

**REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
MARCH 9, 2021
BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT
VIRTUAL AND TELEPHONIC VIA ZOOM**

PRESENT: Commissioners Anthony Dawson; Michael Lawlor; Tracey Meares;
Isaias Miranda; Evelise Ribeiro; and Donald Walker

Chief Dominguez: Department of Police Service
Assistant Chief Carl Jacobson: Department of Police Service
Lieutenant David Zannelli: Department of Police Service
Sergeant Dana Smith: Department of Police Service
Detective Lizmarie Almedina: Department of Police Service
Detective Rosa Melendez: Department of Police Service
Officer Daniel Hartnett: Department of Police Service
Officer Brendan Hawley: Department of Police Service
Officer Marcuirzynski: Department of Police Service
Officer Jasmine Sanders: Department of Police Service
Officer Savannah Smith: Department of Police Service
Officer David Stratton: Department of Police Service
Officer Ameer Williams: Department of Police Service
Officer David Zaweski: Department of Police Service
Ramon Davis: Administrative Assistant II

Rebecca Bombero: Assistant Chief Administrative Officer
Florencio Cotto: President of Elm City Local
Michelle Duprey, Esquire: Deputy Corporation Counsel
Doug Hausladen: Traffic and Parking

Gerald Antunes: Board of Alders
Thomas Breen: New Haven Independent
Nathaniel Collazo
Sempler Fidelis
Daniel Hunt
Ben Lambert: New Haven Register
M.E.G.A, Inc.

OPEN SESSION

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m., Anthony Dawson, Chair, presiding.

DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

■ Motion was made but due to technical difficulties the reporter did not hear what occurred regarding the February 9, 2020 Minutes.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS REPORT

Lieutenant David Zannelli

- Due to technical difficulties the reporter did not hear what was reported to the Board.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Renee Dominguez

- The reporter's technical difficulties were resolved at 6:06 p.m.
- Chief Dominguez indicated that this year there had been 27 guns seized with 27 arrests. Last year at the same time there were 21 guns seized with 21 arrests.
- One of the components of Project Longevity is to do custom notification. So every week the appropriate members of the department are working to do at least 10 custom notifications to high-risk individuals that may be involved in violent crimes. It's is very target specific. Proper measures have been put in place to facilitate these custom notifications. This is something that the Department unable to do previously due to COVID.
- These are some of actions by the Department that it believes have helped to reduce crime. The Department is getting out there. They are communicating, collaborating and offering services to at least 10 individuals per week that the Department believes have potential to commit further violence in the city.
- Chief Dominguez stated there have been six non-fatal signed warrants for 2020 and 2021. And there is one signed warrant for murder for 2021. The Department is still looking for this individual. The Department is doing a lot of good work. Some of the warrants signed in 2020 have not been solved, however, it takes a while to solve crimes.
- There are a lot of firsts for her. This is also her first promotion.
- Class 370 will graduate on the 19th of March, 2021. These are five individuals who attended POST Academy. Other will speak with specificity regarding personnel matters as the meeting ensues.
- Commissioner Meares stated as a general matter the sort of information that should be given to the Board and to the public regarding statistics should not focus exclusively on where the Department was at the same time the previous year. She requested that Chief Dominguez provide a slightly longer timeline. This will provide more context for what the numbers actually look like. She had requested this of Chief Reyes in the past as well.
- Commissioner Meares stated a lot of the work regarding customs notification was developed by her colleague, Mr. Andrew Papachristos, who used to be at Yale and is now at Northwestern University. The focus is on folks who are likely to be shooters themselves. We know often people who are involved in gun violence. It is actually hard to distinguish the extent to which they are either going to be shooters or victims. She wanted to hear Chief Dominguez say more in the context of customs how the Department is focusing on the resilience piece. Mr. Andrew Papachristos's work often shows that the supports that the agency can offer to people who are going to be potential victims are just as important focusing on people that you think are shooters. She wanted to get a better sense of how the Department is trying to focus its resources in the custom context.

■ Chief Dominguez replied that she would let Assistant Chief Jacobson expand on that. It was more an error of her explanation as they do focus on both.

■ Assistant Chief Jacobson said that that was a good question. He knew that Commissioner Meares was well versed in Project Longevity. The Department is not just looking at individual who may be potential shooters. There are also potential victims. Four days a week, except on Thursdays, there are morning meetings. Interestingly, the National Network on Safe Communities often sends the Department people to come and listen to how the Department does it. In those meetings discussion about the violence the night before or on the weekend are discussed. They look at both sides of a dispute, whether gang related or not, but especially if they are gang related because it is paramount the Department make contact with them as soon as possible in the form of offering services.

■ Right now Mr. Stacy Spell has received a lot of funds related to Project Longevity for the small things and the large things.

■ One of the new things Mr. Spell is working on is funds for housing so they are able to pay first and last months' security deposit for an individual willing to commit to the program. They are offering big things like that as well as things like job services, employment and identification. They are also offering small things such as groceries, etc. All these are offered not just to the potential shooters but also to the potential victims as they can be one and the same.

■ If someone talks to the police about a shooting, the Department will also determine if that person needs to be moved for safety or provide help to the person.

■ Mr. Spell is interviewing applicants for a Social Services Coordinator position and a Street Outreach position as well. One of the prerequisites for these positions is that the persons must be deeply rooted in the community.

■ As he and his team go out to reach out to these individuals, they are being given Mr. Spell's contact information and talking about the services and talking to the individuals and their families and asking what the Department could do to keep them safe, alive and out of jail.

■ Commissioner Meares added that she was excited in the context of where the violence numbers have been and the Department's ability to ramp up this critical service. She wanted all to hear about this important program. She implored a reporter she could see in attendance to report this.

■ Assistant Chief Jacobson stated that the Department is planning another call-in at the end of April/beginning of May.

■ Commissioner Dawson thanked all. He commended Chief Dominguez's recent work in Newhallville. A lot of the residents called him to say they were pleased with their interactions with the team which has left them feeling very comfortable. The hope is to put a dent in the crime for the summer.

■ Chief Dominguez thanked Commissioner Dawson.

PERSONNEL MATTERS

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

Savannah Smith

Brendan Hawley

Rosa Melendez

Ryan Marcuirzynski

David Zaweski

Lizmarie Almedina

Jasmine Sanders

Ameer Williams

David Stratton

■ Chief Dominguez stated that they are excited about this great team. They would fill the sergeant positions at this time with these nine individuals. Their resume had previously been sent to the Board for its review.

■ Each candidate introduced himself or herself and was questioned by the Board

■ Chief Dominguez stated that since it's International Women's Month and the other day was International Women's Day, she would capitalize on this, there are currently only four women in the rank of sergeant. With these soon-to-be promoted candidates, the number of women in this rank will be almost doubled. In the top 21, there are six women. It is augmenting where the Department was lacking previously. There are currently 23 male sergeants, one white male, one white female, five black males, one black female, four Hispanic males and two Hispanic females. This group is a great representation overall. There are two Hispanic females, one black female, one black male, one white female and four white males in this group. This will make the sergeant rank more representative of the community and the Department as a whole where it was one-sided previously. They are all excellent candidates in listening to them. Both chiefs are excited about this group being promoted. There is a need for talented officers. There are young people being promoted which brings a kind of different energy as well as the veterans that bring wisdom to help the new officers on the job.

■ Commissioner Dawson asked about the training that would ensue after the group is promoted.

■ Chief Dominguez stated that the one-week training would touch on all of the departmental requirements. The Daigle Law Group would do first-line supervisor training and also liability training. There will be someone from University of New Haven for leadership training. There will be retired Captain Julie Johnson who will do her take on leadership. This is the not the run-of-the-mill instructions, but a broader perspective on what it's like to be a supervisor. They will then go into a week-long FTO observation, if you will. The group will be able to observe all the jobs they could potentially be required to do within the Department as supervisors.

** Commissioner Ribeiro moved to Vote on the Recommendation from Chief Reyes that Officer Savannah Smith be Promoted to the Rank of Sergeant

** Commissioner Walker seconded

** Motion passed unanimously

** Commissioner Ribeiro moved to Vote on the Recommendation from Chief Reyes that Officer Brendan Hawley be Promoted to the Rank of Sergeant

** Commissioner Walker seconded

** Motion passed unanimously

** Commissioner Ribeiro moved to Vote on the Recommendation from Chief Reyes that Officer Rosa Melendez be Promoted to the Rank of Sergeant

** Commissioner Walker seconded

** Motion passed unanimously

** Commissioner Ribeiro moved to Vote on the Recommendation from Chief Reyes that Officer Ryan Marcuirzynski be Promoted to the Rank of Sergeant

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

- ** Commissioner Ribeiro moved to Vote on the Recommendation from Chief Reyes that Officer David Stratton be Promoted to the Rank of Sergeant
- ** Commissioner Walker seconded
- ** Motion passed unanimously

- ** Commissioner Ribeiro moved to Vote on the Recommendation from Chief Reyes that David Zaweski be Promoted to the Rank of Sergeant
- ** Commissioner Walker seconded
- ** Motion passed unanimously

- ** Commissioner Ribeiro moved to Vote on the Recommendation from Chief Reyes that Lizmarie Almedina be Promoted to the Rank of Sergeant
- ** Commissioner Walker seconded
- ** Motion passed unanimously

- ** Commissioner Ribeiro moved to Vote on the Recommendation from Chief Reyes that Jasmine Sanders be Promoted to the Rank of Sergeant
- ** Commissioner Walker seconded
- ** Motion passed unanimously

- ** Commissioner Ribeiro moved to Vote on the Recommendation from Chief Reyes that Ameer Williams be Promoted to the Rank of Sergeant
- ** Commissioner Walker seconded
- ** Motion passed unanimously

■ The new sergeant were congratulated by the Board and Chief Dominguez.

RETIREMENTS (For Board information only)

There were none.

RESIGNATION (For Board information only)

There were none.

RECRUITMENT/SELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT

- Commissioner Ribeiro stated she did not have a report.
- Sergeant Smith stated that there were currently six lateral candidates. The letter just went out that the six will be taking their written examination on the 16th of March, 2021. The actual lateral date to apply would close on the 12th of March, 2021.
- Sergeant Smith stated that as far as entry-level candidates, 160 conditional offers were recently sent out. There are presently 17 candidates that have submitted their application package back to him. Another seven are scheduled to be out this week. That date would close on the 19th of March, 2021.

EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE REPORT

There were none.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

There were none.

OTHER BUSINESS

Officer Daniel Hartnett - NHPD Towing Policy

- Officer Hartnett stated that there were only two changes to the towing policy. One, it went up to \$89.00. Of the \$89.00, \$12.00 will be deducted and that would go to the city. The other change is ownership. You could only have one company and have vested interest in only one company. All of the other rules in the two policy had not changed since the last policy.
- Chief Dominguez asked if the date for inspections was changed from October. Officer Hartnett stated that he would start his inspections in March or April, but due to COVID and the fact that they do not do street sweeping, there was talk of waiting till the fiscal year. He could do them either in March or April or wait till the end of the fiscal year.
- Officer Hartnett said he met with those on the companies. They had some concerns. They wanted to speak with the city regarding their concerns prior to signing the policy.
- Commissioner Ribeiro asked that the policy before the Board has an effective date of 10.1.20. She asked if this policy had been ratified or approved by the Board of Alders and gone through a process or whether that document was not available.
- Officer Hartnett stated that the document before the Board was given to him by Corporation Counsel. He did not know if it was approved by the Board of Alders. That may be a question for Ms. Rebecca Bombero. He was of the belief that the date could be changed on the tow policy.
- Ms. Rebecca Bombero, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, stated she worked on this policy in conjunction with the Department's Officer Hartnett's predecessor and members of the Transportation, Traffic and Parking Division and Corporation Counsel. The date on the front of the document was the date that it was drafted. As the authorizing agency, the police commission is actually the approval agency for the policy. So, it will be updated upon the Board's review. The fees were already passed by the Board of Alders and this is what triggered the update to the policy. So, this effort was undertaken to get in line with the ordinance amendments that were passed in 2019 so that those fee increases could be administered and also to address some of the challenges Chief Reyes was having in terms of administering the previous policy as it related to ownership.
- Commissioner Ribeiro asked what the fee was before. Officer Hartnett said the old fee was \$77.00 for a ticketed tow and \$88.00 for a non-ticketed tow.
- Commissioner Dawson asked whether the new ownership rule applied to new companies that want to be on the list or whether it affect companies already on the two tow list. Ms. Bombero replied by saying that the policy did not have a grandfathering clause.
- Commissioner Dawson asked if everyone would have to follow the same rules. Officer Hartnett and Ms. Bombero said they would have to.
- Commissioner Dawson asked if there were problems with ownership in New Haven. Chief Dominguez replied by saying that the goal is not to have one company monopolize towing.

There is a rotation. There are only a certain number of tow companies that can be on the Department's rotation. She believed there were nine tow companies on the list. The whole point is to have nine different companies do the towing, not one company with different companies monopolizing towing.

■ Officer Hartnett stated that the Department only allows for ten companies on the list. So there were ten companies on the tow list.

■ Commissioner Dawson asked if these were ten independent companies. Officer Hartnett replied that there was one company that may have a vested interest in three companies. They are trying to resolve this prior to the company signing the tow policy.

■ Commissioner Dawson asked if this would be resolved with the Chief Administrative Officer and Corporation Counsel. Officer Hartnett stated that if the company does not sign the tow policy, it would be off the list. Any concerns any company has can be addressed with Corporation Counsel, if they want to handle it through legal means.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro asked, procedurally, the Board would approve the updated changes after which Officer Hartnett would contact the companies to have them sign the documents. Officer Hartnett replied yes.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro asked if the Board would be apprised about the companies that have agreed or not agreed. Chief Dominguez said she would inform the Board.

■ Commissioner Dawson stated that there had been numbers complaints over the years about the behavior of the employees of these companies. He asked if the Department had dealt effectively with those issues with this new policy. Officer Hartnett replied that there were rules in the policy regarding employees' conduct. If complaints are forwarded to him, he would deal with the companies. It would be on a case-by-case basis. Depending on the severity of the complaints, it could lead to a suspension.

■ Ms. Bombero added that on page 8 under complaints, all tow companies are required to post a notice in their places of business regarding the complaint process and to provide a copy of the complaint form to the individuals whose vehicles have been towed.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro stated that in the table of contents there is a reference to a letter from Chief Lewis dated 2.24.2010 which was missing from the documents provided. She asked if the Board should be looking at it or if it was taken out. She did not know if that was important or not.

■ Ms. Bombero thanked Commissioner Ribeiro for catching that. She said it was not part of their review. Commissioner Ribeiro asked how the Board should proceed in light of this revelation. Ms. Bombero stated she did not know about this letter and asked Chief Dominguez. Chief Dominguez said she did not recall seeing a letter as they worked on this. Officer Hartnett said he was not aware of the letter. However, he did not think it would affect the tow policy.

■ Ms. Bombero said it could be taken out of this document.

■ Commissioner Dawson asked that they add in the policy that the tow truck drivers should act in a professional manner. Chief Dominguez said they would take care of that. Commissioner Dawson said he thought that's what the letter referenced. He asked that this be displayed at the companies' locations with the other form.

■ Commissioner Dawson said the drivers should be professional and respectful as he had experienced the unprofessionalism as well.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro added that there should be something added to the document regarding how to handle complaints.

- Commissioner Dawson stated that page 8 addressed it. He thought the language in the policy should be stronger.
- Commissioner Ribeiro added that the document did not indicate where the complaints should go. The companies should understand that this is a serious issue.
- Ms. Bombero stated that the forms are provided by the city and the form indicates where the complaints will go.
- Attorney Duprey stated that any changes the Board wished to see reflected in the document should be moved as an amendment to the original motion.

■ Commissioner Dawson stated that a letter from the Chief or designee should be written to be handed out with the complaint form. Chief Dominguez stated she would have it done.

- ** Commissioner Ribeiro moved to Approve the Tow Policy as Amended
- ** Commissioner Walker seconded
- ** Motion passed unanimously

Officer Evan Kelly - Reimbursement for broken prescription glasses.

After discussions the Board voted as follows:

- ** Commissioner Ribeiro moved to Approve Officer Kelly’s Reimbursement in the amount of \$219.40
- ** Commissioner Walker seconded
- ** Motion passed unanimously

Election of Chair and Vice Chair of the Board

■ Commissioner Meares nominated Commissioner Ribeiro as Chair of the Board of Police Commissioners.

- ** Commissioner Meares moved to nominate Commissioner Ribeiro as Chair of the Board of Police Commissioners
- ** Commissioner Miranda seconded
- ** Motion passed unanimously

- ** Commissioner Ribeiro to nominate Commissioner Walker as Vice Chair of the Board of Police Commissioners
- ** Commissioner Lawlor seconded
- ** Motion passed unanimously

- ** Commissioner Meares moved to Vote for Commissioner Ribeiro as Chair and Commissioner Walker as Vice Chair of the Board of Police Commissioners
- ** Commissioner Lawlor seconded
- ** Motion passed unanimously

■ Commissioners Ribeiro and Walker were congratulated.

- Commissioner Ribeiro thanked everyone. She thanked Commissioner Dawson for all his years of service.
- Chief Dominguez also thanked Commissioner Dawson for his service. He always held the Department to high standards. She wished him good luck.
- Commissioner Dawson thanked everyone.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were none.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- ** **Commissioner Meares moved to Enter Executive Session for the Purpose of Preliminary Drafts and Notes**
- ** **Commissioner Ribeiro seconded**
- ** **Unanimously passed**

The Board entered Executive Session at 7:40 p.m.

- ** **Commissioner Meares moved to Exit Executive Session**
- ** **Commissioner Lawlor seconded**
- ** **Unanimously passed**

The Board exited Executive Session at 7:53 p.m.

- ** **Commissioner Dawson moved to Adjourn the Regular Meeting**
- ** **Commissioner Walker seconded.**
- ** **Unanimously passed**

The next regular meeting will be on April 13, 2021.
The Board adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sotonye Otunba-Payne