

SEYMOUR POLICE BOARD VOTE



Just last month, the Board of Police Commissioners ended up voting on a plan that would extend the employment of a veteran police officer beyond the specific retirement age. While the actual vote was made a month ago, it has since been rendered void. Kurt Miller, the first selectman, made an announcement during the Board of Selectmen meeting on Tuesday in which he stated that the commission did not have the proper authority to make such votes and take such actions. The commission does not have the authority but the Board of Selectmen does because it is in their jurisdiction. Kurt Miller said, "Through no fault of anyone, it was assumed that this was the correct process." He also said, "But after consulting with our town attorney, it was determined that the legislative body is the only one that can do this." The current issue at hands relates back to a request from the Detective Sgt., Ronald Goodmaster. Goodmaster made a request to the commission and his request was approved in a vote of 2-1 from the commission. The request made was about his employment, hoping to have it extended for a year so that he could make his milestone of serving the department for a total of 25 years. On March 8, 2013, Goodmaster will be 65 years old and will be able to retire. Although he will be able to retire, he will only be a year and a few months away from reaching the milestone of 25 years. There is currently a policy under the Municipal Employee Retirement System, commonly referred to as MERS, in which it is stated that department members have to retire at the age of 65 years old. The only way that they can retire at a later age is if there is a specific exception and if that exception is actually approved. According to the police officials, any member of the department who has provided 25 years of service will be able to receive full pension, which is a total of half of their pay. Because Goodmaster falls short of the 25 years by a year and a few months, he would end up receiving a smaller amount for his pension, which would be a total of 48 percent of his pay instead of 50 percent. Goodmaster made the request for an extension of his employment and his original request was approved by two commissioners, Jim Simpson and John Popik. However, the approval for this extension has since been voided. Goodmaster can still make a request to the selectmen in hopes of receiving an extension.