

**REGULAR SESSION MINUTES**  
**SEPTEMBER 14, 2021**  
**BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS**  
**NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT**  
***VIDEOCONFERENCE AND CONFERENCE CALL VIA ZOOM***

**PRESENT:** Commissioners Darrel Brooks; Michael Lawlor; Tracey Meares; 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 Manmeet Colon: Department of Police Service  
Lieutenant Dana Smith: Department of Police Service  
Sergeant Paul Finch: Department of Police Service  
Sergeant Rose Melendez: Department of Police Service  
Officer D. Cohen: Department of Police Service  
Officer John Healy: Department of Police Service  
Officer Reginald McGlotten: Department of Police Service  
Eva Perry-Lambert: Administrative Assistant

Rebecca Bombero: Deputy CAO, City of New Haven  
Michelle Duprey, Esquire: Deputy Corporation Counsel

Gerald Antunes - Board of Alders  
Gabrielle Curtis  
Jonathan Escobar  
Tyler Evans  
Andrea Hoover  
Daniel's iPhone  
John  
NH Resident

**OPEN SESSION**

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

■ Commissioner Ribeiro indicated that Commissioner Miranda would not be attending the meeting. In addition, Mr. Tyler Evan, Candidate No. 1, would be added to the agenda under Personnel Matters

**AGENDA**

- \*\* Commissioner Walker moved to Amend the Agenda to Include Mr. Tyler Evans Under Personnel Matters
- \*\* Commissioner Meares seconded
- \*\* Motion passed unanimously

- \*\* Commissioner Meares moved to Amend the Agenda to Move the Considerations and Votes of General Orders Under Other Business to the Efficiency Committee Report
- \*\* Commissioner Walker seconded
- \*\* Motion passed unanimously

**DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- \*\* Commissioner Walker moved to Approve the August 17, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes
- \*\* Commissioner Lawlor seconded

■ Commissioner Ribeiro indicated that Ms. Otunba-Payne should check the second bullet as it appears on page 2 under Public Comments.

- \*\* Motion passed unanimously

- \*\* Commissioner Lawlor moved to Approve the August 31, 2021 Special Meeting Minutes
- \*\* Commissioner Walker seconded
- Motion passed unanimously

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were none.

**CHIEF'S REPORT**

Chief Renee Dominguez

■ Chief Dominguez indicated there were 81 non-fatal shootings and 22 homicides compared to last year at the same time with 74 non-fatal shootings and 16 homicides. So, this trend has gone up and also in the previous several years as well. A look at a five-year data indicates that there had been an increase every year. At the end of the 2020 there were 20 homicides. The city is experiencing what is happening around the nation regarding violence.

■ With the uptick in violence especially in the past 10 days, and within a five- or six-day period, there were three shootings and two homicides. This is of concern. What makes it even more concerning, however, is that the Department does not believe that any of these five incidents are related. There is not one clear trend such as gang-related activities or several individuals shooting at one another potentially in the past and now it is turning into non-fatal shootings or homicides.

■ What they have observed is several gangs going back and forth between non-fatal shootings, shots fired and homicides throughout the city. They are also seeing isolated acts of violence. They believe these individuals know one another, but have no affiliations with any groups or gangs. There have been many domestic violence matters and some have resulted in homicides. There have been some minor incidents that have led to gun violence.

■ The Department is trying to combat this with its resources that have previously been discussed for several months now to include its Project Longevity call-ins and Custom Notifications as well as Project Safe Neighborhood call-ins, the Shooting Task Force.

- There was a press conference today to discuss the positive outcomes as a result of the Shooting Task Force's efforts to address shots-fired incidents where they have been able to make arrests or are going to make arrests.
- The Department has increased its walking and bicycle beats. They are trying to do all of the things that they know have worked in the past. However, in spite of removing 146 guns off the streets in the past nine months in addition to 135 arrests from last year, there is still an increase in violence. So, the Department has more work to do and is committed to doing the work.
- On September 15, 2021 three Connecticut State Police officers will join the Shooting Task Force comprising of two officers and one sergeant. Hamden, Yale and West Haven also have officers from the State Police working with them. This will augment the number of officers in the task force and enable them to investigate more of the non-fatal shootings and more of the shots fired. Many chiefs have reached out to her to discuss potentially assigning one officer from their departments to the Department's Shooting Task Force. The Department is looking forward to collaborating with the surrounding towns because the violence are linked to some of the surrounding cities and towns. Many times individuals are going outside the city to potentially get the guns or partake in some criminal activities.
- Chief Dominguez went on to say that the next Project Safe Neighborhood call-in would be on September 20<sup>th</sup> at 200 Orange Street in New Haven. Approximately, 30 individuals would be called. This is double the number of individuals called at the last call-in. This call-ins are done quarterly. There is a Project Longevity call -in scheduled for the September 30<sup>th</sup>. Normally, they do not coincide in the same month. This is coming at a perfect time given the increase in violence. They have identified people and are able to get them immediately into a call-in right away.
- Press conferences are going to be weekly on Fridays at the Department at 10:30 a.m. At some of the community meetings, the Department learned that the community does not always know all the positive things the Department is doing. This is a criticism that can be rectified. The goal is to provide more information to the community.
- On Thursday, September 16, 2020 there is a scheduled virtual informational session for new applicants. The application period is scheduled from September 13, 2021 to October 15, 2021. The goal is to double the numbers from last year. The Department needs all hands on deck. The commissioners were invited to attend. The goal is to have 1,000 applicants. There are also planning events to help with the application process.
- Lateral application will reopen on September 20, 2021. On this day the detectives' tests would be posted. The tests would be given on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> days of December, 2021. They are looking forward to replenishing some of the ranks in the Detective Bureau. The Detective Bureau is working very hard especially given the number of cases that each member of the bureau has.
- The Department asked to present before the Board of Alders why it wants use of its ARP funds. This will be presented in the coming weeks. The Department is looking to fund several projects that would help with solvability, crime prevention such as increasing cameras throughout the city. Compared to big cities like Hartford and Bridgeport, the Department has a fraction of their capabilities to utilize cameras to help solve crimes, not just the fatal and non-fatal shootings but also motor vehicle accidents, pedestrians being struck, etc. In addition, the Department would like to expand ShotSpotter in four areas within the city.
- In addition, the Department would be presenting its proposal for dash camera, a component of the Police Accountability Bill which requires that departments acquire dash cameras by a

certain date. The Department feels it would be one of the first departments to acquire them. The Department would like to take advantage of the grants that would allow reimbursement for the dash cameras. In order to take advantage of this grant, the dash cameras have to be in hand by December 31, 2021. The Department is on the agenda for Public Safety and hope to the get on the Board of Alders' agenda at the end of the month regarding the contract which includes dash cameras, upgrades of body-worn cameras and tasers as a bundle. This also includes interview rooms for the Detective Bureau and also IA to be upgraded with new technology, the technology that facilitates better communication between the Department and the community, and the technology that allows for redactions of video footages so the Department is in compliance with FOI laws. This would allow the Department to use less resources in order to be in compliance.

■ Lastly, Officer Paul Vitale, who has been mentioned in the past month, will be honored on September 15, 2021 by the Connecticut Chiefs of Police Association's Fall Expo for the Medal of Valor. She will be there with Officer Vitale so that he can be given this distinguished honor. The Department is very proud of him and his heroic efforts.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro congratulated Officer Vitale. She indicated that she wanted to note for the minutes that Commissioner Brooks had joined the meeting. (Said statement was made at 6:19 p.m.)

■ Commissioner Lawlor indicated that he actually watched the press conference remotely earlier with Mayor Elicker and the Department and the community meeting in the recent past in Fair Haven. He was very impressed. It is a very appropriate move to try and provide as much information to our community as possible, and it is just as important to receive a lot of information.

■ Commissioner Lawlor indicated that he was looking at the CompStat report, and as has been indicated by Chief Domingue, the shootings and homicides are up significantly from last year. However, there seems to be a big drop in the number of robberies including robberies with a firearm. Robberies in general are down by 50 percent and robberies with a firearm are down by almost 20 percent. He asked if there was an explanation for why there's been such a huge drop compared to last year.

■ Chief Dominguez replied by saying that in recent years there have been several individuals they believe are responsible for the string of robberies and a string of burglaries. She believed the reduction is due in part to some of the hard work done by the Department and cases they were able to build against those individuals which led to the incarceration of certain people. The other factor is that many people are working from home resulting in less pedestrian traffic on the streets thereby reducing crimes of opportunity potentially.

■ Commissioner Lawlor added that he thought so himself. However, this is reduced from last year when COVID situation was even severe. It is impressive. These sorts of statistics gets lost in the shuffle because the focus is more on homicides which is appropriate, of course. The other forms of crimes are down significantly from last year. In addition, he was also surprised to see from the CompStat report that the number of stolen motor vehicles and especially theft from motor vehicles were down a lot. This had been a big concern in the East Shore neighborhood. He knew the Department was making all efforts to get this under control. It seemed like it was working as theft from cars is down 23 percent compared to the same time last year. He wanted to give a shout out as the work the Department is doing is very impressive.

■ Chief Dominguez thanked Commissioner Lawlor for pointing this out.

■ Commissioner Meares indicated that she had a question not necessarily to do with statistics. However, it is related to public safety issues. And it is related critically to the efforts that is taken to address homicide, not so much robbery, auto theft which research shows pretty clearly are the offences that seem to drive people's perception of safety, robbery as opposed to homicide. This has to do with the COVID vaccination numbers about which she had written Chief Dominguez about. She hoped that Chief Dominguez would have included that in her report.

■ Commissioner Meares said several months ago when vaccinations became much more available, certainly to people in the healthcare field and first responders, at that time she asked of Chief Dominguez what the vaccination rate. Chief Dominguez's response was 50 to 60 percent. At that time she expressed pretty profound displeasure at the figure. And Chief Dominguez told the Board that the Department was going to be engaging in efforts to improve the vaccinations rates. She had recently read in the New Haven Independent that Mayor Elicker instituted his own strategy to encourage more vaccinations, which was prior to President Biden's new initiative, and in that article Chief Dominguez was quoted as saying the vaccination rate in the New Haven Police Department was 50 to 60 percent. If it is still 50 to 60 percent compared to when she first asked Chief Dominguez, it means there have been no improvement at all. So, whatever efforts were undertaken did not work at all or the information is incorrect.

■ Commissioner Meares said she would like some clarity on what Chief Dominguez thought the rate was. Secondly, she would like to know what efforts were undertaken between then and now. Thirdly, she would like to know what efforts are going to be undertaken.

■ Chief Dominguez apologized for Commissioner Meares having to bring the issue up and for not bringing this up during her report. They did not have the level of ability to measure prior to what the Department now has. Mayor Elicker's mandate that all staff in the city be either vaccinated or be tested weekly has enabled to the Department to collect better data. As of an hour ago, this number would change as registration was still underway, 69 percent of those registered are vaccinated. The Department was awaiting 79 more individuals to register in order to get a complete picture. Ms. Bombero was also in attendance to answer any questions.

■ Chief Dominguez indicated that the health department had reached out. The Department has been doing some outreach. If any individual has to quarantine, the Department has seized the opportunity to speak to the individual about getting vaccinations including offering to make an appointment for the individual. This data includes sworn and non-sworn members of the Department. The number she is talking about are the sworn members of the Department. All employees within the Department have to be registered and opt for one of the options provided. There is a possibility that those vaccinated would opt for testing as well.

■ Commissioner Meares indicated that she would like to know what the efforts had been. She wanted to make it clear that it is critical that people understand this as a public safety issue for a lot of reasons. Number one, as Commissioner Lawlor posted, the leading cause of death for police officers in this last year was COVID. Number two, police officers are one of the only groups of people who can actually mandate, force people to be in their presence especially unmasked which means it is a potential transmission problem. She has seen officers in violation of the city's masking requirements in this city. This is not okay. And it is especially not okay when the rates are 50 to 60 percent. Third, the Yale Police Department which does essentially the same job as the New Haven Police Department, and to the extent that

the job is different, are getting rates of 80 percent vaccinated which personally I think can be better, but they are way better than the Department. So this just has to change. She wanted to know what efforts are being taken.

■ Chief Dominguez indicated that there had been some efforts. For example, the Department had the health department come to headquarters to educate those employees with reservations about being vaccination and to dispel any myths. There have been one-on-one discussions when talking about contract tracing. The Department has sent out information regarding testing options. The Department does not require that staff be vaccinated. So, the Department has a group of individuals who do not wish to be vaccinated. The Department is working with those individuals to convince them to get vaccinated. Some of them have had COVID and then decided to get vaccinated. They do not want anyone to get COVID first and then get vaccinated. Conversations are still ongoing with those who have not been vaccinated. The mandate to either be vaccinated or tested has resulted in more officers deciding to get vaccinated.

■ Commissioner Meares thanked Chief Dominguez. She had spoken with Captain Zannelli about this. She would expect vigilance and discipline for people who are not obeying mask rules because in a world in which you are not even close to 90 percent it is critical that masks are worn and that they understand members of the public are being put at risk if this rule is not obeyed. She indicated that she would not stand for that.

■ Chief Dominguez indicated that they do discipline officers once they get the complaint. Any time an officer is observed disregarding the mask mandate, the Department takes action.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro indicated that the Board would take a look at this closely because they understand, as pointed out by Commissioner Meares, the importance of this. They will continue to work with the chief on this and report back to the commission.

■ Commissioner Meares indicated that New Haven Resident put in the chat that masks are important but crime is crazy right now. She went on to remind the author of the statement that the New Haven Police Department is unable to engage in some of our critical efforts to combat violence when COVID is running rampant because their best strategies actually depend on face-to-face efforts which the Department was unable to do during COVID. So, people really have to understand how related these two issues are. They are not separate issues.

## **PERSONNEL MATTERS**

Consideration and vote on the recommendation of Interim Chief Dominguez that the following candidates from Civil Service Eligibility List #21-10 (Police Officer) be hired:

1. #1 - Tyler Evans
2. #33 - Jonathan Escobar
3. #37 - Gabrielle Curtis

■ Chief Dominguez introduced each candidate.

■ The candidates gave the Commission some background information about themselves.

\*\* Commissioner Lawlor motioned to accept the Chief's recommendation for Tyler Evans to be hired as member of the New Haven Police Department

\*\* Commissioner Walker seconded

■ Commissioner Lawlor stated that he recalled from the last go-around having an opportunity to meet Mr. Evans. His background and his presentation are examples, as is the case with the other two candidates, of exactly what this Department needs. He is very happy that the recruiting process has resulted in these three candidates plus others he hopes are coming. He has faith that Sergeant Finch will give the Board more awesome candidates. He was happy to support Mr. Evans' nomination.

\*\* Motion passed unanimously

\*\* Commissioner Walker motioned to follow the chief's recommendation to make an offer to hire Johnathan Escobar, Candidate No. 33, from the hiring list

\*\* Commissioner Lawlor seconded

■ Commissioner Lawlor indicated that he and Commissioner Miranda had an opportunity to do an extensive interview and discussion with Mr. Escobar the previous week. Mr. Escobar has advantage of a lot of experience in his life including serving our country in both Iraq and Afghanistan. He went into detail about some of his background. He has to say that of all the candidates he had met so far, Mr. Escobar was able to win both commissioners over. It is fair to say that he learned some valuable lessons in his life. He thought Mr. Escobar brings an extraordinary amount of maturity to the role. Like Mr. Evans he's got a diversity of experience that he is bring to his job. Commissioner Lawlor further stated that he was in support of this nomination.

\*\* Motion passed unanimously

\*\* Commissioner Walker motioned support the chief's recommendation for the hiring of Candidate No. 37, Gabrielle Curtis, from the Eligibility List #21-01

\*\* Commissioner Meares seconded

■ Commissioner Lawlor added that he and Commissioner Miranda also had the opportunity to interview Ms. Curtis. They were very impressed. She does not have the advantage of many years out in the workforce like Mr. Evans and Mr. Escobar do. However, her passion for our city is very clear and her dedication to young people and her leadership skills are very clear. She has got impressive academic credentials as well. These group of three is really testimony to the outreach efforts of the Department. He was happy to support her nomination as well.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro commented that she has was happy to see the fruits of the efforts of the Recruitment and Selection Committee interviewing candidates. She is happy to see it is working very well.

\*\* Motion passed unanimously

■ Commissioner Ribeiro congratulated all three candidates

■ Chief Dominguez congratulated the three candidates. She stated the police academy would begin on September 23, 2021. They are very excited. There are now eight candidates including these three candidates.

## **INTERNAL AFFAIRS REPORT**

■ Captain Zannelli introduced Lieutenant Manmeet Colon who he indicated would take over IA in the near future. They were classmates in the academy. She is a well-respected district manager in Newhallville. He has full confidence that she will do an excellent job. He introduced Sergeant Rose Melendez who is a new member of the Internal Affairs team. She is an IA investigator. He introduced Sergeant Paul Finch who will take over recruitment and background investigation. Sergeant Finch has been doing some outreach work already. He also thanked Sergeant Smith for his work with him for the past two and a half years.

■ Lieutenant Colon, Sergeant Rose Melendez and Sergeant Finch gave the commission some background information.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro indicated they appreciate Sergeant Finch for hitting the ground running, so to speak. She looked forward to working with him.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro stated that she wanted to publicly acknowledge and thank Lieutenant Dana Smith. She had worked with him for a number of years, particularly in the last year on background investigations. He has done a phenomenal job. She wished him the best in his next endeavor.

■ Sergeant Smith thanked the Board.

## **IA REPORTS**

Captain David Zanelli

■ Captain Zannelli indicated that year to date there had been 68 civilian complaints. The Department is down in almost all categories under the use of force except for firearm display and use of hands. Although, the Department is slightly higher in this area than the past two years, this is still down compared to 2018. This could be credited to their de-escalation training and to more of the training at the academy.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro indicated that there were two cases from 2020 still pending. She wondered when they would be closed.

■ Captain Zannelli indicated that due to the many promotions in the Department and transitions within Internal Affairs some of the cases have been triaged because of the more egregious cases. Where cases are not likely to be sustained, they have been put at the bottom of the triage list. So far there have been no evidence to support the complaints made. The body-worn camera footages have not substantiated the allegations. They will be closed shortly now that IA is fully staffed.

**IA CASE NO. 21C-043:** The complainant alleged that officers took a long time to respond to his evading responsibility complaint, that the offending vehicle that initially struck his car returned to the scene while the complainant was waiting for officers to arrive, that the occupants brandished a firearm at him. Also, when officers arrived, they secured him with handcuffs. A review of the reports and dispatch records show that when the complainant called 911 to report the accident, officers were tied up investigating higher priority calls for service and were not available to respond. That when the complainant called again to say a gun was being pointed at him, the dispatcher entered the informed and updated the complaint as a priority one, appropriately and officers responded within moments. The officers were exonerated. Worthy of note is that district manager, Lieutenant Marshall, ended up meeting



with the complainant and he had a lot of good input for us. It was basically a misunderstanding as to how the triage system works at the dispatch. This ended up with a good resolution.

**IA CASE NO. 21C-044:** The complainant alleged that the officer was rude and racially profiled him during traffic stop. The complainant did not respond to Internal Affairs' attempt to reach him multiple times by phone and certified letter. Body-worn camera footage was reviewed by Sergeant Rawlins who showed the officer in what appeared to be in a regular conversation with the operator. The operator did not have a license on his person and was only given an infraction for the speeding violation. During his IA interview, the officer stated that he used a laser to detect the operator's speed from a distance of several hundred feet and did not know the race or ethnicity of the operator before he pulled the car over.

**IA CASE NO. 21C-056:** The complainant alleged that task force officers pulled him over for minor violations, that he did not feel free to leave, that officers lied in their arrest report about his vehicle being stolen, and that Detective Sanchez instructed him to be quiet by putting his finger over his mouth during the investigation. Incident and supplemental reports were reviewed but none documented the complainant's vehicle as being stolen at the time of the stop. It was documented that the complainant was pulled over based on excessively loud music, dark tinted windows and because they received information that he was in possession of a firearm. Body-worn camera footage show that officers pulled over the complainant and he provided them with a small marijuana cigarette on the front seat. They did in fact recover a firearm under the front passenger seat of the vehicle. Based on the body-worn camera footage, Detective Sanchez did make a quiet motion as alleged. This complaint was unfounded.

**IA CASE NO. 21C-047:** The complainant alleges that Officer Salvadi inappropriately shared her personal information with her landlord who she alleged Officer Salvadi was related to. The IA investigation confirmed that Officer Salvadi is not related either through blood or marriage to the complainant's landlord nor is the landlord a friend. Based on body-worn camera footage, the complainant gave Officer Salvadi permission to speak to the landlord on her behalf because of her interest in breaking her lease in order to prevent an escalating domestic violence situation. This was unfounded.

**IA CASE NO. 21C-050:** The complainant alleged that the officer was not sympathetic during a sudden death investigation, that he was aggressive with a grieving family member while his hand was on his baton. Body-worn camera footage show that as medical examiners were loading the deceased into the transport vehicle pursuant to a suspicious death investigation, a family member emerged from the crowd attempting to touch the body, that he did put his hands out in a stopping motion but he was not disrespectful and did not have his hand on the baton at the time. This was unfounded.

**IA CASE NO. 21I-041:** Chief Dominguez ordered an internal investigation into the fact and circumstances surrounding a supervisor investigating officers' actions in issuing a misdemeanor summons to a suspect involving a domestic violence incident who later committed suicide. The Internal Affairs investigation confirmed that the supervisor's instruction to the investigating officer to issue a misdemeanor summons to the suspect involved in the incident was inappropriate given the information that the officer is related to the supervisor. This was

captioned on body-worn camera. The supervisor never responded to the scene to offer guidance to the new investigating officers as required, although a felony crime occurred involving a city official. A firearm check was never conducted on the suspect at the time the misdemeanor summons was issued to him. The same supervisor approved of this arrest report although it contained errors and did not contain all the facts. The lethality assessment form was also not turned in as required. This complaint was sustained. They have been referred to Chief Dominguez for further discipline.

**IA CASE NO. 21I-010:** Then Chief Reyes ordered an internal investigation into the actions and the amount of force used by officers during an arrest at 157 Church Street. Body-worn camera footage show that officers responded to 157 Church Street for a harassment complaint. Upon arrival they received a counter complaint that the caller was disruptive and trespassing in the other office areas and that his service agreement had been terminated. They attempted to deescalate the situation by carrying the individual's bags out to the main lobby after he voluntarily agreed to leave. They also attempted to deescalate the situation for approximately one hour by speaking with the individual and offering to document any complaint he had and by even praying with him, although they are not religious. The individual eventually became agitated and began yelling loudly in the main lobby area. Security communicated to the officers that the individual had to leave the premises due to his actions. The individual was told to leave several times and was warned with arrests. When officers attempted to arrest the individual, a struggle ensued and the individual ended up kicking Officer Cole. Officer Cole responded by punching the individual several times in the head area but the individual still resisted arrest. After pepper spray was utilized, the individual became compliant. Officers helped pour water on the arrestee's eyes and an ambulance arrived on scene. These officers were exonerated.

**RETIREMENTS (For Board information only)**

Officer Raymond Bright - eff., July 30, 2021  
Officer Stephanija VanWilgen - eff., August 1, 2021  
Sergeant Rose Turney - eff., August 2 , 2021

**RESIGNATION (For Board information only)**

Officer Joseph DiNatale - eff., September 18, 2021

**RECRUITMENT/SELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT**

■ Sergeant Paul Finch indicated that application began on September 13, 2021. There are five cadets in the POST academy and three more were approved earlier that would attend the Waterbury academy. They are making a huge social media push. They have been getting a lot of good views on the videos. His goal is to just update every single day with what the next step is so that people actively know where they can go and what they need to do. They have an information session coming up on September 16, 2021 via Zoom. Hopefully, they will have a good turnout for that. It is their first session. They have been doing a lot of community walks, community events and going to churches. He spoke at Varick Memorial AME Zion Church on Sunday, September 12, 2021. He also met Reverend Kimber at his church. They were there to

pass out flyers and speak to the congregation about applying and whether they knew anyone who would like to apply.

- They have been getting a lot of e-mails from interested people. The farthest e-mail was from an individual currently in the military in East Africa who is interested in apply.

- They have 18 open files they are currently working on . The background investigators are doing a great job. There is a lot of effort to meet their goals.

- Sergeant Finch indicated that they do a lot in the community as far as getting the word out. They are trying to do CHIP tests too. The CHIP test is for individuals who are prepared or believe they are prepared for the physical agility test. This CHIP test will be held in Massachusetts on September 19, 2021. Their attendance would provide an opportunity to speak to potential applicants about the Department's hiring process.

- Interviews are being completed for the remaining files. They are working on background checks. Obviously, they have a month still left in this process. He is excited about how it started and is excited about where it will go. He looks forward to meeting the goal Chief Dominguez had alluded to earlier regarding the number of applicants this time around.

- Chief Dominguez stated that Sergeant Finch was being humble. He had only been at the position for approximately two weeks. They 100 magnets for every car. They have two banners that were made by the Hill House or Wilbur Cross students. They are huge, beautiful banners. One will be hung in the front of the building and the other at the back of the building. They will have billboards going up. They will have radio commercials. They are planning on boosting their social media presence.

- Chief Dominguez urged the commissioners to look at NHPD's Recruitment page. Sergeant Finch interviews a different police officer in the Department every day in an effort to get different perspectives about their jobs in their different divisions or units to show what a potential applicant could do here and all the different opportunities the Department offers.

- She went on to indicate that Lieutenant Smith was the one who fed Sergeant Finch all these information along with Lieutenant Colon who had done recruitment before. It is just a fantastic team. Even though Lieutenant Smith is going to Newhallville, he is still so involved in recruitment that he's going to be a new arm in the community as he takes on his new role.

- Chief Dominguez added that they would do a one-minute informational video as the churches have agreed to play this video prior to services. The Department is really looking outside the box. They are looking forward to doubling their numbers.

- Sergeant Finch indicated 100 individuals showed interest. They were getting calls from everyone as to when the date to apply would be. Inquiries are coming from everywhere.

- Lieutenant Colon indicated that she would like to highlight some of the things Sergeant Finch has done and what they have done especially under Lieutenant Smith's leadership. The five recruits that went to POST comprise of two Hispanic females, two black females and one white male. Two of them are New Haven residents. The recruits that were approved that evening comprise of one black female, one black male and one Hispanic male of which two are New Haven residents. They are making a push for New Haven residents. She wanted to make note of that. They did a phenomenal job with recruitment last year and will do so again this year.

- Commissioner Ribeiro indicated that it was appreciated. The Board had expressed its concern and desire for diversity.

- Commissioner Walker indicated that he was of the understanding that the Department had scheduled a boot camp for prospective recruits on Saturday, September 18, 2021.

■ Sergeant Finch replied by saying that it's the conditions clinic where they welcome potential applicants interested in getting a deeper look at the physical agility test. They can get information on how to properly do the push-ups and sit-ups or tips on how to run the one and a half-mile race. This will be their first such event. They plan to run do more of these clinics.

■ Commissioner Meares said she wondered if Madam Chair could say a word about her leadership and work with Commissioners Lawlor and Walker on the committee regarding the efforts to revise the interview process along the lines of demographic to ensure that the folks who become officers in New Haven have the heart set and the mindset of the community. It might be useful just to say a few words about that for the minutes. They are few people from the public, but the minutes are always public.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro thanked Commissioner Meares. This is a committee that the commission put together about six years ago as they realized that commissioners needed to be more involved in the recruitment and selection process since the commission is the hiring body for the Department. The committee has instituted a lot of things over years that seem to be working very, very well in helping the Department and commission accomplish their goals of vetting candidates. The committee has the opportunity to speak to candidates that you want to remove or move forward in the process. They revised some processes and protocols. Currently the committee members are as follows: Commissioners Lawlor, Miranda and Waler. In the past she served on the committee in addition to Commissioner Walker. The committee is keeping the commission informed on what is going on. She thanked all who have been involved in this process. They are not done yet. It has not been a process without pain, but they continue to have good results.

■ Commissioner Lawlor added that the three current members of the committee have not all been able to meet. For a variety of reasons their schedules have not coincided over the last month or so. Since Commissioner Meares raised it, he would point that he and Commissioner Walker have discussed the importance of going back and taking a closer look at the screening process such as the psychological screening and the polygraph with the view towards determining whether or not it is excluding desirable candidates or including undesirable candidates. He indicated that Commissioner Meares and others will have at least his commitment to really take this seriously. He is new to the commission as is Commissioner Meares. A lot of questions emerged as they started to review some of the processes that potential recruits undergo as they are being considered and he thought there was room for improvements. They have yet to get to the point that they can recommend anything. These were his impressions. He yielded to Commissioner Walker.

■ Commissioner Walker stated that one of the things they have done it reach out the principal of Hill House. Due to everyone's schedules they have yet to get together with him to speak about revitalizing the Explorer program they used to have at Hill House. That is something they want to do. To get people prepared to apply to work for the police Department it needs to start much earlier than later so they don't do things that would prevent them from becoming police officers. Like Commissioner Lawlor said, they are committed to this and understand it is an involved process. They are just trying to make it better.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro thanked everyone. She indicated that they had spoken about diversity. Hopefully, the trend can continue. She was happy with the progress made so far.

■ Lieutenant Smith indicated that the push online through the police app had resulted in the collection of 528 entries which are names and e-mails of those who could apply.

## EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE REPORT

Consideration and vote on proposed General Order 12.03 “Vehicle Pursuits,” which supersedes existing General Order 302 issued on January 15<sup>th</sup>. 2012.

Consideration and vote on proposed General Order 8.03 “Domestic Violence,” which supersedes existing General Order 8.03 issued on May 13<sup>th</sup>. 2015.

Consideration and vote on proposed General Order 8.17 “Sensitive Crime,” which supersedes existing General Order 8.17 issued on June 16<sup>th</sup>. 2016.

NEW - Consideration and vote on proposed General Order 2.16 “Recruitment.”

NEW - Consideration and vote on proposed General Order 8.21 “Notification of death and Serious/Life-Threatening Injuries.”

■ Commissioner Meares indicated that this was the first efficiency report since she had been on the committee that does a hodge-podge of things including reviewing policy. They have had a bit of a backlog with the polices proposed today because of the recruitment efforts which are important. As all can see in the modified agenda, there five General Orders proposed. A lot of them are General Orders modified to comply with CALEA (Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies) accreditation and the other two are new. She would turn it to the Captain Zannelli to explain each General Order. Each member of this committee has reviewed the orders on their own and no one sort of asked to have a meeting to discuss them. To the extent that there’s discussion, they will discuss here in this open forum. She did not anticipate anything major. She indicated Captain Zannelli did great work.

■ Captain Zannelli thanked Commissioner Meares. He indicated that two of the proposed General Orders are new and three were modified. These are part of CLESP (Compliance Law Enforcement Standards Practice) which is part of POST.

■ Captain Zannelli began with **General Order 8.17**, “Sensitive Crimes.” This was already in existence and was last by the Board on June 16, 2016. They added language regarding CLESP Standard 12. Changes were made to policy on the first page. They included CLESP’s requirement of detailed identifying information of victims of sexual assault or sensitive crimes and shall be governed by Connecticut General Statutes 54-86e. So, they do not release that information and reports. Labor Relations and Corporation Counsel looked at these General Orders aside from the Board.

■ Captain Zannelli want on to say that police officers are to document any items such as clothing or evidence at the hospitals in regard to chain of custody in addition to the names of nurses and/or physicians attending to sex assault victims or sensitive crime victims at the hospitals. They have always done this. They thought it was prudent to add this while updating the General Order.

■ He indicated that Corporation Counsel made some suggestions as well. On page 5 of this section, it is about notifying the Department of Children and Families by the officers as mandated reporters as soon as practicable orally or in writing. He highlighted in red anything

that was moved or amended. Lastly, on page 10 all officers will receive training with the Yale Child Study program while in the police academy.

■ Captain Zannelli went on to **General Order 2.16**, “Recruitment.” This is a newly created General Order. He got some feedback from Commissioners Ribeiro and Walker on this. They redid the number to 2.16 so that it falls in line with 2.14, reinstatement and 21.15, new hire. So, it is within the series of hiring and recruitment efforts.

■ It was important they detail making a policy that distinguishes their recruitment efforts to create a diverse workforce reflective of the community. This was a challenging one to form. He wanted to focus on the purpose as it is where the CLESP standards comes in. The purpose on page is 7-291a of the Connecticut General Statutes to maintain the mandate that they have a policy on recruitment.

■ On page 2 there are red highlights. Corporation Counsel and the commissioners gave their input regarding “personnel assigned to, recruitment and enhanced recruitment by.” They had some feedback regarding the clergy. Sergeant Finch is already doing that. They are practicing what is in the General Order without it having been approved. The goal is to have a qualified workforce reflective of the community.

■ Captain Zannelli next presented **General Order 12.03**, “Vehicle Pursuits.” This is CLESP Standard 3. They added some definitions here. One of the things that he thought was important, based on Corporation Counsel’s feedback regarding what officers have been sued for in the past, is to make clear, on page 2, what a pursuit is. This is regarding talk about reckless driving problems, civilian and community complaints that come in about the driving. They talk about the mere act of attempting to stop a person for a motor vehicle violation does not in and of itself constitute a motor vehicle pursuit.

■ He directed everyone’s attention to page 3 which states what police officers are allowed to chase for. This is where CLESP Standards come to play. The definitions added are to make it abundantly and explicitly clear. Police officers will not chase for infractions, city ordinances, property crimes which include stolen cars and, more importantly they have in there, non-violent felons such as a drug deal as long as it is non-violent.

■ On page 4 is included officers who have been disciplined in that past for pursuits. If someone is in the vehicle, it has to be a sworn officer. Being mandated by POST to make sure that when they do a police pursuit, they have a record management system. Any time there is a police pursuit, they have to document it and keep a log of that to be in compliance with POST. Any supervisor can now terminate a pursuit if they deem it inappropriate whereas before it was specifically the shift commander who could stop a pursuit. The supervisor will not be disciplined if he or she terminates a police pursuit for any reason.

■ On page 6, they articulated explicitly things that are prohibited in the city from officers engaging in regarding a pursuit such as the boxing in, the forcing of collisions and things like that may contribute to injury or death.

■ On page 7 it talks about the use of firearms during a pursuit. It is a finely-tailored area. This is also part of the mandate from CLESP. There are a lot in red here. They reorganized it and make it flow better. Changes were made throughout. They included training as well as a final component. This is especially important.

■ Commissioner Meares commented that she understood why Captain Zannelli indicated that this is one of the most important General Orders, first among equals, if you will. Vehicle pursuits historically lead to the most civilian deaths almost more than any other kind of police

activity. In the '70s in New York when they adopted less stringent policies than this one, it cut down police-involved deaths by over 50 percent. So, a really important stuff to do.

■ Captain Zannelli moved on to the **General Order 8.03**, “Domestic Violence.” This is in reference to CLESP Standard 5. This is probably one of the largest and longest General Order the Department has because it a model policy. They went a little bit further here. Two big things were added besides the reorganization and the feedback. The forms have not been updated since it was last approved by the Board on May 13, 2015. They needed the recent changes to articulate the dominant aggressor law. When Chief Dominguez ran the Special Victims Unit, they trained regarding the primary aggressor. Officers in the past used to make dual arrests if the officer could not determine who the primary aggressor was in a domestic violence situation. So, here, it is laid out for officers to go above and beyond as there are advise forms they can seek from court when investigating domestic violence crimes. They have a whole piece regarding the Victims Advocate that was added. This would have been 50 pages had Corporation Counsel not advised against it.

■ Captain Zannelli went on to the last one which is a new, **General Order 8.21**, “Notifications of Death/Serious Life-Threatening Injuries.” This is in reference to CLESP Standard 9. Victims Services officer piece has been added under definitions. This is whenever feasible because officers are responding to death and serious injuries pretty consistently on an unfortunate basis. They would like to use their Victims Services officer when feasible. This is a comprehensive one. It is good to be up to date with the best policy. This is a model policy.

■ On page 8, they added the piece that was recommended during their meeting that the Victims Services Officer will continue providing information and assistance to the victim or the victims’ families as requested even after the adjudication process has been completed.

■ Commissioner Walker did indicate that there was a recommendation that the chair of the Board of Police Commissioners should sign approved General Orders in addition to the Chief.

■ Commissioner Ribeiro stated that she spoke with Chief Dominguez earlier. The Department is checking with Corporation Counsel about whether this could be done. If it is not possible, verbiage should be added to indicate that this was reviewed and approved by the Board.

■ Attorney Duprey indicated that it would be best to note the date of approval by the Board so one person’s name is not tied to the General Order for litigations purposes and things like. It should indicate the Board as a whole.

■ Commissioner Meares stated with respect to some of these General Orders, in the interest of transparency, she e-mailed Captain Zannelli about whether and how the Department consulted with specially impacted groups with respect to some of the orders such as domestic violence, victims services and so on. Captain Zannelli responded to her e-mail by stating there wasn’t any specific consultation. In future iterations, the Board and the Department can think of and work together on some process of community feedback in the drafting of certain General Orders going forward. These orders might represent best practices right now, but there is also best practice process. There are specific processes that engage the community.

■ Commissioner Meares suggested that it might be good for specially impacted groups to know this is official policy, a kind of proactive rollout.

■ Chief Dominguez indicated that when Commissioner Meares first suggested it, they needed to be in compliance with the law. She thought it could be a great tool to get different perspective. When a kind of General Order allows for community input, they will be happy to engage in a different setting for some community groups to have ability to review and to give some comments.

- Commissioner Meares indicated that she was specifically speaking about these General Orders.
- Chief Dominguez indicated that this would be great especially for their weekly scheduled press conferences. They will add these to the next press conference on September 17, 2021.
- Commissioner Ribeiro indicated she had a conference with Chief Dominguez and she also had a conference with Attorney Duprey. She thought it would be a good idea in terms of community involvement that they get a list of specific advocates or agency groups and stakeholders that may have a particular interest in a particular General Order as opposed going around speaking to folks. Comments can be taken from the public regarding any General Order. Commissioner Meares’s suggestion is great but she thinks it should be done strategically.
- Commissioner Meares replied by stating that she could give a list of the different processes regarding participation by interested groups as well as the general public. Attorney Duprey indicated that she would welcome any information.
- Commissioner Ribeiro thanked Commissioner Meares for sharing her ideas and keeping everything transparent about this.
- Captain Zannelli thanked the Board for moving these General Orders forward. He indicated that they were behind on the General Orders. He has no aversion to engaging the community. There are three or four others regarding the Police Accountability Bill. So maybe they can put the process together with Lieutenant Colon.
- Commissioner Ribeiro thanked Captain Zanelli and everyone. However, they have much more to do.

\*\* Commissioner Meares motioned that the Board approve General Order 12.03 Entitled “Vehicle Pursuit”

\*\* Commissioner Walker seconded.

\*\* Motion passed unanimously

\*\* Commissioner Meares motioned that the Board of Police Commissioners Approve General Order 8.03 Entitled “Domestic Violence”

\*\* Commissioner Walker seconded.

■ Commissioner Brooks asked if he heard correctly that the intent was to engage other groups with regard to this General Order. Commissioner Ribeiro said he had heard correctly. However this has to be approved first, if that Board so chooses. If there are feedbacks that come in at a later date, they can be revise this at a later date.

\*\* Motion passed unanimously

\*\* Commissioner Meares moved that the Board of Police Commissioners Approve General Order 8.17 Entitled “Sensitive Crimes”

\*\* Commissioner Walker seconded.

\*\* Motion passed unanimously

\*\* Commissioner Meares moved that the Board of Police Commissioners Approve General Order 2.16 Entitled “Recruitment”



\*\* Commissioner Walker seconded.  
\*\* Motion passed unanimously

\*\* Commissioner Meares moved that the Board of Police Commissioners Approve General Order 8.21 Entitled “Notifications of Death and Serious/Life Threatening Injuries”  
\*\* Commissioner Walker seconded.  
\*\* Motion passed unanimously

### **FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

■ Commissioner Ribeiro indicated she would have a report for the Board in October.  
■ Commissioner Ribeiro indicated that Ms. Eva Perry-Lambert had been appointed as the new secretary/clerk for the Board. She works in the Chief’s Office. Ms. Perry-Lambert greeted the Board.

\*\* **Commissioner Walker moved to Enter Executive Session to Discuss Internal Affairs, Personnel Matters and other Legal Matters.**  
\*\* **Commissioner Brooks seconded**  
\*\* **Motion passed unanimously**

**The Board entered Executive Session at 7:54 p.m.**

\*\* **Commissioner Meares moved to Exit Executive Session**  
\*\* **Commissioner Walker seconded**  
\*\* **Motion passed unanimously**

**The Board exited Executive Session at 8:17 p.m.**

\*\* Commissioner Walker moved to Adjourn the Regular Meeting.  
\*\* Commissioner Brooks seconded.  
\*\* Motion passed unanimously

The next regular meeting will be on October 16, 2021.  
The Board adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sotonye Otunba-Payne