

Norwalk Board of Police Commissioners

Mayor Harry W. Rilling
Commissioner Fran Collier-Clemmons
Commissioner Tony Lopez
Commissioner Nathan Sumpter
Commissioner Ron Paladino

CITY OF NORWALK BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS Regular Meeting April 21, 2025

ATTENDANCE: Mayor Harry Rilling; Commissioner Collier-Clemmons; Commissioner Tony Lopez; Commissioner Ronald Paladino; Commissioner Nathan Sumpter

STAFF: Chief James Walsh; Deputy Chief Terry Blake; Deputy Chief Melissa Lepore; Deputy Chief Joseph Dinho

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rilling called the meeting to order at 4:49 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES MARCH 17, 2025

****COMMISSIONER SUMPTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

MARCH- OFFICER OF THE MONTH: OFFICER KYLE LIPEIKA

Chief Walsh read the following letter into the record:

I am honored to inform you that you have been selected as Officer of the Month for March 2025. You were chosen due to your continued professional and dedicated service in investigating two individuals suspected of drug sales and possibly involved in drug-related violence.

Officer Lipeika began a narcotics investigation in December 2024. The investigation was initiated after Officer Lipeika began receiving information that Vanessa Guzman and her boyfriend Jaquan

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Rosado were selling large quantities of narcotics in the greater Norwalk area and were involved in two separate shooting incidents that took place in Fairfield, CT, and Bridgeport, CT.

Beginning in December of 2024, Officer Lipeika began making controlled purchases of Fentanyl pills from Guzman and Rosado in Norwalk and Bridgeport. After a two-month investigation, Officer Lipeika determined that Guzman was using a residence in Norwalk and Bridgeport to commit illegal drug sales. Officer Lipeika was able to secure three arrest warrants for Guzman for the sale of narcotics charges. Officer Lipeika also secured search warrants for the residences in Norwalk and Bridgeport and a vehicle used in the commission of illegal narcotic sales. Officer Lipeika coordinated the arrests of Guzman and Rosado with the help of multiple law enforcement agencies in Connecticut. During the arrest operation, Rosado was found to have fentanyl pills on his person. Vanessa Guzman was then taken into custody for several active felony arrest warrants for the sale of narcotics. Officers searched her apartment and located Fentanyl pills and a scale. Officers also located a firearm with an illegal extended 30-round magazine containing 28 assorted 9mm ammunition rounds. Officer Lipeika ran the recovered Springfield Armory firearm through the FBI NIB IN database. The firearm had multiple hits, which showed that the firearm was used in approximately 10 different shootings in the Bridgeport area. As a result of Officer Lipeika's tenacious work ethic and prowess as an investigator, numerous crimes committed by Vanessa Guzman and Jaquan Rosado were solved. Officer Lipeika provided vital information on closing out open cases for other police departments and was also able to stop them from distributing fentanyl within the City of Norwalk. Based on the above information, Officer Kyle Lipeika should be recognized by the Norwalk Police Department as the March Officer of the Month.

(The commissioners congratulated Officer Kyle Lipeika)

CHIEF'S EXECUTIVE REPORT- FEBRUARY EXECUTIVE REPORT

Sworn Personnel Updates

Chief Walsh reported on the patrol staffing for the end of March and said there are 181 sworn personnel (2 open sworn positions). Lieutenant Marc Lepore retired on March 14, 2025. One officer is on administrative leave pending an Internal Affairs Investigation, and four are on extended workmen's compensation leave but have since been reduced.

Chief Walsh said 183.5 sick days and 91.12 workmen's compensation days were used. Chief Walsh said one officer completed the on-field training.

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Chief Walsh said one conditional offer was given to a lateral candidate, pending background information.

Civilian Personnel Updates

Chief Walsh provided an update on the civilian personnel and said 19 telecommunicators/supervisors are assigned to combined dispatch, and two are open positions. Two conditional job offers were given to two candidates pending background investigations. There are 14 civilian employees assigned to support staff positions, and they are fully staffed.

Departmental Initiatives

Chief Walsh reported on the departmental initiatives and said that year three of the CALEA review was completed on March 11, 2025. All policies were found to be in compliance. Chief Walsh said the four-year CALEA review is scheduled for September, and the onsite inspection is scheduled for November 2025. Deputy Chief Lepore and her team are preparing for that.

Chief Walsh said the recruitment and police app tests are open for future applicants. Interviews are scheduled in April for the July POST Academy, and the academy is looking to enroll two candidates to maintain full staffing.

Finance and Current Fiscal Year Budgeting

Chief Walsh said that Mr. Docimo of Administrative Services monitors all budgets. Chief Walsh provided an overview of the March 2025 budget status and noted that all operating salaries and overtime budgets are tracking in the green and are at 71% used for nine months through the fiscal year, which is tracking properly and have only used 52% of the overtime and expect both to stay in the green through the end of the fiscal year.

OPERATIONS REPORT

PATROL STAFFING (MARCH)

Deputy Chief Blake reported on the Detective Bureau activity and said that 19 cases were opened in March, and noted that a suspect was arrested by warrant and charged with a variety of charges, and was related to a domestic violence incident that occurred in South Norwalk. A suspect was arrested by warrant and charged with larceny in the first degree, identity theft, and forgery. The detective bureau assisted the Darien Police Department in arresting a sexual assault suspect who resides in Norwalk.

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Deputy Chief Blake reported on the Special Services activity and said they opened 29 cases in March and noted a search warrant was executed at R&R Smoke Shop, where marijuana was located, and the suspect was arrested. They also assisted the State Liquor Commission with liquor compliance checks at multiple establishments throughout the city.

Deputy Chief Blake reported on the Special Victims activity and said they opened 40 cases in March and noted that a juvenile suspect was arrested for Breach of Peace following an investigation into inappropriate pictures being taken of another juvenile. There are also several ongoing investigations.

Deputy Chief Blake reported on the Marine Unit's activity for March and noted that they recovered one person from the Norwalk River and reported a boat fire on Long Island, which was later found to be a large brush fire.

Deputy Chief Blake said there were 6,412 calls for service and 124 total arrests in March.

Deputy Chief Blake said 964 citations were issued in March, for a total of 3,242 for the year.

Commissioner Paladino said the arrests at the smoke shops are becoming habitual and asked what the recourse is, if any. Deputy Chief Blake said an ordinance is currently being worked on through the Ordinance Committee.

Commissioner Sumpter asked if other towns have the same issues with smoke shops. Deputy Chief Blake said, "Yes." However, due to our early success in investigating smoke shops, many police departments have contacted the special services investigators, who have assisted local agencies with smoke shops that are violating the law in their communities.

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

TRAINING REPORT (MARCH)

Deputy Chief Dinho reported on the Community Police Services Division and said they handled 1,041 calls for service in March. He said 13 events were attended and provided an overview of the major events they had attended/assisted with during March.

Deputy Chief Dinho reported on the Traffic Unit and said that for March, they had conducted 554 motor vehicle stops, installed two child car seats, issued 67 parking violations, found nine abandoned vehicles, and made seven DWI arrests. He said there were 86 selective enforcement locations and noted some of them. Mayor Rilling requested traffic enforcement on Hunters Lane.

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Deputy Chief Dinho provided an overview of the Behavioral Health Unit and said they opened 55 cases in March, addressed 55 cases, closed out 45 cases, hospitalized 31 cases, partnered with the state's attorney in three, referred 24 cases for services, and worked with the families on 22 cases.

Deputy Chief Dinho provided an overview of the March training, saying there were 10 total subject areas, and 45 officers attended.

Deputy Chief Dinho reported on Animal Control that 64 incidents were addressed, four animal bite incidents were reported, six enforcement/infractions/summonses were issued, and three dogs were adopted.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT (MARCH)

Deputy Chief Lepore reported on the grants and inspections and said the DUI grant had six grant hires for March for 56 hours worked. The officers made 36 car stops, issued 32 infraction tickets, and made five DUI arrests. She said the quarterly reporting was compiled and submitted for the DUI grant in March. The JAG grant funds were utilized to purchase a speed feedback sign. ARPA grant funds were utilized to purchase stop sticks. They are awaiting an award notification for the Project Safe Neighborhoods grant application. There was no other grant funding utilized in March. The distracted driver grant began on April 1st and runs through April 30th. They are continually monitoring opportunities and applying for funding.

Deputy Chief Lepore said the 2024 annual report was completed and is posted on the PD website. Deputy Chief Lepore reported on the staff inspections and said no inspections were scheduled or conducted during March.

Deputy Chief Lepore reported on the Crime Scene Unit that 103 people were fingerprinted (41 were for pistol permits). She said 17 DVDs / photos were created for case requests, 17 cases were processed for evidence, 81 patrol cases required camera/photograph downloads of scenes, 13 cases were delivered to the State Forensic Lab for processing, 14 vehicles were stored for court cases and there were no background checks conducted with three massage therapists. She said one solicitor permit was issued in March for Trinity Solar Co., and there were no pawnbroker/precious metal permit requests. She said the CSI unit vehicle was deployed once in March for a death investigation on the Norwalk River.

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Deputy Chief Lepore said they assisted the Corporation Counsel with one civil case. The 2024 NPD annual report is completed and posted on the website. Two interns from Sacred Heart University are working with the Special Victims Unit and the Behavioral Health Unit. Deputy Chief Lepore reported on the body and dashboard cameras and said that two BWC's were returned for issues, and the officer was issued a replacement camera.

Deputy Chief Lepore said there were 60 new requests for case videos, 32 disks were burned with videos, and 28 electronic shares with Stamford Court. Performance audits on officers' equipment usage and video tagging are conducted monthly. Communication takes place regularly for any issues or concerns.

Deputy Chief Lepore reported on the accreditation and said they are continually collecting proofs and reviewing CALEA standards for compliance and annual audits. The third-year electronic review for 2024 was completed on March 14th. The review consisted of examining 144 files. This year will include the fourth-year review at the end of September and the physical on-site audit in October.

Mayor Rilling asked about the background checks for massage therapists and whether the police department is compensated. Deputy Chief Lepore said they are conducted through the crime scene unit, and there is an application fee.

EXECUTIVE SESSION-PROBATIONARY CANDIDATE INTERVIEW

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The executive session began at 6:12 PM.

The executive session ended at 6:52 PM

During the executive session, no motions were made, and no votes were taken.

PERSONNEL MATTERS

MOTION TO APPOINT PROBATIONARY OFFICER

****COMMISSIONER SUMPTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF HANS BOAH AS A PROBATIONARY OFFICER FOR THE CITY OF NORWALK POLICE DEPARTMENT EFFECTIVE MAY 8, 2025.**

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT-SERGEANT NATHANIEL PAULINO

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****COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE TUITION REIMBURSEMENT FOR SERGEANT NATHANIEL PAULINO IN THE AMOUNT OF \$ 4,560.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

MASTER'S DEGREE STIPEND- OFFICER ESLAM ELLISY

****COMMISSIONER SUMPTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MASTER'S DEGREE STIPEND FOR OFFICER ESLAM ELLISY.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

****COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:59 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Dilene Byrd.