

REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
JUNE 11, 2024
BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT
VIDEOCONFERENCE AND CONFERENCE CALL VIA ZOOM

PRESENT: Commissioners Darrell Brooks; Michael Lawlor; Isaias Miranda; and
Evelise Ribeiro

Chief Karl Jacobson: Department of Police Service
Assistant Chief Manmeet Bhagtana: Department of Police Service
Assistant Chief David Zannelli: Department of Police Service
Sergeant Yelena Borisova: Department of Police Service
Sergeant Christopher Fennessy: Department of Police Service
Sergeant Paul Finch: Department of Police Service
Officer Reginald McGlotten: Department of Police Service
Asia Johnson-Clark: Administrative Assistant

Chief Anthony Campbell: Yale Police Department
Michelle Duprey, Esquire: Deputy Corporation Counsel

Gerald Antunes: Alder
Brian Becker
Tameia Bell
John Johnson
Michael Miller
Miguel Pittman, Sr.

OPEN SESSION

The Regular Session meeting of the Board of Police Commissioners was called to order at 6:00 p.m., Evelise Ribeiro, Chair, presiding.

Commissioner Ribeiro indicated that Commissioners Meares and Walker would not be attending the meeting.

AGENDA

Approval of the Agenda for the Board of Police Commissioners

- ** Commissioner Miranda moved the Approval of the Agenda
- ** Commissioner Lawlor seconded
- ** Motion passed unanimously

DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Discussion and Approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 14, 2024
Discussion and Approval of the Special Meeting Minutes of May 29, 2024

** Commissioner Brooks moved the Approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 14, 2024

** Commissioner Miranda seconded

** Motion passed unanimously

** Commissioner Miranda moved the Approval of the Special Meeting Minutes of May 29, 2024

** Commissioner Brooks seconded

** Motion passed unanimously

CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Karl Jacobson

■ Chief Jacobson greeted everyone.

■ Chief Jacobson began by speaking about the scheduled services for fallen officer, Jamal Mitchell, who was killed in the line of duty in Minneapolis on May 30th, 2024. There was service held in Minneapolis on June 11, 2024, but he is a hometown resident, native of New Haven.

■ Officer Mitchell's body and his family will be flown to Bradley Hospital on June 12, 2024 where he and the Connecticut State Police and members of the New Haven Police Department's Motor Units and Honor Guards will meet at Bradley and bring his body back to the McClam Funeral Home on Dixwell Avenue.

■ On Monday, June 17, 2024 there is a scheduled service open to the public. The wake is scheduled from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.; the service is scheduled from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The burial will be at the Evergreen Cemetery.

■ The Department is preparing for a large crowd. He thanked his team and the Connecticut State Police, CAO Regina Rush-Kittle, the deputy CAO and everyone who had helped. The city has been great in getting the Department some busses and helping to get this together on kind of a short notice.

■ An academy just graduated. He thanked the commissioners for their hard work. The academy consisted of 16 individuals and was comprised of 13 minorities and females and three white males.

■ Seven sergeants were promoted last Friday on May 7, 2024. He thanked the commissioners. It was a good promotional ceremony. He thanks Commissioner Ribeiro's for her words of wisdom at the ceremony.

■ The sergeants are going through training now. They will ride with other sergeants the following week. People would then be placed in different positions. The Department is excited about this because they are able expand the supervision in the Investigative Services Division and the Patrol Division. Regarding Patrol, they will be putting more district managers back on the street. The Department will resume its community CompStat meetings and more community-based meetings. Regarding the Department's community policing plans, they are getting back to it with the promotions of the sergeants.

- The Department is aiming for its 30x30 goal; that is 30 percent females by 2030. The Department is at 16 percent female which is a larger percentage than the rest of the state. And overall for diversity, within the ranks, the Department is currently at 46 percent white males and 54 percent minorities and females which is reversed from when this administration took over two years ago.
- Chief Jacobson thanked the commissioners for all the hires and for giving people an opportunity.
- There was a public announcement regarding an murder arrest that was made. The family of the victim were also in attendance. The three key elements that led to the arrests are as follows: the cameras helped to get the picture of the perpetrator, the community helped with identification, and then the great work of the police officers. One of the police officers identified the person in the picture as someone he had stopped in the recent past. The officer's body-worn camera footage was then used for identification. This was a really great collaboration.
- The Department got the arrest warrant within two days. He thanked Sergeant Alvarado and detectives for their great work.
- The community members talked the perpetrator into turning himself in. The suspect turned himself in. So this was truly a collaborative effort by the community, cops and cameras.
- Of the six homicides this year, four would be closed shortly either by arrests or other means. The Department is making headway with those six homicides.
- Last year, at the same time, there were 12 homicides.
- The Freddy Fixer Parade was a great community event. He thanked Commissioner Ribeiro for marching with the Department. The Department's Motorcycle Unit won an award. The Survivors of Homicide won Best Float. He also thanked Officer Nikki Curry and Assistant Chief Ettienne who worked on the float and rode with the float.
- Through the budget, they have received more positions from the Alders so that the Department could have one more lieutenant, two sergeants and one detective. They appreciate the Alders helping the Department get its control back when it comes to supervision. There are a lot of young cops on this job.
- Commissioner Brooks asked about the location of the May 17th, 2024 service for Officer Mitchell.
- Chief Jacobson responded by saying that the service would be held at Hill House High School. The location has about 1,600 seatings plus another 400 on the floor. They are expecting a large crowd.
- Commissioner Ribeiro expressed her condolences to his family and to the Minneapolis Police Department and the City of Minneapolis. She had read some articles about Officer Mitchell. He was a young officer and had just been on the job for about two years and was on a good trajectory. It is a tragedy.
- Commissioner Ribeiro indicated that the Department's Motorcycle Unit won Best Motorcycle group which was kind of interesting because she didn't know the unit entered the contest. There are upcoming events regarding the winners at the Freddy Fixer Parade. The Board should be kept informed.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS REPORT

Sergeant Fennessy

- Sergeant Fennessy would report in Lieutenant's Agosto's stead.
- Sergeant Fennessy indicated there were eight closed cases since the last meeting.

IA Case No. 23C-052: It occurred in District 2. The complaint was against Officer Andrea Moore. It was closed on May 28th, 2024. The disposition was a summary action. The complainant alleged that he his ex-landlord copied the keys to his vehicle, towed it and sold it on Facebook Marketplace. When officers responded, they did a fairly good job. However, the officer in question didn't do a report until several weeks later because she said she felt a little bit overwhelmed and confused. Summary action means an officer is counseled and provided other resources to utilize as far as correcting the behavior in the future. She's a new officer. They believe summary action was appropriate under the circumstances.

IA Case No. 24C-013: The compliant was received on January 24th, 2024. The complainant is Mr. Ray Bidon. This occurred in the Fair Haven District. The officer complained of is Officer Krzysztof Ruszczyk. It was closed May 21st, 2024. The disposition is exonerated. This investigation had to do with a motor vehicle accident involving a tractor-trailer and a railroad trestle overpass. The complainant had approached the driver of the tractor-trailer. Officer Ruszczyk believed that Mr. Bidon was trying to get the driver to move the tractor-trailer. The tractor-trailer accident into the overpass was actually an Amtrak job that they would be generating a report for. So Officer Ruszczyk in trying to preserve the crime scene asked Mr. Bidon to please stop trying to talk the driver into moving the vehicle. The complainant stated that he felt Officer Ruszczyk was rude and threatened to arrest him. However, after watching the body-worn camera footage, reading the reports and interviews, the investigation determined by a preponderance of the evidence that he did not engage in misconduct because that was lawful, justified and proper not to have the vehicle moved. So the officer was exonerated.

IA Case No. 24C-018: This was received February 8th, 2024 from Mr. Joseph Lewis . This occurred in District 4. The officer complained of is Officer Stacey Villone. This was closed on May 20th, 2024 and the disposition is exonerated. Mr. Lewis had complained that he been admitted into the hospital and was assaulted by staff. He contacted police and asked for them to make a report and provide him with a case number. Officer Villone did all those things on that date. Sergeant Fennessy indicated he could not elaborate further due to HIPPA protections in regards to Mr. Lewis's complaint. It was determined that this complaint was unfounded because the Officer did take the report, filed a report and did it on the same day Mr. Lewis made his complaint.

IA Case No. 24C-024: The date of occurrence is March 18th, 2024. The complainant is Ms. Tywana Harrington. She made this complaint on behalf of her son. The incident occurred in District 8. The officer complained of was Detective Derrick Huelsman. The date it closed was May 19th, 2024. The disposition was unfounded. This had to do with New Haven police detectives responding to 910 Chapel Street, Chipotle, and a possible domestic dispute. While the officers were conducting an investigation to determine what was occurring, one of the females involved attempted to leave the premises. Officer Arnone stopped her from leaving by grabbing her arm and explained to her that she needed to wait until the investigation was completed. The female was not happy with the fact that the officer touched her. Once the investigation was concluded, the female was allowed to leave. Officers were unable to identify

the female complainant as being involved in a crime. The officer was exonerated. This was a plainclothes operation during which the officers were attempting take a subject with a warrant into custody. The subject was tackled. The complainant stated that she thought that officers had struck him several times while he was on the ground. A review of the body-worn camera footages showed that that did not occur. In addition to being arrested for the felony warrant that he had, he was also found to be in possession of a loaded handgun at the time. After careful review, this was determined to be unfounded.

IA Case No. 24C-027: It was received on March 25th, 2024. The complainant was Ms. Tonya Younger. It occurred in District 5. The officers complained of are Officers Roch and Foley and Sergeant Lawrence. This was closed on May 10th, 2024. The disposition is unfounded. Ms. Younger complained that officers did not retrieve her property from a partner she had that she loaned a tv to. She said she did not want to file charges repeatedly. She just wanted the officers to get her property back. She was not pleased with the fact that she was told that that's not a function that police can do. It is more of a civil matter. However, if she wanted to press charges, she could do that. Ms. Younger chose not to file charges. So as a result the investigation this was determined to be unfounded.

IA Case No. 24C-038: This was received April 4th, 2024. The complaint is Mr. John Kroeber. This incident occurred in District 10. The officer complained of is Officer Luis Lopez. This case was closed on May 31st, 2024. This disposition is withdrawn. This individual originally made the complaint about Assistant Animal Control Officer Luiz Lopez stating that he thought the dog was going to be euthanized, and that he had called the dog pound to take the dog. Upon contacting Mr. Kroeber later, April 18, 2024, he withdrew the complaint because he had had communication from the shelter which including pictures of the dog that showed how well the dog he helped save was doing. At Mr. Kroeber's request the complaint was withdrawn.

IA Case No. 24C-040: This was received on May 18th, 2024. The complainant's name is Mr. Cristal Castro. The incident district is the Downtown District, District 1. The officers involved were Officers Chin and Daniele. This was closed on May 8th, 2024. The disposition is unfounded. Ms. Castro complained that there was excessive force. She was verbally antagonized and her body was touched excessively before calling for a female officer. She also claimed that she was being stalked by a bicycle officer as well. After a review of the body-worn camera footages, interviews and reports, it was determined that officers were dispatched to assist the fire department regarding a pile of clothing that had been set on fire. Officers located Ms. Castro there. She matched the description given of the person who set the clothes on fire. Upon the officers attempt to make contact, she ran away. The force used was just the force that was necessary, appropriate and reasonable in order to take her into custody. Therefore, the complaint was deemed to be unfounded.

IA Case No. 24C-046: This was received on May 15th, 2024. The complainant is Ms. Soumya Jadbai. The incident district is Newhallville, District 7. The officer complained of is Officer Dennis Cole. This was closed on May 24, 2024. The disposition is unfounded. Ms. Jadbai had called for the police because her five-year-old son at a local school had been hit by another five-year-old student at that school with a puzzle piece. Ms. Jadbai stated that she thought that the officer was rude and aggressive when he spoke to her as the officer tried to explain to her

that this was not a criminal matter, that it could very likely be handled by the school. Upon making contact with Ms. Jadbai, she wanted to know the name of the other child involved. Officer Cole did not provide that to her because officers are not allowed to release juvenile names. When Sergeant Fennessy spoke to Ms. Jadbai, he explained all of this to her. She was unhappy with that answer. Sergeant Fennessy further explained that by law he could not divulge the name of juveniles unless it's the parent of that juvenile, but should she wish to get a copy of the report, she could get it from the information he gave to her. This is not being a criminal matter and without malfeasance was determined to be unfounded.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro asked about IA Case No.: 24C-018. She asked if Mr. Lewis had been contacted because that was a letter that was sent to herself and Commissioner Walker.

■ Sergeant Fennessy indicated that he was actually the investigator in that matter. He spoke to Mr. Lewis at great length. One of his complaints was that he never received a copy of the report. He is an older gentleman. He did not think Mr. Lewis was very familiar with how to request a copy of the report electronically. He was sent an electronic copy via his son's e-mail at his request. A copy was sent to his home via certified mail at his request as well. Officer Fennessy indicated he spoke to Mr. Lewis for about an hour. At the end of the conversation, he understood that the incident he reported was documented and why it was documented the way it was (HIPPA laws) and why no arrests were made.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro asked for a copy of the letter. A letter was sent to her specifically and she would like to respond to Mr. Lewis as well.

PERSONNEL MATTERS

1. Discussion and action on the recommendation of Chief Anthony Campbell, Yale Police Department, to hire the following candidates for the Yale Police Department:

- A. Brian Becker
- B. Michael Miller
- C. John Johnson

■ Chief Campbell indicated he had three lateral officers before the Board. They come from diverse background. These three officers would bring to Yale Police Department to full strength. The New Haven Police Department has been called upon many times to deal with protests on the campus especially in the wake of the Israel-Hamas war. Having these officers would help their department be in a better position to better serve the Yale and New Haven community. Each of these three men would be great additions to their department.

■ He further stated that some members of the Board had had the opportunity to interview the three candidates in the pre-interview. They will answer any questions from the Board in a respectful and astute manner. The Board will then see why they are great additions to the department.

■ Chief Campbell thanked the chair and each commissioner for all of their service and for helping the Yale Police Department get up to full strength.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro indicated there was an opportunity to speak to each of them last week.

■ Commissioner Miranda indicated that the three lateral candidates are good officers in his opinion. They have very good backgrounds. They have a lot of experience. He congratulated the three officers.

** Commissioner Lawlor moved to Approve Chief Campbell's Request to Hire Officers Brian Becker, Michael Miller and John Johnson to the Yale Police Department

** Commissioner Brooks seconded

** The motion failed unanimously

■ Commissioner Ribeiro congratulated the new hires and Chief Campbell.

■ Chief Campbell was thankful. He congratulated the three new hires.

2. Discussion and action on the recommendation of Chief Karl Jacobson to remove the following candidate from Police Eligibility List 22-68CR dated February 12, 2024:

A. #32 Tameia Bell

■ Commissioner Ribeiro asked Ms. Bell if she wanted to be heard in an open session or a closed session. She went on to explain each. Ms. Bell opted to be heard in a closed session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

** Commissioner Lawlor motioned to go into Executive Session to discuss Tameia Bell.

** Commissioner Brooks seconded

** Motion passed unanimously

■ Commissioner Ribiero invited the following people to the closed session: Chief Jacobson, the commissioners, Assistant Chief Bhagtana, Assistant Chief Zannelli, Officer McGlotten, Sergeant Borisova and Attorney Duprey

Executive Session began at 6:34 p.m.

** Commissioner Lawlor motioned to come out Executive Session

** Commissioner Miranda seconded

** Motion passed unanimously

Execuitve Session ended at 7:02 p.m.

** Commissioner Lawlor moved to Accept Chief Jacobson's recommendation that Tameia Bell be Removed from the Candidates

** Commissioner Brooks seconded

** Motion passed unanimously

3. Chief Karl Jacobson is requesting approval by the Board of Police Commissioners to send 2 Conditional Offers of Employment for the position of Police Officer from Eligibility List 22-68CR, 5/29/2024.

- ** Commissioner Lawlor moved to Approve Chief Jacobson's Request to send Two Conditional Offers of Employment to the Two individuals mentioned
- ** Commissioner Miranda seconded

■ Commissioner Ribeiro indicated that she did not recall getting a copy of this list. They do not know who these two candidates are. She asked that the list be forward to the Board as this is a new list.

■ Sergeant Finch asked if the Board needed the names.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro responded by saying that if Sergeant Finch knew the names, he should state them.

■ Sergeant Finch said the candidates are Tyler Bradley and Ty Netto.

- ** Motion passed unanimously

RETIREMENTS (For Board information only)

There were none.

RESIGNATIONS (For Board information only)

Recruit Franchessca Flores, eff., May 13, 2024

Officer in Training Jean-Gilles Patrick, eff., May 30, 2024

Officer in Training John Brunetti, eff., June 5, 2024

RECRUITMENT/SELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT

Sergeant Paul Finch

■ Sergeant Finch indicated that the next written examination would take place on July 18, 2024. The South Central Justice Association has been working with the Department to do quarterly testing. He was grateful that quarterly tests are available and for the Board working with the staff on just moving this process along to make the testing happen and ultimately hiring as many officers as they can.

■ Anyone taking the July 18, 2024 written examination must have their Chip Card before July 18, 2024. If anyone knows folks who are interested, just make them aware of this information and continue to send people our way.

EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE REPOR

■ Commissioner Ribiero stated that she and Assistant Chief Bhagtana should schedule a meeting to get the General Orders back on track.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

■ Assistance Chief Bhagtana indicated that she had sent her report earlier.

- They are working with the city’s Engineering Department and Utility Communications regarding the property room shelving and security system.
- The Department is now conducting job analyses with the testing company for the ranks of Detectives, Lieutenants and Captains.
- There are 16 officers currently in Phase One of FTO and three officers in training for Phase Two.
- Regarding uniforms, the Department is putting a Wear-Test Committee for Uniforms which would entail officers from different divisions, different heights, gender to make sure that the Department has the appropriate uniform. The wear-test would take a year before the Department starts ordering the uniforms.
- Regarding Facilities, there is funding that was approved by the Board of Alders for ammunition storage at 200 Wintergreen. The project will begin soon.
- Personnel updates: One assistant municipal animal control officer resigned in May. The Department is looking to fill that position. Currently, there is one name left on the Civil Service List. There has been a request to appoint that person.
- Four clerks were terminated from the Records Division last month. There’s an active list. Sergeant Finch and his team have been conducting background checks for them to fill those vacancies.
- There is another opening for a Grants Coordinator as the current one resigned on June 7th, 2024. This position has been posted with a closing date of June 9th, 2024
- Commissioner Ribeiro indicated that she requested that the Department give the Board an update on personnel, any disciplines, hiring, terminations, resignations. According to the Board’s bylaws, in addition to being responsible to hire, discipline and possibly terminate sworn officers except for the chief, it is also part of the Board is also responsible to carry out those same functions with the non-sworn personnel. The Board’s bylaws says that they can delegate that authority to the chief. In the past, the Board would get updates but the updates have not been provided for some time.
- As a result, Chief Bhagtana had sent the first report to the Board. She thanked Chief Bhagtana for the report which went all the way back to 2019. So it’s actually a lot more than she has requested.
- Commissioner Ribeiro went on to inquire about what “contractual upgrade” meant.
- Chief Bhagtana replied by explaining that the “contractual upgrade” had to do with a police officer’s advancement from Grade 1 to Grade 3 and the associated increment in salaries.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was none

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- Attorney Duprey indicated that there was nothing from her office to report.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The next regular meeting will be on July 9, 2024.
The Board adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sotonye Otunba-Payne

Sotonye Otunba-Payne