

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 December 16, 2024

ATTENDANCE: Mayor Harry Rilling; 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 4:35 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES NOVEMBER 18, 2024

** COMMISSIONER PALADINO MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments this evening.

NOVEMBER- OFFICER OF THE MONTH-LINDSEY TAYLOR

Chief Walsh said he is honored to announce that Detective Lindsey Taylor has been selected as Officer of the Month for November 2024.

On September 12, 2024, she was assigned the missing person investigation of Earl Sebastian, a 72-year-old resident of Norwalk who went missing on September 10, 2024. Throughout September, October, and November, she diligently investigated by accessing and reviewing thousands of bits of data in his electronic devices to find a possible cyber trail of where he had gone and issued a "Silver Alert." Most importantly, she liaised with the family to glean any possible information, but she also acted as the department's contact as they struggled with Mr. Sebastian's disappearance. As the investigation continued, she gathered surveillance videos from businesses and the train station of Mr. Sebastian

City of Norwalk
Board of Police Commissioners
December 16, 2024

Norwalk Board of Police Commissioners

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

walking on the day he disappeared. This led us to believe he willfully walked away but could still be in danger. She worked with our social media and other social media applications, highlighting missing persons and placing his photo and information on these sites. On November 12, 2024, he was located safely in New York through social media sites and returned to Norwalk after a hospital visit.

Due to her diligent and professional missing person investigation of Earl Sebastian, he was safely located and returned home to his family. Her commitment to finding him and using many investigative techniques, such as social media and technology, made this investigation successful for all.

Chief Walsh said the family contacts throughout this investigation were most important. He had attended the vigil that the family held and had the opportunity to meet the family members. They stressed the fact of Detective Taylor's outreach to the family throughout this process and what a wonderful job she did.

Detective Taylor thanked the commission for their kind words and said she was honored and humbled to receive this award. She said it was a very difficult and long case and that it was a relief that she was able to bring him home to his family for the holidays.

(The commissioners congratulated Detective Lindsey Taylor)

CHIEF'S EXECUTIVE REPORT- NOVEMBER EXECUTIVE REPORT

Sworn Personnel Updates

Chief Walsh reported on the patrol staffing for November and said that there are 181 Sworn Personnel (2 open sworn positions), one officer on Administration pending Internal Affairs Investigation, and one officer on a leave of absence.

Chief Walsh said Officer Amanda Lopez and Officer Patricia Nelson completed their field training and are assigned to patrol.

Chief Walsh said four officers remain on-field training, and that three background investigations are ongoing for the January POST Academy.

Civilian Personnel Updates

Chief Walsh provided an update and said there are 21 telecommunicators and that one telecommunicator had taken a job in another department and is in the process of completing a background investigation on her replacement. He said that 14 civilian employees are assigned to support staff positions and are fully staffed.

Departmental Initiatives

Chief Walsh said the 2025/2026 Fiscal Operating and Capital budgets are being finalized and will be submitted to Finance for review.

City of Norwalk
Board of Police Commissioners
December 16, 2024

Norwalk Board of Police Commissioners

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

Chief Walsh said that overtime is down in all divisions by 358% from November of 2023 and is down 22% from October of 2024.

Chief Walsh said the departmental side firearm transition began and will continue.

Chief Walsh said they have implemented two electric vehicles into the police fleet as SRO vehicles.

Chief Walsh said the Diocese of Bridgeport Blue Mass Life Saving Award recognized officers Deri and Lowe III.

Finance and Current Fiscal Year Budgeting

Chief Walsh said that all budgets are monitored by Mr. Docimo of Administrative Services, and he provided an overview of the November 2024 budget status and noted that overtime is down in all sectors.

Mayor Rilling asked why the overtime for school security in October was so much higher than the other three months. Chief Walsh said it ebbs and flows depending on the number of school days.

OPERATIONS REPORT

PATROL STAFFING (NOVEMBER)

Deputy Chief Blake reported on the Detective Bureau activity and said that 30 cases were opened in November and noted that a suspect was arrested by warrant for risk of injury, reckless endangerment, and illegal use of a firearm. Missing person Earl Sebastian was located by Detective Taylor in Brooklyn, New York, and was found in good health and was reunited with his family.

Deputy Chief Blake reported on the Special Services activity and said they opened 52 cases for November and noted that a suspect was arrested via five arrest warrants for the sale of narcotics, a search warrant was executed at 42 Woodward Avenue, and five gambling machines were seized as well as \$98,000. Search warrants were executed on Marlin Drive and two arrest warrants were served on a suspect for the sale of narcotics, and they assisted the Stamford Police Department with a search warrant on West Cedar Street, and a handgun and assault rifle were seized.

Deputy Chief Blake reported on the Special Victims activity and said they opened 28 cases for November and noted that a suspect was arrested by warrant, charging sexual assault in the 1st degree, Illegal Sexual contact with a victim Under 16, assault in the 3rd degree, and interfering with a 911 call. A suspect was arrested by warrant for family violence assault in the 3rd degree and risk of injury to a child. A suspect was arrested by juvenile summons, charging assault in the 2nd degree, and strangulation in the 2nd degree.

Norwalk Board of Police Commissioners

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

Deputy Chief Blake reported on the Marine Unit activity and said they had five cases for November and noted that there were two people rescued from the water by Cockenoe Island. Deputy Chief Blake said there were 6,503 calls for service and 166 total arrests in November, and that 983 total citations, summons, and written warnings were issued for the month, which is up from 507 last November, and are currently at 12,179 for the year.

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

TRAINING REPORT (NOVEMBER)

Deputy Chief Dinho reported on the Community Police Services Division and said they handled a total of 859 calls for service in November. He said that several events were attended, and he provided an overview of the major events attended/assisted during November.

Deputy Chief Dinho reported on the Traffic Unit and said they had conducted 589 motor vehicle stops and three enforcement citations for school bus violations, and 135 parking violations were issued in November. He said there were 32 selective enforcement locations and some of the locations were held on Main Avenue, West Rocks Road, East Avenue, Rampart Road, Walter Avenue, Connecticut Avenue, Strawberry Hill Avenue, and Silvermine Avenue.

Deputy Chief Dinho provided an overview of the Behavioral Health Unit and said they opened 28 cases in November, addressed 28 cases, closed out 28 cases, hospitalized 15 cases, partnered with the State's Attorney on three cases, referred 15 cases for services, and worked with the families on six cases.

Deputy Chief Dinho provided an overview of the training for November and said seven total subject areas were attended by 39 officers.

Deputy Chief Dinho said that the Norwalk Animal Control facility passed its annual inspection by the Connecticut Department of Agriculture and was found to be 100% compliant and there were no deficiencies found.

Mayor Rilling said he is impressed with the number of community events that are attended, and it certainly fosters a wonderful relationship between the community and the department, and they should be complimented.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT (NOVEMBER)

Deputy Chief Lepore reported on the grants and inspections and said that the DUI grant is back in effect and had 15 grants for November for a total of 124 hours worked. They had conducted 19 field sobriety tests leading to 8 DUI arrests, and the officers made 75 car stops and issued 66 infraction tickets. Click It or Ticket had six grant hires for November for a total of 24

Norwalk Board of Police Commissioners

Mayor Harry W. Rilling

Commissioner Fran Collier-Clemmons

Commissioner Tony Lopez

Commissioner Nathan Sumpter

Commissioner Ron Paladino

hours and the officers made 31 car stops and issued 24 infraction tickets. She said they are continually monitoring funding opportunities through new state and federal grants.

Deputy Chief Lepore reported on the staff inspections and said the property room is scheduled for inspection the week of December 16th and will have the results in January.

Deputy Chief Lepore reported on the Crime Scene Unit and said that 101 persons were fingerprinted (40 were for pistol permits. She said 17 DVDs / or photos were created for case requests, 34 cases were processed for evidence, and 90 patrol cases required camera/photograph downloads of scenes, and backgrounds were conducted on 5 massage therapists that consisted of Massage Envy, Carefoot Reflexology, Spring Massage Spa, and Angel Reflexology. She said one solicitor permit was requested during the month for New Yorker Solar LLC., and there were no pawnbroker/precious metal permit requests.

She said the CSI unit vehicle was not deployed during November, and 215 new firearms were test-fired for sworn personnel.

Deputy Chief Lepore said the promotional exam is on schedule with no issues at this time and to date, there are 10 people signed up for the sergeant's exam and two people signed up for the lieutenant's exam.

Deputy Chief Lepore said the directive updates were completed and distributed to all personnel.

Deputy Chief Lepore reported on the body and dashboard cameras and said three body cameras were returned due to minor malfunctions, and all were replaced within the month, one dashboard camera was also returned and replaced due to a power issue. There were no taser issues reported.

Deputy Chief Lepore said that there were 40 new requests for case videos, 24 disks were burned with videos, and 16 electronic shares with Stamford Court.

Deputy Chief Lepore reported on the accreditation and said they are continually collecting proofs and reviewing CALEA standards for compliance and annual audits. She said they are also developing and writing a department Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). The plan is in accordance with CALEA standards and entails preparing the department in the event of an emergency evacuation of headquarters and relocating operations. This includes but is not limited to building security, relocation of prisoners (if any), and the safeguarding or possible removal of vital assets, equipment, and records which needs to be completed for the March review.

Commissioner Lopez asked how often the COOP is developed. Deputy Chief Lepore said this is the first one and is a new standard that CALEA has come out with, and it will incorporate some pieces from the emergency plan.

Norwalk Board of Police Commissioners

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

PERSONNEL MATTERS

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT- LIEUTENANT ROBERT ZWILLICH

**** COMMISSIONER LOPEZ MOVED TO APPROVE THE TUITION REIMBURSEMENT FOR LIEUTENANT ROBERT ZWILLICH IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,335.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

COMPLIMENTARY LETTERS

Chief Walsh said he received a complimentary letter from an employee of the Norwalk Public Schools stating she was on her way home from work and ran out of gas and Officer Steven Green pushed her car to a safer location and sat behind her car for safety reasons and filled a gas can and helped her fill her car and followed her to the gas station to be sure she arrived safely. She said that Officer Green had gone above and beyond, and she is very grateful.

Chief Walsh said he received a complimentary letter from Premier Oral Surgery expressing their gratitude for Officer Anuszkiewicz for assisting with a medical emergency at their office on November 15th. He said the officer demonstrated knowledge, confidence, and tactfulness consistent with a professional medical first responder, and Norwalk is truly lucky to have this type of public service.

Chief Walsh said he received a complimentary letter from a resident of Westport stating she was involved in a motor vehicle accident and Office Zavitz had responded and that he was very polite and concerned and made her feel so much better and is a credit to the department.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COMMISSIONER LOPEZ MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd

City of Norwalk
Board of Police Commissioners
December 16, 2024