MINUTES OF MEETING FOR NORTHERN REGIONAL POLICE BOARD

August 26, 2026 **BRADFORD WOODS MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

CALL MEETING TO ORDER (7:00 PM)

Chairman Ryan Colombo called this Northern Regional Police Board meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Members in attendance: Ray Kendrick, Richland Township Alternate Ann Miller, John Marshall, Dan Dimond, Ryan Colombo, Jason Bragunier, J. Tracy, Pine Township Alternate Pat Avolio, and Jack Donahue. Also in attendance were Captain Jeff Jones, Captain Matt Blough, and Solicitor Jonathan Whalen. Chief Bryan DeWick was not in attendance.

There were six members of the public present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from the public.

MINUTES OF THE JULY BOARD MEETING

The motion was made by Pat Avolio and seconded by Jack Donahue to approve the Board meeting minutes from July 22, 2026. Board members John Marshall and Ryan Colombo abstained from the vote. Motion carried with seven aye votes.

REPORTS

CHIEF REPORT

Captain Jeff Jones presented the Chief's report in his absence. He announced that the draft 2027 Budget would be included in the September Board packet for review and presented for approval at the October Board Meeting. Board member Pat Avolio asked whether managers would be involved in the budget process before the budget was presented, and Captain Jones replied that they would meet with the managers after final numbers were confirmed.

Captain Jones also referenced the overall municipal call volume report in the packet. He stated that the NRPD would like to revise the monthly Chief's Report to include citations, warnings, K9 use, commercial vehicle inspections, and other calls not typically listed. Captain Jones assured the Board that it would not negatively impact the communities' contribution percentage but stated that the current numbers were underreporting about 3,000 calls annually, therefore underreporting the time and utilization of investigative resources. He stated that the new method would decrease the contribution percentage for Pine, Richland, and Marshall Townships, with Bradford Woods Borough remaining at their standard 4%, and increasing Seven Fields Borough's contribution. Board Member Jason Bragunier asked about the rationale behind the current call volume reports, and Captain Jones answered that it was an operational decision made by a previous Chief, noting that their recent grant work had demonstrated the importance of accurately capturing the Department's call activity moving forward. Captain Blough added that the numbers were based on written reports but did not provide a fair representation of call

volume. Several board members stated that they would rather see the raw data. Jason Bragunier requested that the NRPD provide a comparison showing call volume with and without additional calls at the September Board Meeting, and Captain Jones replied they would, but were presenting the full-year figures at this time to accommodate for monthly variances. Board Member Ray Kendrick asked if there was an original agreement addressing how calls would be reported, and Captain Jones replied that previous agreements did not directly address this topic.

Board Member Ray Kendrick also inquired about the status of discussions with Seven Fields Borough regarding contract renewal. Captain Jones stated that he was not aware of any updates, but that the Chief would speak on the topic at the September Board meeting. Richland Township Manager Brian O'Malley asked whether the Uniform Crime Report (UCR) was similar to the call-volume report, but Captain Blough explained that the UCR was based on crimes reported at a federal level and unrelated.

The motion was made by John Marshall and seconded by Ray Kendrick to approve the Chief's Report for July 2026. The aye vote on the motion was unanimous. Motion carried.

TREASURERS REPORT

J. Tracy presented the Treasurer's Report. In his report, he stated that operating cash was lower than in prior years but remained consistent with the budget, with surplus funds from previous years used to offset the current year's contributions. He added that local grant revenue and expenses, police services, administrative costs, and employee benefits and wages had increased since the prior year but were also consistent with the budget. Public safety revenue and accounts receivable figures were higher due to timing adjustments in the prior year's reported revenue alongside an increase in Seven Fields Borough's contracted rate.

The motion was made by Pat Avolio and seconded by Dan Dimond to approve the Treasurer's Report for July 2026. The aye vote on the motion was unanimous. Motion carried.

COMMENTS FROM POLICE BOARD MEMBERS

Board Member Jason Bragunier expressed the Police Board's appreciation for retired patrolman Shawn McCann and his service.

Chairman Colombo requested a presentation at the September Board meeting regarding license plate readers (LPRs) in response to recent news and community concern. Captain Jones provided information regarding the VIPR LPR cameras and responded to questions from Board members. He confirmed that the NRPD can access the VIPR system at any time to review license plates captured by their officers. Captain Jones stated that the cameras operate under a master VIPR account approved by the District Attorney's Office and protected under all governances. Board Member Pat Avolio asked whether the municipalities were responsible for funding these cameras, and Captain Jones replied that the running agreement requires each municipality to install the cameras, after which the NRPD will take over management and maintenance. Captain Blough stated that the DA's Office was continuing to update guidance and safeguards for the LPR systems, noting that were longer accepting evidence obtained using Flock LPR systems for prosecution purposes, and referenced our existing agreement with Lexipol. Ryan Colombo asked whether out-of-state officers could access our systems and if there was a data retention policy in place. Captain Jones replied that out-of-state agencies would have to be a VIPR subscriber and agree to the same terms to access our systems. He also stated that while VIPR has expanded into western Pennsylvania, it was not as widely used as Flock and confirmed that they required data to be maintained indefinitely, including all records of who accessed

the system.
Board Member Dan Dimond asked about the key differences between Flock and VIPR including data utilization and their parent companies, and Captain Jones replied that he will ask the Viper account manager to attend a future meeting and provide additional information. Board Member Jack Donahue asked whether VIPR cameras were manufactured in United States, and Captain Jones responded that they are, and this was one of the factors considered by the DA's Office in choosing VIPR. Captain Blough reminded the Board that overall, LPR cameras are an extremely effective tool for crime solving, and that there can be no expectation of privacy for publicly visible license plates. Ryan Colombo concluded that the Police Board understands their use but just needs accurate information to provide to the communities. Several Board members vouched for LPR cameras and their effectiveness in protecting the community, especially in reducing the need for high-speed chases.

Board Member Jason Bragunier asked for an update regarding the 2026 sergeant and lieutenant promotions. The captains stated that the promotions improved continuity, reduced the need for Officers-in-Charge (OIC), increased responsibility among less-experienced officers, and increased supervision on patrol. They concluded that the promotions have had a positive impact on the department and that NRPD officers were satisfied with the changes.

Board Member Ray Kendrick inquired about prior month's extensive overtime and asked if protocols were in place so to provide all officers with equal opportunities to work overtime details. Captain Blough confirmed that they factored in shift times and used signup sheets, stating that all officers were happy with the current process.

OLD BUSINESS

UPDATE ON NEW STATION PROJECT

Captain Jones reminded the Board of their previous request for Buchart Horn Architects to identify additional areas for cost reduction or alternates for the building project. He stated that BHA was developing alternates for certain line items in the event that grant funding could not be secured. He also noted that any alternates would not affect program space but would primarily involve exterior or cosmetic changes.
Captain Jones reported that they had hired Saxton & Stump and Econ Partners to assist with obtaining funding for the project, and the two firms had been working extensively over the last month to support. He stated that they had applied for the 2026 GEDTF grant through Allegheny County and requested the maximum of $500,000 to potentially fund the parking lot improvements. He also mentioned meeting with Saxton & Stump and Representative Jeremy Schaffer to discuss RACP funding, including looking at Pine Township and project phasing. Captain Jones stated that there was $10 million in grant funding earmarked for the NRPD, and that they were working with the two firms and government representatives to establish the department as an entity under the Allegheny County Redevelopment Authority now that they had the required itemization bill. He stated that Representative Schaffer also expressed support for the LSA grant and police vehicle grant funding, and that with the help of Saxton & Stump and Econ Partners, they were making progress overall.

Richland Township Manager O'Malley addressed the Board and reported that the recent Building Committee meeting was productive, with BHA providing a list of project alternates to help facilitate the bidding process in the event grant funding was not received. Pine Township Manager Jason Kratsas and Marshall Township Manager Bob Grimm spoke about the importance of the timing of grants and award money, with Manager Grimm mentioning RACP's significance due to its flexibility. Board Member Jason Bragunier asked whether providing services to Seven Fields Borough across county lines would assist in obtaining funding, and Captain Jones replied that Representative Schaffer

believed the elected officials in the other municipalities would support the building project as well. He noted that they will reach out to Seven Fields' representatives for their support.

NEW BUSINESS

MOTION TO MOVE OFFICERS FROM PROBATIONARY STATUS TO FULL-TIME STATUS

The motion was made by John Marshall and seconded by Dan Dimond to move Officers Evan Gazda and Katrina Kuhl from probationary status to full-time status with the NRPD, effective August 11, 2026. The aye vote on the motion was unanimous. Motion carried.

MOTION TO HIRE TWO OFFICERS

The motion was made by John Marshall and seconded by Dan Dimond to authorize the hiring of the following two officers: Jarrod Chiaramonte and Mykael Paakanen. The aye vote on the motion was unanimous. Motion carried.

MOTION TO AMEND THE AUGUST POLICE BOARD AGENDA

The motion was made by Ryan Colombo and seconded by J. Tracy to amend the August Police Board agenda to include authorization to extend a conditional offer to an additional officer candidate.

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE EXTENDING A FOURTH CONDITIONAL OFFER TO AN ADDITIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE

The motion was made by Jason Bragunier and seconded by Dan Dimond to authorize extending a fourth conditional offer to an officer candidate, in addition to three conditional offers previously authorized at the July Police Board Meeting. The aye vote on the motion was unanimous. Motion carried.

MOTION TO APPROVE A NEW OFFICER CANDIDATE TESTING CYCLE

Captain Blough stated that the NRPD had nine total candidates remaining after testing, including the two candidates presented prior to the meeting. He mentioned that the NRPD also wanted to advance one non-veteran candidate in the hiring pool. However, they had another candidate that they would like to advance as well, who was scheduled to retake the Act 120 examination on September 10, 2026. Captain Blough stated that, if the second candidate passes, the NRPD intends to advance this candidate first based on prior military experience, reminding the Board that veterans receive priority in the hiring process. He mentioned that although they had candidates remaining in the pipeline, it was safe to prepare for the pool depleting while they waited for training of new officers, exams, and the hiring process to complete. Therefore, the NRPD requested authorization to initiate another hiring cycle for the Spring of 2027.

Chiarman Ryan Colombo asked whether conditional offers could be extended to both candidates simultaneously upon successful completion of the latter's Act 120 examination. Captain Blough reminded the Board that they had previously authorized three total conditional offers, but they intended for the candidate to begin in November of 2026 as the third offer upon completion. Captain Blough stated that, from a training standpoint, it would be preferable to hire three officers in 2026 and stagger a fourth so that they could successfully concentrate their limited FTO resources on their new hires. He also stated that if the candidate next-in-line cannot complete the process, they will extend an offer to the fourth guy in the pool, and if both candidates were ultimately hired, they would have to delay the fourth candidate's start date until early 2027.

Board Member Jason Bragunier expressed concerns regarding the speed of the hiring process, and discussion ensued. Captain Blough stated that they could not train three officers simultaneously given prior experience having done so, noting the need to balance filling the vacancies with ensuring adequate training at the rate necessary to succeed. He confirmed for Jason Bragunier that the department would still be four officers short, following the hiring of Officer Chiaramonte and Officer Paakanen at this meeting. Jason Bragunier stated that he believed the NRPD needed to advance the two new officers as quickly as possible and do whatever was necessary to hire the two other candidates in the pool, keeping in mind the officers approaching retirement. Captain Blough assured the Board that he was not concerned about losing the fourth candidate, because they were focused on hiring quality officers suited for Northen Regional Police Department, and these candidates were only applying to this department. Jason Bragunier stated that he would feel more comfortable with a fourth offer letter on the table. Solicitor Jonathan Whalen suggested amending the agenda to authorize extending one additional conditional offer beyond the three previously authorized, with the understanding of a later start date for the fourth hire. He reminded the Board that the amended agenda must be posted on the Bradford Woods Municipal Building door by the end of the day following the meeting in addition to the NRPD website.
Board member Dan Dimond asked whether new officers worked daylight shift only, and Captain Blough replied that their training covers both shifts. He stated that training typically lasts 12-14 weeks, but he anticipated Officer Chiaramonte to take six weeks in addition to shadowing, and Officer Paakanen to require the full training period. He concluded that both officers would be on probation for one year and stated that leadership will conduct more frequent check-ins to monitor their progress.

The motion was made by Dan Dimond and seconded by J. Tracy to approve a new officer candidate testing cycle for November 5, 2026. The aye vote on the motion was unanimous. Motion approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

No comments were made.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The decision was made by the Police Board to forgo the executive session.

ADJOURNMENT

The motion to adjourn was made by John Marsahall and seconded by Jason Bragunier. The aye vote on the motion was unanimous. Motion carried.
The meeting adjourned at 8:04 PM.

Julia Reginelli

Recording Secretary – Julia Reginelli

Chief Bryan DeWick