

Norwalk Board of Police Commissioners

**Mayor Harry W. Rilling
Commissioner Fran Collier-Clemmons
Commissioner Tony Lopez**

CITY OF NORWALK BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING December 18, 2023

ATTENDANCE: Mayor Rilling; Commissioner Lopez; Commissioner Collier-Clemmons

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 4:59PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES- November 20, 2023

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 20, 2023, AS SUBMITTED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

NOVEMBER OFFICERS OF THE MONTH- DETECTIVE LUIS SERRANO, SERGEANT MATTHEW NYQUIST, SERGEANT JOHN TARANTO, AND OFFICER CHRIS WASILEWSKI

Chief Walsh said that Detective Luis Serrano, Sergeant Matthew Nyquist, Sergeant John Taranto, and officer Chris Wasilewski were awarded officers of the month for their role and investigation into a fatal hit-and-run accident that occurred on Bayne Street.

Chief Walsh said that on October 28, 2023, Mark Kravarik was operating his motorcycle with his wife Dawn as they rear passenger. They had stopped at the stop sign at Bayne Street and East Rocks Road and as they proceeded, they were rear ended by a vehicle being operated by James O'Brien. The impact caused both passengers to be thrown from the motorcycle onto the roadway and James O'Brien fled the accident evading responsibility without rendering any assistance or dialing 911, and as we all know Dawn Kravarik passed away from her injuries sustained in the accident, and there was an open investigation with a fleeing operator who was responsible.

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Detective Serrano, Detective Nyquist, and Sergeant Taranto responded to the scene with Detective Serrano being the lead investigator. Officer Chris Wasilewski of the traffic unit responded to the scene to begin his role in reconstructing the accident. With limited information on the suspects' vehicle Detectives Serrano and Nyquist began a canvass of the area and were able to locate a video of the suspect fleeing the scene on a home security system and with this new piece of evidence the video was given to neighboring agencies as a be on the lookout (BOLO). The next day officers from the Wilton Police Department recognized the suspects' vehicle and notified the investigators. Detectives Serrano and Nyquist responded to the suspects address and located the suspects' vehicle and the suspect where he confessed to the crime.

Officer Wasilewski worked through the night processing the scene and was able to locate valuable evidence that was eventually matched to the suspects' vehicle. Detective Serrano and Officer Wasilewski completed several warrants for this investigation which assisted in gaining additional investigative information. All the participating officers worked as a team to gather all relevant evidence during this investigation and as a result, Detective Serrano was able to secure an arrest warrant for James O'Brien and charge him with manslaughter, assault in the second degree, reckless driving, evading responsibility, and several other motor vehicle charges. Chief Walsh said he wholeheartedly concurs with Lieutenant Kevin Markert's nomination of the officers for the month for November 2023. Due to their diligence, and professional investigative abilities, they were able to locate and arrest an individual who were responsible for the death of Dawn Kravanik.

(The commissioners congratulated Detective Luis Serrano, Sergeant Matthew Nyquist, Sergeant John Taranto, and officer Chris Wasilewski)

PATROL STAFFING (November)

Deputy Chief Blake reported on the patrol staffing for the month of November and said the staffing was at 182 sworn personnel and there are no vacancies in patrol. He said a total of 191.5 sick days and 80.25 workers compensation days were used by sworn personnel, and three officers remain on long term workers compensation but one of the officers will be back on January 1, 2024.

SELECTIVE ENFORCEMENT REPORT (November)

Deputy Chief Blake reported on the Detective Bureau activity and said that 38 cases were opened in the month of November and noted that a suspect in evading a fatality was arrested and charged with manslaughter two and evading, and a suspect was charged with carrying a pistol without a permit.

Deputy Chief Blake reported on the Special Services activity and said they opened 46 cases for the month of November and noted that underage liquor compliance checks led to 13 referrals to the state liquor commissions and there were ongoing investigations.

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Deputy Chief Blake reported on the Special Victims activity and said they opened 53 cases for the month of November and a majority were opened by School Resource Officers and noted that a suspect was arrested by warrant and charged with assault in the third and risk of injury to a minor and there were ongoing investigations.

Deputy Chief Blake said that there were 5,670 calls for service and 174 total arrests in November. He said that 507 total citations, summons, and written warnings were issued which was a drop as there was a large number of selective enforcement going on due to various safety concerns, proactive high visibility patrols being conducted, as well as assisting in outreach events. He said that 66 parking tickets were also issued during the month of November due to the ordinate amount of parking complaints throughout the city that they have received and are proactively working on parking violations in the areas that are not patrolled by the Parking Authority.

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

TRAINING REPORT (NOVEMBER)

Deputy Chief Dinho reported on the Community Police Services Division and said during the month of November they had attended the Citizens Police Academy graduation, Coffee with a Cop at McDonalds on Main Avenue, the Veterans Day ceremony at City Hall, three turkey giveaway events, two stuff the cruiser events and the tree lighting on Washington Street.

Deputy Chief Dinho reported on the Traffic Unit and said for November they had conducted 158 motor vehicle stops. He said they also conducted commercial truck enforcement operations with the CT-DMV police and major selective enforcement based on the data from the UCONN traffic crash repository as well as resident complaints. Commissioner Collier-Clemmons asked what the commercial truck enforcement and the major selective enforcement entails. Deputy Chief Dinho said for the major selective enforcement locations officers are sent out throughout the month that show there are motor vehicle accidents occurring in those areas as well as select locations based on residents' complaints. He said separate from that the Traffic Unit had a joint operation with the CT DMV police to do truck enforcement and perform inspections on heavy duty vehicles to be sure they are operating safely and in compliance with Connecticut state statutes.

Deputy Chief Dinho reported on the Behavioral Health Unit and said they opened 42 cases in November, addressed 42 cases and closed out 26 cases. He said there were three cases that were referred by outside agencies, 37 cases were received from within the police department, and two cases were self-initiated.

Deputy Chief Dinho reported on the training for November and said they have successfully resolved the printout issue with the new software vendor and were able to make the report as simple as possible from the previous printouts and are quite lengthy as they are heavy into the recertification and training cycle.

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ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

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Deputy Chief Lepore reported and said the DUI grant was approved by the Common Council on December 12, 2023, and hires continue throughout the holiday season and into the new year, and the remaining funds for the auto theft grant allows them to continue to hire through the end of the year.

Deputy Chief Lepore reported on the staff inspections and said the physical audit was completed for the Property Unit and are awaiting the written report but through the physical audit there were no major discrepancies found, and the cash audits will take place in the next week or two for the Detective Bureau and Special Services

Deputy Chief Lepore reported on the Crime Scene Unit and said that 106 persons were fingerprinted (41 were for pistol permits, 28 DVD's were created for case requests, 14 cases were processed for evidence, and 87 patrol cases required camera/photograph downloads. Mayor Rilling asked if there is a fee charged for the case requests. Deputy Chief Lepore said "yes", and the fee is \$5.00 per DVD. Mayor Rilling asked if that involves a lot of staff time. Deputy Chief Lepore said "yes". Mayor Rilling asked if \$5.00 is the maximum allowed by state statute. Deputy Chief Lepore said "no". Mayor Rilling requested what the cost to the city be analyzed in terms of manpower and material. Chief Walsh said he has already begun having discussions with the Corporations Councils office to review all the fees for FOI and will come out with a new fee schedule after the new year.

Deputy Chief Lepore reported on the professional standards and accreditation and said that the Detective Bureau test and the reading list was announced and is scheduled for February 17, 2024, and as of Friday, December 7th there are four officers signed to take it. The Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) is going electronic and NexGen and Axon will be utilized for transmitting all necessary information. The training and initial set up has begun with hopes to roll it out sometime in January 2024. This will entail all court required documents for hearings, electronic evidence submissions, probable cause hearings, and clean slate erasure messages. She said eventually they will also be getting the submissions for body camera and any type of third-party video electronically.

Deputy Chief Lepore reported on the body and dashboard cameras and said after troubleshooting there were minimal issues, and that two dashboard cameras were returned for service and replaced by Axon. She said there were 24 new requests for case videos. Deputy Chief Lepore reported on the accreditation and said they are preparing and collecting year-end reporting requirements for CALEA and the NPD annual report. Mayor Rilling asked how often each division is inspected as part of the accreditation process. Deputy Chief Lepore said within the four-year accreditation cycle every division in the department must be inspected at least once and they have a schedule for which month each division will be inspected except for property which is done annually and is announced.

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PERSONNEL MATTERS

BACHELOR'S DEGREE STIPEND- OFFICER QUINN SCARPELLI

**** There was no action taken.**

MASTER'S DEGREE STIPEND- OFFICER QUINN SCARPELLI

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MASTER'S DEGREE STIPEND FOR OFFICER QUINN SCARPELLI**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

COMPLIMENTARY LETTERS

Chief Walsh said he received a complimentary letter from the Norwalk Housing Authority for Sergeant Calise and his community policing team for all their help and support for their 2023 Thanksgiving turkey giveaway, and 380 Norwalk Housing Authority households received turkeys.

Chief Walsh said that Officer Equi received a complimentary letter from a family that had a family member die in a car accident two months ago for the empathy she had shown the family.

Mayor Rilling said that he appreciates the participation from the Police Department in all the events around the city, and in view of what is happening around the world the people attending those events felt very comfortable seeing the officers there, and the officers were amazing as far as interacting with the people that were in attendance.

Commissioner Collier-Clemmons thanked the Chief and the Deputy Chiefs for the work that they are doing on the reporting each month and they are doing a great job.

Mayor Rilling wished everyone a very Merry Christmas and a joyous, peaceful, healthy, prosperous 2024.

ADJOURNMENT

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 5:27PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Dilene Byrd

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