



## City of New Haven Civilian Review Board

### Case 21C-103 Review Meeting

December 7, 2023

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Date: December 7, 2023 5:30 pm

[Zoom meeting link](#)

Minutes by Alyson Heimer, CRB Administrator

Approved by the Board: DRAFT

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1. **Call to Order** at 6:06pm.
2. **Attendance: Virtual Via Zoom**
  - a. **Present:** Carter (Chair), Comins, McClure
  - b. **Guests:** Alyson Heimer

### 3. Case 21C-103

Translation of the complaint was given to the board:

Translation from NHPD Sgt. Melendez:

My complaint is because Officer Peña discriminated against me the day of the incident. He didn't write what really happened at the location, and he also told me if I had paid money and signed papers for this location then I would have rights as to what happens there. I told him at that time, it was my house because I was not yet divorced from my husband at the time, who owns the house. He also didn't put in the report that (from the first floor] came to speak to me and accuse me of taking video, which I showed him was not true, but he did not put that in the report and only wrote what they told him and wrote it in favor of them. I want (body camera) footage from that day to be reviewed.

A few days later, I went to the police station and spoke with Officer Peña and told him I wanted to file a report against the person from [from the first floor daycare] and he told me No, as he was going to include it in the initial report. I told him about a video I had where (redacted) damaged my car window from banging on it and obstructed my way of getting out of my driveway but he didn't add that to the report. This is why I'm filing this report and because I feel I've been discriminated against from him.

Discussion: Carter: this is a case where the individual was being harassed by their partner and in the middle of a divorce. The tenant on the first floor (owner of the daycare) had a client who was blocking the driveway and not letting the second floor tenant (complainant) leave - and this call to the police further stems from a personal issue about parking and the owner of the building, who was the husband, purposely not mediating the tenants issues because one was his soon to be ex-wife.

Member Comins: I do not feel the officer violated any bias/discrimination rules as pertains to the complaint.



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Carter: The question is about officer discretion. The officer could have chosen to help mediate the situation and help build back the relationship between neighbors.

Comins: not a mental health issue, not a substance issue, so not a COMPASS issue (Note: even though COMPASS did not exist at that time - it would not be referred to that agency)

Carter: Not the role of the officer necessarily but some officers take on the role of community mediators.

Comins: the correct mediator would have been a marriage counselor for the husband and wife to avoid this level of contention.

Carter: The officer did what he needed to do. The officer could have connected them to resources.

McClure: In agreement that the officer was not in violation. What resources are available for situations like this?

Comins: This isn't the police's issue. The City should maybe come up with ways to keep the peace between neighbors. No service exists to members' knowledge.

McClure: resources being unavailable put stressors on individuals and she doesn't know where to go for these resources. There might be counselors in the police department.

Sub - Committee Recommendations

Motion to accept the following decision moved by Member Carter, Seconded by Comins.

*The committee determined that there was no bias and no favoritism seen in the interaction. The officer did their job fairly. The decision of IA was correct.*

- 1. Police officers who are responding to neighbor vs. neighbor complaints should be made aware of any city resources that become available in the areas of community counseling or social work.*

Recommendation passes. 3-0-0.

**4. Adjournment** motioned by Carter. Comins seconded. Meeting adjourned at 6:33 pm.