

MERRILLVILLE METROPOLITAN POLICE COMMISSION MINUTES
Merrillville Town Hall, 7820 Broadway

November 3, 2023

Regular Meeting called to order at 2:13 PM

IN ATTENDANCE: William Poling – Police Commissioner Chairman, Present
Petar Dragojevic – Police Commissioner Vice Chairman, Absent
Michael Rich – Police Commissioner, Present
Thomas Pawlak – Police Commissioner, Present
Gene Ward – Police Commissioner, Present
Michael Deppe – Police Commission Attorney, Absent
Josh Gonzales – Assistant Chief of Police, Present
Konstantinos Nuses – Chief of Police, Present
Lori Sanfratello – Chief’s Executive Director, Present

A quorum is present.

Commissioner Poling asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ITEM I Motion was made to accept the minutes of the Police Commission Meeting dated October 6, 2023, as presented.

Commissioner Rich made a motion to accept October 6, 2023, minutes and was seconded by Commissioner Ward.

Commissioner Poling asked if there was any discussion.

Commissioner Poling stated all in favor signify by saying, “Aye.”
All replied, “Aye.”
Commissioner Poling stated, “Opposed, same sign.”
Commissioner Poling stated, “Motion carries.”

ITEM II STATISTICS REPORT

None

ITEM III LETTERS OF CORRESPONDENCE

Commissioner Poling read a letter of Commendation from the Administration.

On March 28, 2022, Officers were dispatched to the 4000 Block of West 77th Place in reference to a death investigation. The victim, a 25-year-old seemingly healthy female, was found deceased in her residence. Commander Miskus, then assigned to investigations, was assigned the task of investigating the incident. Commander Miskus soon uncovered suspicious circumstances surrounding the death. Commander Miskus discovered a possible suspect with motive when he learned the victim had previous troubles with the spouse of a friend. Commander Miskus, who at this point was only three months into his assignment as a detective, pursued this case relentlessly devoting much of his time and effort outside of the workday in order to build a case against the suspect.

In August of 2022 Commander Miskus presented his case to the Lake County Prosecutor's Office where they determined they would accept a charge of Murder against the suspect and advised Commander Miskus to take the individual into custody. Commander Miskus organized a surveillance operation over the course of several days which resulted in the apprehension of the suspect. After the suspect was taken into custody the Judge in charge of reviewing the Prosecutor's charge decided at this time, they would not accept the charge and ordered the release of the suspect.

What most would consider a major roadblock in the case and give up Commander Miskus pushed on and continued working this investigation. Over the course of the next year he would continue to conduct interviews, analyze countless records, and work with the Prosecutor's Office to keep this case alive. During this time due to the needs of the department Commander Miskus would be assigned back to patrol as a Shift Commander and then eventually take over the Patrol Commander position. Even with changes in his assignment and new responsibilities he remained committed to seeing this case through.

On September 21, 2023 this case was heard before a Grand Jury where the suspect was indicted on the charge of Murder and Theft and a warrant was issued for their arrest. Commander Miskus again organized a successful surveillance operation which resulted in the apprehension of the suspect.

I recommend Commander Miskus be awarded the commendation for Meritorious Police Duty for his act of intelligent and valuable police service demonstrating special faithfulness and perseverance.

Commissioner Pawlak made motion to award Cmdr Miskus the Meritorious Police Duty Commendation and was seconded by Commissioner Ward.

Commissioner Poling asked if there was any discussion.

Commissioner Poling stated all in favor signify by saying, "Aye."
All replied, "Aye."
Commissioner Poling stated, "Opposed, same sign."
Commissioner Poling stated, "Motion carries."

Commissioner Poling read a letter of Commendation from the Administration.

I want to take this opportunity to highlight a couple of incidents involving Lt. K. Horvath, Sgt. L. Schmidt, Ofc. E. Reid, Ofc. T. DeCero, Ofc. I. Fultz, Ofc. M. Novak, Ofc. I. Dugan, Det. A. Ridgway, Det. E. Meyer, Det. M. Bunnell, and Det. J. Garza, of the Merrillville Police Department. The Merrillville Police Department learned that a suspect from a 2022 homicide in Merrillville had recently been indicted for murder and a warrant for his arrest was active.

Over a three-day period from 10/02/2023 to 10/04/2023, Sgt. L. Schmidt, Ofc. E. Reid, Ofc. T. DeCero, Ofc. M. Novak, Ofc. I. Dugan, Det. A. Ridgway, Det. E. Meyer, Det. M. Bunnell, and Det. J. Garza, conducted surveillance operations in an attempt to apprehend the suspect. During the surveillance operations, officers discovered the suspect was seen at his residence at 7704 Montana Street in Merrillville, IN. on 10/04/2023 earlier in the day.

At approximately 7:30 PM on 10/04/2023, Lt. Horvath learned the suspect, who was possibly armed and dangerous, was at his residence. Lt. Horvath, took Ofc. Reid and Ofc. DeCero, who were working patrol and are part of the Merrillville Tactical Apprehension Squad, to see if the suspect was at his residence.

The officers parked down the street, approached the residence on foot, and observed the suspect standing in the roadway. As officers approached him, he fled on foot, and a foot pursuit ensued. After a short foot pursuit, Lt. Horvath, Ofc. Reid, and Ofc.

DeCero were able to apprehend the suspect in the backyard of a residence, and he was eventually transported to the Lake County Jail.

The courageous actions by Lt. Horvath, Ofc. Reid, and Ofc. DeCero, to respond quickly to the scene and engage in a foot pursuit with a possibly armed and dangerous individual is admirable. I would like to recommend that Lt. Horvath, Ofc. Reid, and Ofc. DeCero, be awarded Level III Commendations for their actions which placed them in grave personal danger by knowingly pursuing a subject who was wanted for murder and possibly armed and dangerous.

I would like to recommend Sgt. Schmidt, Ofc. Fultz, Ofc. Novak, Ofc. Dugan, Det. Ridgway, Det. Meyer, Det. Bunnell, and Det. Garza, be awarded Level I Commendations for their dedication and perseverance which helped lead to the apprehension of a dangerous subject.

Commissioner Rich made motion to award Lt. Horvath, Ofc Reid, and Ofc DeCero a Level III Commendation, and Ofc. Mason Excellent Police Duty and was seconded by Commissioner Pawlak.

Commissioner Poling asked if there was any discussion.

Commissioner Poling stated all in favor signify by saying, "Aye."
All replied, "Aye."

Commissioner Poling stated, "Opposed, same sign."
Commissioner Poling stated, "Motion carries."

ITEM IV OLD BUSINESS

NONE

ITEM V NEW BUSINESS

Motion was made to open an Emergency Hiring Process.

Commissioner Pawlak made a motion to open an Emergency Hiring Process and was seconded by Commissioner Ward.

Commissioner Poling asked if there was any discussion.

Commissioner Poling requested that Chief Nuses take a roll call vote.

Chief Nuses took a roll call vote.

Commissioner Rich, "Aye"
Commissioner Dragojevic, Absent
Commissioner Poling, "Aye"
Commissioner Pawlak, "Aye"
Commissioner Ward, "Aye"

Commissioner Poling stated, "Vote is unanimous, and the motion carries."

Amend General Order 23.2 Holiday and Comp Time.

Commissioner Pawlak made a motion to Amend General Order 23.2 Holiday and Comp Time and was seconded by Commissioner Rich.

Commissioner Poling asked if there was any discussion.

Commissioner Poling requested that Chief Nuses take a roll call vote.

Chief Nuses took a roll call vote.

Commissioner Rich, Absent
Commissioner Dragojevic, "Aye"
Commissioner Poling, "Aye"
Commissioner Pawlak, Absent
Commissioner Ward, "Aye"

Commissioner Poling stated, "Vote is unanimous, and the motion carries."

Amend General Order 27.6 Applicant Hiring Process.

Commissioner Rich made a motion to amend General Order 27.6 Applicant Hiring Process and was seconded by Commissioner Pawlak.

Commissioner Poling asked if there was any discussion.

Commissioner Poling requested that Chief Nuses take a roll call vote.

Chief Nuses took a roll call vote.

Commissioner Rich, "Aye"
Commissioner Dragojevic, Absent
Commissioner Poling, "Aye"
Commissioner Pawlak, "Aye"
Commissioner Ward, "Aye"

Commissioner Poling stated, "Vote is unanimous, and the motion carries."

Commissioner Poling read Resolution 1018 Promoting Probationary Patrolmen Dylan Mazurek to Second Class Patrolman effective from and after 12:01 AM, November 9, 2023.

Commissioner Pawlak made a motion to accept Resolution 1018 and was seconded by Commissioner Ward.

Commissioner Poling asked if there was any discussion.

Commissioner Poling requested that Chief Nuses take a roll call vote.

Chief Nuses took a roll call vote.

Commissioner Rich, "Aye"
Commissioner Dragojevic, Absent
Commissioner Poling, "Aye"
Commissioner Pawlak, "Aye"
Commissioner Ward, "Aye"

Commissioner Poling stated, "Vote is unanimous, and the motion carries."

Commissioner Poling read Resolution 1019 promoting Second Class Patrolman Andrew Germonprez to First Class Patrolman effective from and after 12:01 AM, November 23, 2023.

Commissioner Rich made a motion to accept Resolution 1018 and was seconded by Commissioner Pawlak.

Commissioner Poling asked if there was any discussion.

Commissioner Poling requested that Chief Nuses take a roll call vote.

Chief Nuses took a roll call vote.

Commissioner Rich, "Aye"
Commissioner Dragojevic, Absent
Commissioner Poling, "Aye"
Commissioner Pawlak, "Aye"
Commissioner Ward, "Aye"

Commissioner Poling stated, "Vote is unanimous, and the motion carries."

Motion was made to Ratify the Eligibility List.

Commissioner Pawlak made motion to Ratify the Eligibility List and was seconded by Commissioner Ward.

Commissioner Poling asked if there was any discussion.

Hearing none, Commissioner Poling requested that Chief Nuses take a roll call vote.

Chief Nuses took a roll call vote.

Commissioner Rich, "Aye"
Commissioner Dragojevic, Absent
Commissioner Poling, "Aye"
Commissioner Pawlak, "Aye"
Commissioner Ward, "Aye"

Commissioner Poling stated, "Vote is unanimous, and the motion carries."

Conditional offers to Thomas Sarsfield, Christopher Trotter-Borrelli, Stanley Thompson, and Roberto Espinosa.

Commissioner Ward made motion to extend Conditional offers to Thomas Sarasfield, Christopher Trotter-Borrelli, Stanley Thompson, and Roberto Espinosa and was seconded by Commissioner Pawlak.

Commissioner Poling asked if there was any discussion.

Hearing none, Commissioner Poling requested that Chief Nuses take a roll call vote.

Chief Nuses took a roll call vote.

Commissioner Rich, "Aye"
Commissioner Dragojevic, Absent
Commissioner Poling, "Aye"
Commissioner Pawlak, "Aye"
Commissioner Ward, "Aye"

Commissioner Poling stated, "Vote is unanimous, and the motion carries."

ITEM VI ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Pawlak made motion to adjourn and was seconded by Commissioner Ward.

Commissioner Poling stated all in favor signify by saying, "Aye."
All replied, "Aye."
Commissioner Poling stated, "Opposed, same sign."
Commissioner Poling stated, "Adjourn."

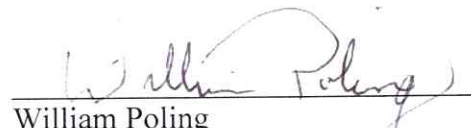
Commissioner Poling stated the next regular meeting will be Friday December 8, 2023, at 2:00 P.M.

AS THERE WAS NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED at 2:32pm

Passed and adopted on this 8th day of December, 2023.



Lori Sanfratello
Chief's Executive Director
Police Commission Recorder



William Poling
Police Commissioner Chairman