

SPECIAL SESSION MINUTES
JUNE 16, 2020
BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT
VIRTUAL AND TELEPHONIC VIA ZOOM

PRESENT: Commissioners Anthony Dawson; Isaias Miranda; Evelise Ribeiro; Gregory Smith; and Donald Walker

Mayor Justin Elicker: City of New Haven
Chief Otoniel Reyes: Department of Police Service
Assistant Chief Renee Dominguez: Department of Police Service
Assistant Chief Karl Jacobson: Department of Police Service
Assistant Chief Herbert Sharp: Department of Police Service
Captain Anthony Duff: Department of Police Service
Lieutenant Elliott Rosa: Department of Police Service
Lieutenant David Zannelli: Department of Police Service
Sergeant Yelena Borisova: Department of Police Service
Sergeant Christopher Cameron: Department of Police Service
Sergeant Bertram Ettienne: Department of Police Service
Sergeant Michael Fumiatti: Department of Police Service
Sergeant Ryan Przybylski: Department of Police Service
Sergeant Betsy Segui: Department of Police Service
Sergeant Dana Smith: Department of Police Service
Detective J. Cordero: Department of Police Service
Detective Lenny Soto: Department of Police Service
Officer Jay Bandy: Department of Police Service
Officer Jason Galvan: Department of Police Service
Officer Cesar Gutierrez: Department of Police Service
Officer Jason Koenig: Department of Police Service
Officer Orlando: Department of Police Service
Officer Tiffany Ortiz: Department of Police Service
Officer James Paxton: Department of Police Service
Officer Raul Pereira: Department of Police Service
Officer Anthony Ryken: Department of Police Service
Officer Jason Santiago: Department of Police Service
Officer Christopher Stroschio: Department of Police Service
Ramona Davis: Administrative Assistant II

Officer Florencio Cotto, Jr.: President, Elm City Local
Marshall Segar, Esquire: For Elm City Local

Gage Frank: Director of Communications, Mayor's Office
Scott Jackson: Chief Administrative Officer
Seam Matteson: Chief of Staff
Cathleen Simpson, Esquire: Director of Labor Relations

Michael Wolak, Esquire: Senior Deputy Corporation Counsel

Jessie Agosto	News 8
Jennifer Agroni	WFSB
Christiana Alteri	NBC Connecticut
Tom Arnone	Lalo's iPhone
Matt Austin	King's iPhone
Jakub Baliga	Folch
Lloyd Barrett	Kevin's iPhone
Shanaya Bell	Bridget
Richard Benson	PD 4
Blake Black	PD 7
M. Borges	PD 8
John Brangi	P 23
Thomas Breen: New Haven Independent	Boyle
Bridget Brosnahan	JL
Christian Bruckhart	Nikki's iPhone
Caceia	OMI
Eric Cieply	Derek's iPhone
M.K. Colon	Steve's iPhone
Jose Crespo: Board of Alders	Jocelyn
M. Criscuolo	Freddy
Jenna Davis	Tee Hee
Joe DeNatalie	Detention
Ed Dunfold	Nikki's iPhone
Amber Durkin	Timothy's iPhone
Jhane Eason	Chanz
Jose Escobar, Sr.	Annie's iPhone
David Flores	JB
Richard Furlow	Howard's iPhone
Michael Haines	Ward 15
Mike Hall	Ryan W.
Charles Hebron, Sr.	Scuba Steve
Ryan Hooper	Bway's iPhone
D. Huelsman	David's iPhone
Daniel Hunt	Scott
Haley Istcb	Sean's iPhone
Douglas Jackson	Ward 18
Sharon Johnson	Sal
Breck Joseph	Revllini
Maria K.	Claire
Kemicakes	LSkywalker
S. Kendall	Bros
Jillian Knox	Trevor's iPad
John Lambe	Grillo
Patti Lambe	Rob

Jocelyn Lavendier
C. Leonardo
S. Maher
M. Mastroianni
R. Maturo
Reeves McArthur
O. McCoy
Steve McMorris
Jessica Mirimima
William Moore
Lindsey Nesto
Justino Nieves
Maria O'Leary
Francisco Ortiz: Former Chief of Police
Brian Pzasak
Katie Pearse
Rick Pelletier
L. Pena
Eric Pesino
Miguel Pittman, Sr.: Community and Police Relations Task Force
David Pulisi
Essau Ramirez
Christopher Rinaldi
Karl Rindfleisch
Luis Rivera
Ty Robinson
Michelle Rodriquez
Gabriel Rosa
Norbetto Rosa
Jessica Russo
Daophet Sanaxayarath
Jasmine Sanders
Anastasia Scott
Kiyaniah Simpkins
Adam Singletary
Robyn Smith
Christopher Troche
Paul Vitale
Tyisha Walker-Myers: President of the Board of Alders
Shirley Wanen
Rodney William
Glenn Wittig

Doug's iPhone
Sal

OPEN SESSION

The meeting was called to order at 6:08 p.m., Anthony Dawson, Chair, presiding. The Chair read an excerpt from the Special Meeting Notification/Agenda into the record.

- The commissioners introduced themselves.

Consideration and vote on the recommendation of Chief Reyes that the following be promoted to the rank of Detective:

James Paxton
Christopher Stroschio

- Chief Reyes presented both officers to the Board for promotion by giving brief background information about the officers.

- Officers Paxton and Stroschio addressed the board briefly. Each officer was asked questions.

- ** Commissioner Ribeiro moved to Approve Chief Reyes' recommendation that Officer James Paxton and Officer Christopher Stroschio be promoted to the Rank of Detective
- ** Commissioner Smith seconded
- ** Unanimously passed

- Officers Paxton and Stroschio were congratulated.

Discussion and action on the recommendation to remove the following candidate from Eligibility List #19-37:

Blake Black

- Assistant Chief Sharp stated that Mr. Black had opted to be heard in a closed session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- ** **Commissioner Ribeiro moved to Enter Executive Session for Personnel Matters**
- ** **Commissioner Walker seconded**
- ** **Unanimously passed**

The Board entered Executive Session at 6:31 p.m.

- ** **Commissioner Ribeiro moved to Exit Executive Session**
- ** **Commissioner Walker seconded**
- ** **Unanimously passed**

The Board exited Executive Session at 6:52 p.m.

- ** Commissioner Ribeiro moved to Approve the Removal of Blake Black from the Eligibility List #19-37
- ** Commissioner Walker seconded
- ** Unanimously passed

Consideration and vote on the recommendation of Chief Reyes that the employment of Officer Jason Santiago with the New Haven Department of Police Service be terminated.

- Commissioner Dawson inquired of Attorney Segar as to whether his client wanted to be heard in an open or a closed session. Attorney Segar replied that his client would prefer to be heard in an open session as there needed to be transparency.
- Attorney Segar stated that the agreed-upon procedure was that someone from Labor Relations would present the city's case.
- Attorney Simpson, Director of Labor Relations, stated that the agreement was that each side would do an opening statement. The city would begin with its opening statement followed by Chief Reyes' rationale for recommending termination. The union would then present its opening statement. Officer Santiago would also address the Board.
- Attorney Simpson spoke about the events that led to an investigation and ultimately the termination hearing of Officer Jason Santiago. The State's Attorney's Officer notified Chief Reyes of the New Haven Police Department of a potentially inappropriate conduct involving Officer Jason Santiago. The State's Attorney will determine whether or not to press charges. The city's position is that whatever the State's Attorney decides to do is of no consequence to what the Board decides. The Board's focus is on policies and rules.
- Chief Reyes stated his position regarding Officer Jason Santiago's actions on December 25, 2019 during the arrest of Mr. Luiz Rivera.
- Attorney Segar stated that Mr. Santiago's action was a mistake. Officer Jason Santiago's body of work does not indicate that he is a bad apple. The community he served support him knowing that to err is human.
- Officer Jason Santiago read a prepared speech in both English and Spanish.
- Attorney Segar stated that Mr. Santiago was remorseful. It was a split-second decision. He was emphatic that termination was not the answer. Instead, restorative justice was proposed. He expounded on how restorative justice may be achieved.
- Commissioners Ribeiro and Smith asked questions of both Attorneys Simpson and Segar.
- Commissioner Smith asked about the whether the Board could go into executive session
- Commissioner Ribeiro stated the Board could go into executive session only if the union, Mr. Santiago and his attorney were in agreement.
- Attorney Segar agreed that the Board could deliberate in a manner it chooses.
- Attorney Wolak stated that Officer Santiago as the employee would have to agree to the Board going into executive session.
- Commissioner Smith asked if the union and Officer Santiago were in agreement to the Board having its discussions in executive session after which its decision would be expressed in open session.
- Attorney Segar stated that Officer Santiago was in agreement.
- Attorney Simpson on behalf of the city agreed to the Board going into executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- ** Commissioner Smith moved to Enter Executive Session to Discuss Personnel Matters**
- ** Commissioner Ribeiro seconded**
- ** Unanimously passed**

■ Attorney Wolak suggested that the executive session should be limited to members of the Board and Mayor Elicker in his capacity as an ex officio member of the Board. He could be called to join the meeting, if he is needed.

The Board entered Executive Session at 8:12 p.m.

■ Attorney Wolak later joined the Board while it was in executive session.

- ** Commissioner Walker moved to Exit Executive Session**
- ** Commissioner Ribeiro seconded**
- ** Unanimously passed**

The Board exited Executive Session at 9:06 p.m.

■ Chief Reyes stated that Commissioner Dawson was experiencing technical difficulties and was making his way to the New Haven Police Department Headquarters where he would have virtual access to the meeting.

- ** Commissioner Ribeiro moved to go into Recess**
- ** Commissioner Walker seconded**
- ** Unanimously passed**

The Board entered recess at 9:15 p.m.

- ** Commissioner Ribeiro moved to Exit Recess**
- ** Commissioner Smith seconded**
- ** Unanimously passed**

The Board exited recess at 9:26 p.m.

■ Commissioner Dawson was apologetic for the delay.

- ** Commissioner Walker moved to Vote on Chief Reyes' Recommendation to Terminate Officer Jason Santiago**
- ** Commissioner Smith seconded**

■ Commissioner Dawson stated that a roll call was requested.

- ** Voting for: Commissioners Dawson, Ribeiro, Walker and Mayor Elicker**

** Voting against: Commissioners Miranda and Smith
** Passed

- Attorney Segar thanked the Board.
- Commissioner Dawson was again apologetic for the delay, but at the end of the day the Board did the best it could.

** **Commissioner Ribeiro moved to Adjourn the Special Meeting**
** **Commissioner Smith seconded**
** **Unanimously passed**

The Board adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sotonye Otunba-Payne