

**REGULAR SESSION MINUTES**  
**MARCH 8, 2022**  
**BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS**  
**NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT**  
***VIDEOCONFERENCE AND CONFERENCE CALL VIA ZOOM***

**PRESENT:** Commissioners Darrell Brooks; Tracey Meares; Evelise Ribeiro:  
and Donald Walker

Interim Chief Dominguez: Department of Police Service  
Assistant Chief Karl Jacobson: Department of Police Service  
Captain David Zannelli: Department of Police Service  
Lieutenant Manmeet Colon: Department of Police Service  
Lieutenant Dana Smith: Department of Police Service  
Sergeant Paul Finch: Department of Police Service  
Officer Christopher Boyle: Department of Police Service  
Officer D. Cohen: Department of Police Service  
Gregory Dash: Department of Police Service  
Officer Larnell Jackson: Department of Police Service  
Officer Bleck Joseph: Department of Police Service  
Officer Reginald McGlotten: Department of Police Service  
Officer John Moore: Department of Police Service  
Officer Maegan Moran: Department of Police Service  
Officer Samantha Romano: Department of Police Service  
Officer Paul Vakos: Department of Police Service  
Officer Allyn Jamal Wright: Department of Police Service

Sandeep Aysola: Department of Transportation, Traffic and Parking  
Michelle Duprey, Esquire: Deputy Corporation Counsel  
Bruce Fischer: Department of Transportation, Traffic and Parking  
Regina Rush-Kittle, CAO, City of New Haven

Gerald Antunes: Board of Alders  
Wault Batley  
Thomas Breen - New Haven Independent  
Abdul Bunyaminu  
Lorena De Los Reyes  
Ben Lambert - New Haven Register  
Miguel Pittman

**OPEN SESSION**

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m., Evelise Ribeiro, Chair, presiding  
Ribeiro indicated that Commissioners Lawlor and Miranda would not be in attendance this  
evening.

## **REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRAFFIC AUTHORITY**

Following the regular meeting of the Traffic Authority, Mr. Fischer and Mr. Aysola excused themselves at 6:26 p.m.

### **AGENDA**

- \*\* Commissioner Walker motioned to Approve the Agenda
- \*\* Commissioner Meares seconded
- \*\* Motion passed unanimously

### **DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Discussion and Approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of February 8, 2021.

- \*\* Commissioner Meares motioned to Approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of February 8, 2021
- \*\* Commissioner Brooks seconded
- \*\* Motion passed unanimously

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were none.

### **CHIEF'S REPORT**

Chief Renee Dominguez

- Chief Dominguez indicated that there were 17 non-fatal shootings and zero homicides. A press conference was scheduled for Thursday, March 10, 2022 at 11:00 a.m. to report on warrants and arrests that have been made. In addition, there were three shots investigated by the Shooting Task Force that led to an arrest.
- The Department's ability to make arrests from non-fatal shootings or shots fired is significant. The shell casing are important to be able to make some links and target specific individuals responsible for some of this violence
- The Department is in compliance with the city's order. There have been no new vaccinated persons to add to the list since the last update. However, the new recruits, that would be presented to the commission and are scheduled to begin classes in April, are all vaccinated.
- There are no POST guidelines on laterals. This has been left to each police department and its Collective Bargaining Agreement.
- Chief Dominguez stated she went before the Board of Alders on Monday, February 7, 2022 requesting unanimous consent in order to take a donation from Demand Zero for a police dog. Lisa Dean who ultimately founded Demand Zero after her son overdosed at McDonald's on Kimberly Avenue. She turned this loss into new passion for supporting police departments through fundraisings. The New Haven Police Department has benefitted the most from Demand Zero.
- Demand Zero supplied the Department with two dogs back in 2019, Bruce and Farley.

Ms. Dean also takes care of food and veterinarian bills for the life of both dogs. Ms. Dean has provided the support that the Detective Bureau may need in terms of donations.

■ The Board of Alders granted a unanimous consent to take the donation from Demand Zero. Another dog would be added to the Department. Ms. Dean has indicated that she would continue to provide food and pay the veterinarian bills for the life of this new dog. This dog will replace Sergeant Robert's deceased dog.

■ The 25<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary of the Chief's Cup (a hockey game between the police and fire departments) has been scheduled for March 26, 2022. All past chiefs have been invited from both departments. It is a great family event. This event would be more ceremonial than usual.

■ Chief Dominguez indicated that the St. Patrick's Day Parade was scheduled for March 13, 2022. Everyone would be working on that day.

■ Chief Dominguez indicated Captain Healy would be attending the FBI National Academy in April. No one has attended from the Department since 2018. He will be gone for 10 weeks. The Department is excited about this.

■ The Command College for the newly-promoted sergeants has concluded. They did about 10 days of Command College in addition to an FTO period. Last week, they completed the FBI Leader training which is an additional leadership training. The FBI Leader training is a trilogy. Hopefully, these officers would be able to take all three steps. The other two levels are called Command and Executive.

■ The Board of Alders approved the money to be used for ShotSpotter and the four-year contract with ShotSpotter to have an extension of their service. They are waiting for the contract to be signed. Implementation of the expansion would begin and is expected to take about eight to 10 weeks. The hope is that the full expansion would be up and running by the end of this fiscal year and beginning of summer.

### **PERSONNEL MATTERS**

1. Discussions and action on the recommendation to remove the following candidates from Eligibility List #21-01:

1. #136 - Abdul Bunyaminu
2. #150 - Lorena De Los Reyes

■ Commissioner Ribeiro asked Mr. Bunyaminu and Ms. De Los Reyes if they wanted to be heard in a closed or open session. Both opted to be heard in an open session.

■ Commissioner Brooks wanted to know why he was on the list for removal.

■ Mr. Bunyaminu read a prepared testimony. He was asked questions.

■ Sergeant Finch indicated that Mr. Bunyaminu tried to get this situation settled by filing the actual complaint. Mr. Bunyaminu had made it clear that he had settled. A police agency has access to Mr. Bunyaminu's file regarding what transpired at the Pennsylvania State Police Academy. There were 13 infractions to which Mr. Bunyaminu has acknowledged some of them are true. We are here today based upon the termination and 13 infractions.

■ Mr. Bunyaminu was asked more questions.

■ Sergeant Finch indicated that some of the infractions were so alarming that it led to the recommendation for removal from the list.

- Lieutenant Colon added that his authorized exemption for religious purposes related to food allowed him specific times for the exemption. His inability to follow instructions, given the number of infractions, is concerning.
- Mr. Bunyaminu explained the rules given to him regarding prepping his meals.
- Commissioner Ribeiro indicated that members of the public had their hands raised to ask questions. She informed those in attendance that it was inappropriate for the public to ask questions at this point. This is between the candidates, the commission and staff. She thanked the public for having interest and wanting to participate.
- Ms. De Los Reyes addressed the commission.
- Commissioner Meares indicated that she would like to hear from staff first.
- Sergeant Finch indicated that the concern here is comprehension.
- Officer Cohen indicated that his time with Ms. De Los Reyes from beginning to the end during the background interview revealed much difficulty understanding some of the English words. The background interview usually takes two to two and a half hours. This particular interview took almost four hours. He and Sergeant Borisova both interviewed Ms. De Los Reyes.
- Officer Cohen further indicated that when he asked Ms. De Los Reyes questions about a loan she took, she did left out portions of the loan out. Ms. De Los Reyes was asked for character references which has to be someone the candidate has known for five years. She provided two names. One she had known for one year and the other she had known for two years.
- Sergeant Finch indicated this continued into the polygraph phase. Even though she passed, the polygraph examiner was unsure if she passed understanding what had been asked of her. So, there is a concern regarding comprehension. This had continued throughout the entire process, the lack of comprehension.
- Commissioner Walker asked about whether Ms. De Los Reyes' was completed. Sergeant Finch indicated that her application missed some information. E-mail correspondences with her had words in Spanish as well.
- Chief Reyes explained the concern for the Department also is that if she were to investigate a crime and there was probable cause, the candidate may not understand probable cause and not make an arrest. Conversely, a false arrest could be made due to lack of comprehension of an oral statement, for example. Another concern is that a written report has to be generated that could be used in court eventually and the author of the report would have to testify.
- Ms. De Los Reyes indicated she had been waiting for three years for this process. She passed her English test so she could take the police test. She indicated that she had taken the written test which she passed. She passed her background interview. All the tests were in English. She indicated she has studied very hard. She indicated she is from Peru. She had a professional career in the government in Peru. She had attended college as well. She has respect for people. She stated she is honest and intelligent.
- Commissioner Brooks asked if any of the candidates, if given an opportunity, could come back and reapply. Chief Dominguez indicated they could come back and reapply.

- \*\* Commissioner Walker motioned to follow the Chief's recommendation to remove Mr. Abdul Bunyaminu from the Eligibility List
- \*\* Commissioner Meares seconded

■ Commissioner Brooks indicated that he was agonizing about this. For a young man to go to school, study criminology and get to this point ... He agonized over this.

\*\* For: Commissioners Meares, Ribeiro and Walker  
\*\* Against: Commissioner Brooks  
The motion carried.

\*\* Commissioner Walker motioned to follow the Chief's recommendation to remove Ms. Lorena De Los Reyes, from the Eligibility List  
\*\* Commissioner Brooks seconded  
\*\* Motion passed unanimously

2. Discussions and action on the recommendation to promote the following from Detective Eligibility List #22-06:

1. #1 - Maegan Moran
2. #2 - Samantha Romano
3. #4 - Allyn Wright
4. #5 - Larnell Jackson
5. #6 - Bleck Joseph
6. #7 - Paul Vakos
7. #8 - Gregory Dash
8. #9 - Stephen Jacques
9. #10 - Christopher Boyle
10. #10 - John Moore

■ Commissioner Ribeiro indicated that the commissioners had an opportunity to interview the candidates last week. Due to time restraints she asked the Chief or her designee to some background on the candidates.

■ Chief Dominguez gave brief summary of each officer's background. She indicated that No. 3, Frank Riello, has been skipped due to injury. It is against the Department's rules to promote someone who is out injured. He just had surgery for a work-related injury.

■ Commissioner Meares indicated she and Commissioner Ribeiro has the opportunity to speak with Officers Maegan Moran, Allyn Wright, Bleck Joseph, Greg Dash and Christopher Boyle. She wanted to say publicly how much pleasure it was to speak to each candidate. She had an opportunity to their views on they consider to be the critical aspect and characteristic of detective work. The group agreed that probably first and foremost among those characteristics is community outreach and also continual communication with survivors of incidents as well as their families because the officer's ability to put together particular details mean nothing if the officer cannot actually get the details and the evidence. As all know, New Haven is in the midst of clearance rape crisis presently.

■ Commissioner Meares also wanted to make a special shoutout to Officer Allyn Wright who has turned being a survivor of discrimination and hate into a professional pursuit of justice. It was incredibly inspiring.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro concurred with Commissioner Meares. She enjoyed speaking to the candidates in their group. The officers' responses to their questions were very impressive.

Their responses and their backgrounds give her hope and confidence that they would make good detectives.

■ Commissioner Walker concurred with what Commissioners Meares and Ribeiro said. These candidates were outstanding. One of their questions focused on integrity that a police officer must have and how the officers carry out their duties, they were very impressive. They will do outstanding work when they get into the Detective Bureau.

\*\* Commissioner Walker motioned to promote the candidates as a group to the Rank of Detective as follows:

1. #1- Maegan Moran
2. #2 - Samantha Romano
3. #4 - Allyn Wright
4. #5 - Larnell Jackson
5. #6 -Bleck Joseph
6. #7 - Paul Vakos
7. #8 - Gregory Dash
8. #9 - Stephen Jacques
9. #10 - Christopher Boyle
10. #10 - John Moore

\*\* Commissioner Meares seconded

\*\* Motion passed unanimously

■ Commissioner Ribeiro congratulated all the officers.

### **INTERNAL AFFAIRS**

Lieutenant Manmeet Colon

■ Lieutenant Colon indicated that there were seven closed cases for the month of which four were unfounded, one was exonerated and two were withdrawn. Just because the complainant chooses to withdraw a case, the investigator is still responsible for checking all body-worn camera footages, reports and supplemental reports to make sure there are no other policy violations apart from the complainant's indicated violation.

■ Lieutenant Colon that even though no batons have been used in 2022, there was one which was not an actual strike. She reviewed the use of force herself. The baton was used to retract the arms away from an arrestee who was suicidal at the time. The baton use was not a strike. It was used to extract.

■ There was no Taser use so far in 2022 and no canine deployments.

■ There is a high number of hard hands which means takedowns or pressure points used by officers. If there are four or five officers at a scene and all use hard hands, all four or five officer are required to fill the use-of-force form. This is the reason the hard hands are up.

■ So far for the year, there have been a total of 19 complaints of which 13 are open in Internal Affairs. There were some minor violations forwarded to the Patrol Division.

■ Commissioner Meares asked that since the use-of-force policy is new and since the Department's data collection is new, she wanted clarify about what Lt. Colon had just said.

What she understood Lt. Colon to say is that if there is an incident with multiple officers, and one officer is the officer who only used some force, all four of them fill out the form, but they do not all say they did that. The worry is that the way the reporting works is that it would make it appear that there is four times as much that's actually used as opposed a reporting of the incident. Reporting base is an incident base, but one can still count by the person whether force was used. She wondered if this true or not.

■ Lieutenant Colon indicated that the count is by the person as far as the numbers for the data. And incident is separate as well. All four officers who complete the use-of-force form is only if they have used actual force.

### **RETIREMENTS (For Board information only)**

There were none.

### **RESIGNATION (For Board information only)**

There were none.

### **RECRUITMENT/SELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT**

■ Sergeant Finch indicated that with springtime approaching career fairs are present. The Department participated in some career fairs at Southern Connecticut State University last weekend and the Connecticut National Guard post-yellow ribbon event. Both career fairs were successful as he had begun to be flooded with e-mails expressing interests.

■ They have also participated in police community panels. There was one such participation at Mount Zion Church in Hamden. Officer Cole in District 7 is a member of this church. His pastoe, Pastor Oliver, invited them to the church. They had a mock motor vehicle stop during which a civilian got to walk in the shoes of a police officer regarding this mock stop. The whole experience was positive.

■ They participated on the last day of the Black History Month at Gateway Community College where they had a ceremony titled Behind the Blue, a Candid Conversation with Law Enforcement. Different law enforcement personnel from different agencies were panelists. They answered questions from the college community.

■ He invited anyone interested in hearing from the Department to reach out to them.

■ Commissioner Walker commended Sergeant Finch and Officer Kendell for their outstanding job discussing some of the problems and issues that police officers have. It demonstrated how tough a job this is. Again, they were excellent panelists.

■ Sergeant Finch indicated all on the list had been interviewed. There were 10 remaining candidates. They hope to have five candidates ready for the Milford Academy on April 21, 2022.

### **EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Consideration and vote on proposed General Order 2.05 Alcohol and Drug Use Policy, which supersedes existing General Order 2.05 issued on 12.23.15

■ Commissioner Meares indicated there she had gone over this General Order thoroughly with Captain Zanelli.

- Captain Zanelli presented the much more comprehensive General Order.
- Commissioner Meares indicated that this policy makes distinctions between drugs that are federally prohibited and are controlled substances, drugs that are maybe prescription drugs and alcohol which is of course is legal for people a certain age that could be abused. Although, it is now not illegal to possess cannabis in this state, it is not consistent with New Haven Police Department policy for officers to use that substance under this policy. She thought it was important to highlight that. The policy is carefully written to acknowledge both status in the State of Connecticut, but also the Department’s policy with respect to use of that substance,

- \*\* Commissioner Meares motioned that the Commission Accept the Revised General Order
- \*\* Commissioner Brooks seconded
- \*\* Motion passed unanimously

**FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

- Commissioner Ribeiro indicated Commissioners Brooks and Miranda were newly appointed to the committee. They will be meeting with the two commissioners to flush out the duties of the committee.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Discussion and vote on the Rule for Document by Production in Disciplinary Matters Being Heard by the Board of Police Commissioners

- Commissioner Ribeiro indicated that this rule would be adopted by the commission in order to clarify the parameters regarding how the commission gets documents delivered to it in a timely manner when the Chief makes any recommendation for discipline. They want documents from both sides in a timely fashion in order to make fair and equitable decisions regarding discipline,
- Commissioner Meares indicated that she had read the proposed rule to be adopted. No complaints, quarrel or suggested edits regarding Points. 2, 3 and 4. She suggested an edit regarding Point 1. It says, all documents, exhibits, etc., must be provided to each commissioner seven days prior ... This says basically that the commissioners gets it seven days prior. She suggested no later than or at least at that time. Sometimes the documents are voluminous. She indicated she would prefer more time.
- Commissioner Brooks suggested 14 days for the commission for receive information for the commission to do its due diligence.
- Commissioner Meares indicated she would be happy with Commissioner Brooks’ recommendation of 14 days.
- Commissioner Ribeiro indicated the change would be made to the rule.
- Attorney Duprey asked if it was 14 days.
- Commissioner Brooks stated no later than 14 days.

- \*\* Commissioner Meares motioned to accept the Draft Rule for Document Production in accordance with the edits just suggested.



- \*\* Commissioner Brooks seconded
- \*\* Motion passed unanimously

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- \*\* **Commissioner Brooks motioned to Enter Executive Session for Legal Matters**
- \*\* **Commissioner Meares seconded**
- \*\* **Motion passed unanimously**

**The Board entered Executive Session at 7:46 p.m.**

- \*\* **Commissioner Meares motioned to Exit Executive Session**
- \*\* **Commissioner Brooks seconded**
- \*\* **Motion passed unanimously**

**The Board exited Executive Session at 8:00 p.m.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

- \*\* Commissioner Brooks moved to Adjourn the Regular Meeting
- \*\* Commissioner Meares seconded
- \*\* Motion passed unanimously

The next regular meeting will be on April 12, 2022.  
The Board adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sotonye Otunba-Payne