

REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
OCTOBER 12, 2021
BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS
AND TRAFFIC AUTHORITY
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT
VIDEOCONFERENCE AND CONFERENCE CALL VIA ZOOM

PRESENT: Commissioners Darrell Brooks (joined - 6:10 p.m.); Michael Lawlor; Tracey Meares; Isais Miranda; Evelise Ribeiro; and Donald Walker

Interim Chief Dominguez: Department of Police Service
Assistant Chief Carl Jacobson: Department of Police Service
Captain David Zannelli: Department of Police Service
Lieutenant Mamet Colon: Department of Police Service
Sergeant Yelena Borisova: Department of Police Service
Sergeant Paul Finch: Department of Police Service
Officer D. Cohen: Department of Police Service
Officer Reginald McGlotten: Department of Police Service
Officer Raul Pereira: Department of Police Service

Rebecca Bombero: Deputy CAO, City of New Haven
Michelle Duprey, Esquire: Deputy Corporation Counsel
Bruce Fischer: Transportation, Traffic and Parking
Karla Lindquist: Transportation, Traffic and Parking

Gerald Antunes - Board of Alders
Nathaniel Brackett
Rich Buckholz
Ali Frearman
Ben Lambert - New Haven Independent
Daniel Lynch
Sophie Sonnenfeld
Angelina

OPEN SESSION

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m., Evelise Ribeiro, Chair, presiding.

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRAFFIC AUTHORITY

Following the regular meeting of the Traffic Authority, Mr. Fischer and Ms. Lindquist excused themselves at 6:32 p.m.

AGENDA

- ** Commissioner Walker moved to Approve the Agenda for the Regular Meeting of the Board of Police Commissioners for October 12, 2021
- ** Commissioner Miranda seconded

** Motion passed unanimously

DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- ** Commissioner Walker moved to Approve the September 12, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes
- ** Commissioner Meares seconded
- ** Motion passed unanimously

PUBLIC COMMENTS

■ Commissioner Ribeiro called on Mr. Buckholz for public comment. She commented that he had been a commissioner of the Board in the past.

■ Mr. Rich Buckholz thanked the Board, Chief Dominguez and Assistant Chief Jacobson for their service and commitment to the City of New Haven. He has always had the utmost respect and admiration for the women and men of the New Haven Police Department, and always regarded the NHPD as one of the very best in the country. He was truly sorry for what the Department has had to endure over the past couple of years as they were not afforded the respect and appreciation all should have felt. The challenges we all face in New Haven are very concerning, some areas obviously more so than others, but all have to do with the quality of life throughout our city. In the past several years our right to a peaceful enjoyment of our homes has been repeatedly disrupted as we have been faced with the continuous onslaught of the excessively loud music coming from Long Wharf, River Street, Fulton Street, East Rock Park and other areas within the city at all hours of the day and night. While he appreciated the recent enforcement and attention to this quality of life concerns that has plagued so many residents throughout the city and beyond for far too long, the hope is that we can expect a continued effort in confronting this issue. Thank you for affording me this opportunity to share my concerns. And thanks to all of you for serving our city at such difficult times. I wish only the bests for everyone here tonight as well as to all my neighbors throughout the city. Thank you for your time.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro thanked Mr. Buckholz. She indicated that Chief Dominguez would get in touch with Mr. Buckholz, if there was anything to respond to.

CHIEF’S REPORT

Chief Renee Dominguez

■ Chief Dominguez began with the crime statistics. She indicated that there 88 non-fatal shootings and 22 homicides. Last year at the same time there were 83 non-fatal shootings and 17 homicides.

■ The city had mandated that its employees either, if fully vaccinated, upload their vaccine cards onto the designated portal or, if not vaccinated, get test results uploaded onto the designated portal. As a result of this mandate, more employees have chosen to be vaccinated. Overall, for the entire police department, 38 new individuals have been fully vaccinated or begun with their first shots. Twenty-five of the 38 are sworn personnel. The others are civilians in other bargaining units. Sixty-five percent of the Department are fully or partially vaccinated.

■ The Department will continue to access these numbers in order to monitor its compliance. The Department is 100 percent in compliance with the city's mandate as all have uploaded their vaccination cards or uploaded their test results.

■ There were two recruitments walks the previous week on Tuesday (Fair Haven) and Thursday (the Hill). Mayor Elicker, CRB, some alders and community members were also in attendance on Thursday. Flyers were handed out. They had a really good engagement with the community. Some indicated they would take the flyer for friends. All the businesses indicated they would put the flyers on their windows. They were able to answer the questions that those interested in applying had. They have extended the application deadline for one more week.

■ East Coastin's motorcycle, non-permitted, non-sanctioned, stunts event took place in the area of Forbes Avenue on September 25, 2021. While the Department did not want this event to take place, it did see a drop in attendance by 50 percent. About 10,000 people attended last year. This year there were about 5,000 people. The organizer of this event was arrested after he was told that there would be no stunt shows. That was the piece that the Department did not want. They did overrun the officers. So, the stunt show proceeded.

■ Since then, the Department has taken numerous actions within the city such as requiring payments from them for the overtime for the Department and the Public Works. There were several departments within the city working together to ensure that this was a non-event and then when it turned into an event to make sure that it was a successful event and safe event for the officers and the public.

■ The Department is in the process of compiling warrants for individuals that are going to be identified via body-worn camera footages, social media, etc. They have a lot of footages to go through. Chief Dominguez indicated she would report back on this once they have a final number.

■ The Department is approximately up \$125,000 in overtime as a result of that event. This does not include the help from Connecticut State Troopers, Public Works and the other city departments.

■ The Department is continuing with its weekly briefing conferences. Due to the holiday on Monday, the press conference will take place on October 13, 2021 at 10:30 a.m. The Department had received feedback from the community that they wanted some sort of regular engagement and updates as to what is going on. So, this would be the third of week of updating the public about the prior week.

■ On October 13, 2021 there will be an awards ceremony led by Tracey Spell of Project Longevity whereby 10 individuals, consisting of sworn and non-sworn individuals, would be recognized for their work with Project Longevity. It would take place at 200 Wintergreen at 8:00 p.m. This event would take place outside due to the Covid-19.

■ The application period had closed for the Detective Test. The test will take place in the first week of December. They are happy to inform the Board that 61 officers applied to take the test. This is more than they have had in the past.

■ There are approximately 10 vacancies in the Detective Bureau. She asked Assistant Chief Jacobson if he knew the exact number of vacancies.

■ Assistance Chief Jacobson indicated there were 14 vacancies in the Detective Bureau.

■ The "Battle of the Badges" flag football has been scheduled. There will be media blasts regarding this planned event. This is a battle between the Department and New Haven Fire Department. The Departments will decorate their trucks and give out candy for Halloween

before the flag game at Winslow Augustine Field so that everyone can treat-or-trick in a safe setting. All were invited to attend.

PERSONNEL MATTERS

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

1. #57 - Brackett, Nathaniel
2. #59 - Cardenas, Mike
3. #60 - Lynch, David
4. #62 - Gibson, Patrick

- Commissioner Ribeiro asked how many of the four candidates were present
- Mr. Brackett indicated he was present.
- Sergeant Finch indicated Mr. Lynch was also present.
- Commissioner Ribeiro asked Mr. Brackett and Mr. Lynch if they would like to be heard in open session or closed session. She went on to explain what each meant.
- Commissioner Ribeiro asked both what they would like to do. Mr. Brackett and Mr. Lynch both opted to be heard in open session.
- Mr. Brackett addressed the Board and was asked questions.
- Mr. Lynch addressed the Board and was asked questions.

** Commissioner Walker motioned to remove, #57, Nathaniel Brackett from Eligibility List #21-01

** Commissioner Meares seconded

** Motion passed unanimously

** Commissioner Walker motioned to remove, #59, Mike Cardenas from the Eligibility List #21-01

** Commissioner Miranda seconded

** Motion passed unanimously

** Commissioner Walker motioned to remove, #60, Daniel Lynch from the Eligibility List #21-01

** Commissioner Miranda seconded

** Motion passed unanimously

** Commissioner Walker motioned to remove, #62, Patrick Gibson from the Eligibility List #21-01

** Commissioner Miranda seconded

** Motion passed unanimously

INTERNAL AFFAIRS REPORT

Lieutenant Manmeet Colon

■ Lieutenant Colon indicated that there were two closed cases for September.

IA CASE NO. 21C-067: The complaint is dated September 3rd, 2021. The complainant reported that civilian Records clerk was the person the complaint was against. The complainant alleged that he had been waiting for almost two years for a copy of his incident report detailing his robbery for insurance purposes. The complaint was assigned to Lieutenant Weted of the Records Division for further investigation. His investigation confirmed that the incident was a robbery with a firearm complaint from 2019 listing the complainant as the victim, and that the investigation was listed in the Records Management System as open and actively being investigated by the Detective Bureau. Lieutenant Weted spoke with the Detective Bureau sergeant who was supervising the case and received permission to release the incident report to the victim, in this case also the complainant. That civilian clerk did not violate any policies since the Records Division does not release any open or active felony cases. And the complainant indicated that he was satisfied with the disposition of his complaint. Therefore, the clerk was exonerated. A certified letter was sent to the complainant. This matter was closed on September 13, 2021.

IA CASE NO. 21C-060: This complaint was received on August 19, 2021. The complaint is against two officers. The complainant alleged that the two officers were continually harassing and arresting him. The complaint was assigned to Lieutenant Przybylski, who is the district manager for the officers, for investigation. Based on the analyses of body-worm camera footage, the reports and any supplemental reports, it was revealed that two recent stops of the complainant whereby the officers listed in their reports that officers appropriately detained the complainant based on the information provided by the Department's Narcotics Unit to include video surveillance of the complainant selling drugs. The complainant was also arrested by the same two officers during a pervious incident for being in possession of an illegal firearm. The actions of the officers were deemed appropriate and lawful. The complainant told Lieutenant Przybylski that he made the complaint because he was more concerned about having an active warrant. The complainant was satisfied with the conversation he had with Lieutenant Przybylski and understood he was stopped and searched on August 19, 2021 based on articulatable probable cause. Therefore, the complaint was unfounded. A certified letter was sent to the complainant on October 5, 2021.

■ Lieutenant Colon indicated that to date there had been 77 cases. There are 28 open cases in Internal Affairs. Eight of the open cases have been assigned to Patrol. One has been sustained. One has been withdrawn. Eight of the cases closed with exonerations. Twenty-eight have been unfounded. And two ended up with summary actions.

■ Lieutenant Colon went on to breakdown the nature of the complaints as follows: There were seven complaints for unlawful stops, illegal search. There were five complaints for false reports. There were five complaints for alleged criminal conduct on or off duty. There were no complaints regarding inappropriate social media. There were eight other unknown complaints. There were 16 neglect-of-duty complaints. There was one complaint for property damage and missing property. There were five complaints for false reports or error in reports. There were 14 complaints for excessive force, injury complaints. There were two complaints regarding racial profiling and bias. There were 10 rudeness complaints. There were four harassment and threatening complaints. There were no complaints of mishandling of PD equipment.

- For the month of September compared to last year, there were 17 OC spray deployments compared to 23 last year. There were 85 firearm displays compared to 68 last year. No baton usage this year compared to four last year. There have been 108 hands or takedowns compared to 116 last year. There have been three canine deployments compared to six last year. There have been no officer-involved shootings.
- There have been 20 Taser deployments compared to 33 last year. There were have been 16 Taser-laser (Taser pointing) compared to 39 last year.
- Total use of force by year are as follows: There have been 249 so far for this year compared to 289 last year.

RETIREMENTS (For Board information only)

There were none.

RESIGNATION (For Board information only)

Records Clerk Oriel Brinkley, eff., August 4, 2021
 Administrative Assistant II Ramona Davis, eff., August 24, 2021
 Records Clerk II Tashasua M. Torres, eff., September 20, 2021
 Officer Matthew Curran, eff., October 17, 2021

LATERAL TANSFFER (For Bord information only)

Executive Administrative Assistant Dawn Lewis, eff., October 15, 2021

RECRUITMENT/SELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT

- Sergeant Finch indicated that the last time they spoke there were 216 applicants. As of October 12, 2021 there are 330 applicants. He and other officers have recently been spending some time on the radio airwaves. He had been on Channel 8 with Officer Alejandro Rodriguez who is from New Haven. Channel 8 did a focus on him since he’s from the Fair Haven part of New Haven. They were also a Latino radio station.
- Sergeant Finch indicated that he 94.3 Electric Drum. He was interviewed by Mr. Juan Castillo during which he also spoke about recruitment process. He did an interview with Chaz & AJ in the morning just the other day. Chaz & AJ have welcomed him back in person to continue speaking about the recruitment process on October 13, 2021.
- As Chief Dominguez mentioned previously, they have been running conditioning clinics and also information sessions. His goal is to continue running the conditioning clinics all the way up until the academy begins so that they have continued relationships with those that will enter the academy to ensure that they are prepared for the actual physical agility test they have to take right before the academy starts.
- Sergeant Finch indicated that he has been spending time at the gyms not necessarily working out but visiting the gyms and handing out flyers and trying to get those he encounters to apply. Today, he was at the military base and the train station.
- They have a heavy social media presence. He tries to update it as frequently as possible to give people information about what is going on with the process. The deadline has been extended to next Friday, October 22, 2021.
- As far as the Civil Service lists there are 74 candidates still in the process. Currently, there are nine candidates in the medical phase. This is the last step before they are sworn in to be

police officers in the academy. There are four candidates in the psychological phase. There are four in the polygraph phase. The efforts are continuing in the process to get people through the background checks. The background officers are doing a great job. The hope is to have large class for the academy.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro indicated she appreciated the effort. She asked how many people applied for the last list. Captain Zannelli replied by saying that the ended up with 482 applicants, but that was at closing.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro said that the Department then ended up with 170 or 180 applicants. Chief Dominguez indicated that it was 176. Captain Zannelli indicated that was for conditional offers.

EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE REPORT

■ Commissioner Meares indicated there was no report. For the benefit of the public, she indicated that they were still processing a number of policies that need to be approved because of the new legal requirements and to fulfill class obligations. She just received another two or three on October 11, 2021 from Captain Zannelli so they will be right on that.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

■ Commissioner Ribeiro indicated that she was able to meet with the Chief Dominguez, Ms. Alissa Ebbson and Mr. Mike Gormany. A quick recap. She was provided the end of the fiscal year closeout budget. They were still working on it. They are still working on the fiscal year, 2022. For fiscal year 2021 which ended on June 30th of this year, the Department ended with \$1.1M deficit in overtime. However, there was a \$2.7M surplus in the overall budget. So, the Department should be fine. She asked, what would happen to the surplus funds? Once she receives a response from Mr. Gormany, she would inform the commissioners. She also inquired about whether there would be a transfer from other line items to balance out the deficit or if it will be closed out the way it is given the surplus in the overall budget.

■ In 2021 the Department was budgeted for 406 sworn positions, 14 were budgeted at a dollar. The Department ended with an average 338 filled sworn positions. The Department ended with 325 sworn officer by end of fiscal year 2021. For fiscal year 2021-2022 the Department is budgeted for 408 positions with 17 position still budgeted at a dollar. Chief Dominguez had expressed to her that she had requested two additional positions for that rank of sergeant which was granted. There are still 325 filled positions leaving the Department with 83 vacancies for sworn personnel.

** **Commissioner Meares moved to Enter Executive Session to Discuss Pending Litigation and Incomplete Reports, Pending Lawsuits and Claims, Preliminary Drafts and Notes for IA and Personnel Matters**

** **Commissioner Walker seconded**

** **Motion passed unanimously**

The Board entered Executive Session at 7:23 p.m.

** **Commissioner Meares moved to Exit Executive Session**

- ** Commissioner Walker seconded
- ** Motion passed unanimously

The Board exited Executive Session at 8:04 p.m.

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

The next regular meeting will be on November 9, 2021.
The Board adjourned at 8.05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sotonye Otunba-Payne