

**REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
DECEMBER 12, 2023
BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT
VIDEOCONFERENCE AND CONFERENCE CALL VIA ZOOM**

PRESENT: Commissioners Michael Lawlor, Tracey Meares, Isaias Miranda, Evelise Ribeiro (in person), and Donald Walker

Chief Karl Jacobson (in person) (exited-6:21 p.m.): Department of Police Service

Assistant Chief Manmeet Bhagtana (in person): Department of Police Service

Assistant Chief Bertram Ettienne (in person): Department of Police Service

Lieutenant Dana Smith (in person): Department of Police Service

Sergeant Paul Finch: Department of Police Service

Asia Johnson-Clark (in person): Administrative Assistant

Michelle Duprey, Esquire: Deputy Corporation Counsel

Regina Rush-Kittle (in person): Chief Administrative Officer

OPEN SESSION

The Regular Session meeting of the Board of Police Commissioners was called to order at 6:02 p.m., Evelise Ribeiro, Chair, presided.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro indicated that Commissioner Brooks would not be in attendance this evening.

AGENDA

Approval of the Agenda for the Board of Police Commissioners Meeting

- ** Commissioner Miranda moved to Approve the Agenda
- ** Commissioner Walker seconded
- ** Motion passed unanimously

DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Discussion and Approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of November 14, 2023

Discussion and Approval of the Special Meeting Minutes of November 28, 2023

- ** Commissioner Meares moved to Accept the Regular Meeting Minutes of November 14, 2023
- ** Commissioner Miranda seconded
- ** Motion passed unanimously

- ** Commissioner Walker moved to Accept the Special Meeting Minutes of November 28, 2023

- ** Commissioner Meares seconded
- ** Motion passed unanimously

CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Karl Jacobson

- Chief Jacobson started with the Violent Crime Report. Non-fatal shootings this year was at 73; last year at the same time the figure was 105. Homicides was at 22; at the same time in 2022 there were 14 homicides. So the total number of persons shot in the city was at 95, whereas, at the same time last year the figure was 119. So there was a decrease of 21 percent.
- Regarding shots fired, the city was down to 265 this year from 290 in 2022.
- Again, the Department was having record gun seizure numbers. To date, they had seized 259 guns, 35 ghost guns with 249 arrests. Last year at the same, they seized 235 guns, 45 ghost guns and made 207 arrests. In 2022 they had a record number of gun seizures. They had already surpassed that number.
- So the officers are working hard in getting guns off the streets.
- Chief Jacobson indicated he would address staffing. On December 12, 2023 he was given the budgeted strength report of 340 officers. Nine officers will retire at the end of this month.
- Of the 19 that had graduated in September, most of them having finished their Field Training Program in either October or November, the Department lost two of them who had resigned. They were unable to complete the Field Training Program. Their names are on the list here under resignations. So of the 19, there are 17 left. They are on the streets and are working.
- There are six officers getting off the FTO program this month and they are all doing well. Three graduated from New Britain last week; two are graduating from Milford next week. Nineteen recruits went into the academy on December 1st, 2023. However, one has dropped out so they are down to 18. They will be graduating one from POST in January of 2024. They are looking tonight to get eight conditional officers from the Board of Police Commissioners to place in satellite academies. There are currently four recruits in the Waterbury Academy due to graduate in March of 2024. So in total there were 35 officers in training with those six getting off this month.
- Over the last nine months, the Department has hired 52 officers. They had filled 340 positions. Of that, 15 percent are women, 52 percent are minority and women and 48 percent are white males.
- Chief Jacobson indicated that the Department would continue recruiting. They had scheduled a testing process in January of 2024. They already have a good section of people signed up for the testing process in January. They will continue to hire, continue to use their crime suppression methods, continue to go knock on the doors of people who are most likely to be shot or shoot someone and keep moving forward. They are seeing reductions in violent crimes.
- Commissioner Walker asked, up until this point in time, how many officers had the Department lost this year? He indicated he was interested in what the net gain was.
- Chief Jacobson responded by saying that this year they had lost 15 officers to other departments and 20 to retirement. So at least 35. He indicated he would double check this figure for the next meeting.

- Commissioner Lawlor followed up by saying that he thought what Commissioner Walker was asking was whether there was a net gain over time. Did the Department add more than it is lost over the last year?
- Commissioner Ribeiro indicated they were having a hard time hearing Commissioner Lawlor and asked him to repeat his question due to technical difficulties.
- Commissioner Meares indicated she would ask the question. The question is: Given the number of people that were lost to retirement, etc., you know, given the hiring, are we still up overall this year? That's what you were looking for Commissioner Lawlor. Commissioner Lawlor responded by saying, yes.
- Commissioner Meares also added that Chief Jacobson had given them the trend line, it would be interesting to know that too. In other words, is the Department losing more people over time? She thought the Department was adding more because of the ways in which they had changed the hiring process with double lists and so on.
- Chief Jacobson responded by saying that if the commissioners looked at least year, it was something along the lines of the Department losing 35 to 40 and gaining 52 which would be a net of 12. Right now, they see that when nine more retire at the end of the month, it would only be three lost from last year. As much as they are gaining, at times they are also losing. After the end of the month, they would only be plus three from last year.
- Commissioner Meares indicated that it was more like holding steady.
- Chief Jacobson concurred.
- Commissioner Walker asked about how the negotiations regarding the contract was going. Part of the reason the Department is losing so many officers is because they don't have a contract.
- Chief Jacobson indicated that negotiations was going better recently than they had in a while. He knew that offers were being exchanged. There are lots of good things the city is putting on the table. They are hoping to get over the finish line as soon as possible. He further indicated he couldn't go into specifics for obvious reasons.
- Commissioner Walker responded by saying he understood. He wanted to get a broad idea of how negotiations were goings. He was hoping that they were gaining ground.
- Chief Jacobson said he would say they were in a better position than they were six months ago.
- Commissioner Ribeiro added that there were an Awards Ceremony. She congratulated the Department and commended the Awards Committee under the leadership of Chief Ettienne. She thought it was a wonderful program. It had been a couple of year since they had the Awards Ceremony. She enjoyed it as did the other commissioners in attendance as well.
- Chief Jacobson indicated they gave out over 90 awards. They had some special awards for officers that were hurt in the line of duty. It was just a really good night. He thanked the commissioners for attending.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS REPORT

Lieutenant Dana Smith

- Lieutenant Smith greeted everyone. He was happy to report that the Internal Affairs statistics looked pretty good. Since the last report, the Department had not received any complaints.
- The Department is looking at 58 complaints for this year compared to the same time last year at 28. So the Department was down 20 complaints which is a good thing.

- The use of force is continuing to trend down greatly as well. At this time in 2022, the Department had a total of 694 complaints. The Department was still holding steady at this time at 248 complaints. This is a 64 percent decrease which is 446 incidents.
- And the biggest thing last year was hard hands. They had 509 incidents. Year to date, there are 190. This is a 62 percent decrease which is 319. This is one of Department's outstanding ones.
- Lieutenant Smith further reported that the Department had a total of three closed cases for the month. One complaint led to a summary action and two complaints were unfounded.

PERSONNEL MATTERS

1, Discussion and action on the recommendation of Chief Karl Jacobson to hire the following candidates from the Civil Service Eligibility List #22-68CR:
Eligibility List #22-68CR 9/13/23

- A. Joseph Hundley
- B. Jamie Logan

- Chief Jacobson indicated that the candidates had failed their agility. They were no longer able to hire them. This is the second agility for both candidates.
- Commissioner Ribeiro indicated that they were to complete their withdrawal forms. She asked if that had occurred.
- Sergeant Finch indicated the withdrawal forms were completed after the test results.
- Commissioner Ribeiro stated that since it was on the Agenda they would still have to take action even though they signed the withdrawal forms. The recommendation would then be to not hire. Commissioners have the option to make the motion based on the Chief's recommendation to hire and vote it down or not hire and vote it up.

** Commissioner Miranda motioned to follow the recommendation of Chief Jacobson to hire Candidate No. 1, Joseph Hunley from the Eligibility List #22-68CR
 ** Commissioner Meares seconded
 ** Against: Commissioners Miranda, Meares, Walker, Ribeiro
 ** Abstention: Commissioners Lawlor

- Commissioner Lawlor stated he abstained because he got booted off the videoconference and did not hear the discussions.
- Commission Ribeiro indicated the motion failed and the candidate would be removed from the process.

** Commissioner Miranda motioned to follow Chief Jacobson's recommendation to hire No. 19, Jamie Logan from the Eligibility List #22-68CR
 ** Commissioner Meares seconded
 ** Against: Commissioners Miranda, Meares, Walker, Lawlor and Ribeiro

■ Commissioner Ribeiro indicated that the motion had failed and the candidate would be removed from the process.

2. Chief Carl Jacobson is requesting approval by the Board of Police Commissioners to send 8 Conditional Offers of employment for the Position of Police Officer, Eligibility List #22-68CR 10/25/23 and 11/29/23

** Commissioner Miranda motioned to approve the 8 Conditional offers from Eligibility List 22-68CR

** Commissioner Walker seconded

■ Commissioner Ribeiro added that she had spoken with Sergeant Finch. As the commissioners may recall, now that the Department has continuous recruiting, there is a running list. So they would see the list with the same number but different dates. So these eight conditional offers are from the last two lists. She was able to sit with Sergeant Finch and actually go through the first two lists to make sure they were hiring or offers were declined or candidates withdrew to ensure that the Department is in accordance with what has to be done and not skip anyone. So the Department is good on that. She just wanted to inform the commissioners.

** Motion passed unanimously

■ Commissioner Ribeiro indicated Chief Jacobson would excuse himself as he had another meeting to attend.

RETIREMENTS (For Board information only)

There were none.

RESIGNATION (For Board information only)

Officer Jovonni Torres, eff., November 16 2023

Officer Felder Jean- Baptiste, eff., November 16, 2023

Recruit Nisaiah Moore, eff., December 4, 2023

RECRUITMENT/SELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT

Sergeant Paul Finch

■ Sergeant Finch indicated he was positive and kind of encouraged by the fact a couple of names on this list don't want to give up. Although they resigned, they still have a positive mindset about putting their best foot forward and maybe even giving it another try.

■ There have a scheduled training session that evening. He knew one or two of them would probably be at the session tonight. So they are not giving up.

■ One of the individuals that did not pass the physical agility test will be there tonight. So he's not giving up.

■ They are continuing to work with those that are still encouraged to get better and be better so that way they can make it through the process.

■ As the Chief had alluded to earlier, there is a scheduled written examination on January 10th, 2024. There are currently over 130 applicants that would be receiving invites to the written examination. The Department will continue to reach out to them individually.

■ There is a final CHIP test scheduled on December 17th, 2024 that could increase the number of applicants that they can invite if people pass that. They hope that number does increase over the weekend.

■ Outside of that, phone calls are coming in from Rhode Island and from New York.

This is a testament to where the Department has tried different recruitments. They have asked for feedback from the interested persons about how they found out about the Department.

People say they had seen the ads. People in New York have said they had seen the Department billboards on trains. So people are seeing it and are calling to ask for more information. The Department is gladly giving it to them. They are also doing ride-alongs as well.

■ Sergeant Finch indicated he was excited to push harder and harder.

■ They are looking for new ways to actually have a shorter time span between actual testing processes. If the Department can have them more than one quarterly, then they would not lose those who are waiting. As a result, he has been speaking with the South Central Criminal Justice Association about whether they could do something more than just every three to four months. Perhaps, they could do something every other month.

■ Sergeant Finch further indicated that they were looking into how to help applicants with writing and reading and to just continue to sharpen minds when it comes to the education period. They take advantage of it during the training portion. However, some folks do struggle when it comes to having to go back the academy and back to education when they've been away from it for so long. They are looking for ideas and maybe partnering with a university to see how they could help applicants in that way.

EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE REPORT

■ Commissioner Meares updated the Commission by saying that the Committee had met with all of the personnel to come up with a plan to continue to get the policies approved. They do not have anything to present to the Commission right then. However, she was hopeful it would happen soon. They are working out some issues with union negotiations among other things.

■ Assistant Chief Ettienne added that he was optimistic that they would have something to present to the Commission in January of 2024 for approval.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

■ Commissioner Ribeiro indicated they had to get this committee up and running. She did not remember who was on the committee. She would have to check her notes.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was none.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro asked Attorney Duprey if there was any reason to go into executive session.

- Attorney Duprey indicated the Commission should think about what information they would like from her office as it relates to reporting during future executive sessions. She used to do reports but the new database does not necessarily fit with that regarding generating reports.
- Attorney Duprey further indicated that in speaking with her paralegal, they both thought it would be best to learn what information would best the Commission. She implored all to think about what sorts of reports they want from the Corporation Counsel so they could discuss it at a later date. This would be very helpful.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The next regular meeting will be on January 9, 2024
The Board adjourned at 6.29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sotonye Otunba-Payne

Sotonye Otunba-Payne