track his activity.

**Detectives Report:** No change from previous months due to COVID-19.

**School Resource Officer (SRO):** Nothing to report due to school closing.

## Chief's Items

Chief Rondeau stated that Task Force Committees have been created to look at opening the Town. However, a lot relies on what the Governor says is the right thing to do. The first committee the Chief sits on is the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Committee and meets next week. The second committee is 'how to open the Town' and more to follow on that.

Decisions made by the Task Force Committees will be based in science, best practices and sound data and that info will be gathered not from just the US but from around the world.

Chief would like to credit Chief Norm Skantze for beginning the discussion with EOC members about how to re-open the Town.

## Captain's Items

None

## Questions from the Press

None

## Commissioner's Items

Chairman Wood stated that given the current state of the pandemic and not seeing a rise of cases in our area he would like to make a motion to discontinue this phase of the Hazardous Duty Pay as of 23:59 PM this Sunday, May 10, 2020.

**Chairman Bob O'Brien moved the Wolfeboro Police Commission to stop the Hazardous Duty Pay as of 23:59 PM, Sunday, May 10, 2020. Commissioner Joe Balboni, Jr. seconded. Roll call vote:**

**Joe Balboni, Jr. – yes, Bob O'Brien – yes, and Steve Wood – yes, Members voted, the motion passed.**

Chairman Wood spoke about the Police Officers being out in harm's way by nature of their job and now the COVID-19 pandemic has increased their potential for harm. In April, the FFCRA went into effect and had provisions for municipal employees to work from home for 10-12 weeks. However, what we were tasked to do to stay effective as a Police Department meant we had to take a vote to exempt employees from taking such provisions. Also impacting the vote is that we only have 14 officers and to maintain a level of safety that the community would expect we need each of them. Then we had to exempt the Dispatch from those provisions as well. Concurrently the Town Manager had to enact the same provisions for Firefighters.

The Hazardous Duty Pay was implemented, and the policy was activated on an as needed basis. We allowed up to \$100 per employee per week for those who were working in the building. We implemented this based on two reasons:

1. The Police and Dispatch employees were now exempt from taking the FFCRA provision.
2. As of April 13<sup>th</sup>, all Town employees were granted a paid day off as a mental health day, but the Police Department employees were exempt.

The Commissioners believe it was necessary to implement the Hazardous Duty Pay for the Department. It became effective April 13, 2020 and would run it for no more than 10 weeks and based on the threat of the pandemic. Immediate effects of the Hazardous Duty Pay were a morale booster since being denied other options. Impending retirements allowed for funds to be available to implement the Hazardous Duty Pay and the pay was an incentive for employees to come to work. It was the right thing to do.

We took a vote to step away from the policy and should the threat of the pandemic pick up in the fall we could re-enact it. We are not seeking any other money from the Town. What it equated to is about a ½ day paid per employee. It was threat based and we feel the threat has diminished.

## DISCUSSION

Commissioner O'Brien mentioned that the Hazardous Duty Pay showed our faith in the Department employees during this time.

Commissioner Balboni asked when will we open up the Town?

Chief Rondeau answered that it is not up to the Police Department but up to the Governor and the Town.

Commissioner Balboni asked what happens when all the people from other states come across the state line?

Chief Rondeau answered that the state line of Massachusetts and New Hampshire is still open. No indication it will be shutting down or closed. If people are coming to visit their property, then they have a right to. They should follow the rules and guidelines for the Town. We would hope that, for example, they would bring their own groceries or have them delivered...bring what you need. We should assume the best about people coming into our Town.

Commissioner O'Brien replied that the electric sign on route 28 is a great tool.

Chairman Wood stated that some people are following the guidance of the State and then there are those who are not bothered by the pandemic. We do not know everyone's story – when we see an out of state license plate it could be a worker or a rental car. We just don't know. We will get through this and we need to try to be positive and assume the best.

### **Board of Selectmen's Representative**

None.

### **Public Comment**

Budget Committee member Tom Bell said that he applauds what the Commission has done (by implementing the Hazardous Duty Pay). He feels once the public understands what was done, they will too. He also thanked the Commission for what they did.

Budget Committee member Matthew Plache said that it would be helpful to quantify the total cost for the Budget Committee.

*Being no further business before the Commission, Chairman Wood entertained a motion to enter non-public session to discuss personnel.*

**Commissioner Bob O'Brien moved the Wolfeboro Police Commission enter into non-public session RSA 91 A: 3, a to discuss personnel at 7:14 PM. Joe Balboni, Jr. seconded. Roll call vote: Joe Balboni Jr. - yes, Bob O'Brien-yes and Steve Wood-yes, the motion passed.**

The Commission re-entered public session at 7:43 PM.

*Being no further business before the Commission, Chairman Wood entertained a motion to adjourn.*

**Commissioner Bob O'Brien moved the Wolfeboro Police Commission to adjourn at 7:43 PM. Commissioner Joe Balboni Jr. seconded. Being none opposed, the motion passed.**

Respectfully submitted,

**Sherri Moore**