

Norwalk Board of Police Commissioners

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

CITY OF NORWALK BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING NOVEMBER 15, 2021

ATTENDANCE: Mayor Rilling; Commissioner Collier-Clemmons

STAFF: Chief Thomas Kulhawik; Deputy Chief Susan Zecca; Deputy Chief James Walsh

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rilling called the meeting to order at 4:30PM. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 20, 2021.

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Cece asked if there is staff available for the enforcement for the stop here on red and don't block the intersection at Olmstead Place. She also requested that she is provided something that states how the enforcement is done so that she can share it with the residents, as well as information regarding when a ticket is issued if it is written for blocking the intersection or are they written the same as when going through a stop sign. Mayor Rilling said the ticket issued would be for failure to obey a traffic control sign.

RECOGNITION

Civilian Award- Carolyn Meatta

Chief Kulhawik said that Ms. Meatta is an out of state resident and was traveling through Norwalk and our officers were dispatched to a call of a person unresponsive and when they arrived, they found Ms. Meatta performing CPR and assisted the officers with CPR and the subject was transported to the hospital and was revived. He said one of the officers made note of

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this at the scene and suggested that she be honored with a civilian award, and he will be sending a letter and certificate to her.

(The commissioner offered Carolyn Meatta congratulations)

Civilian Award- Dispatcher Michael Devaney

Chief Kulhawik said we were notified by the EMS coordinator from the Norwalk Hospital stating that on October 13, 2021, there was a cardiac arrest reported and dispatcher Devaney handled the 911 call and dispatched police, fire and EMS and provided pre-arrival instructions. He said the hospital staff credits his instructions along with the response of the first responders for reviving the individual, and the Norwalk Hospital presented awards to all of those that were involved along with the individual.

(The commissioners offered Dispatcher Michael Devaney congratulations)

Civilian Award- Dispatcher's Christopher Lazar, Vanessa Barrett and Matthew Allan

Chief Kulhawik said he received a write up through Lieutenant Blake on a request from Officer Haggerty who had been working in dispatch in the early morning hours of October 24, 2021, where there were numerous calls and there was a large pop-up party in East Norwalk that had 300-500 people where a fire alarm had been ripped off the wall causing chaos and required a large number of officers to disburse the crowd. He said almost at the same time a shots fired call was received on Washington Street which required officers to respond there as well, and EMS was also sent to three other major calls at the same time and Officer Haggerty noted the calm and professional manor in which all three dispatchers handled the numerous 911 calls and monitoring all the units at the same time and wanted to see them recognized and we agreed.

(The commissioners offered Dispatchers Christopher Lazar, Vanessa Barrett and Matthew Allan congratulations)

September Officers of the Month- Officer Sgritta, Officer Wargo and Officer McSally

Chief Kulhawik said there was a call on September 1, 2021, at 11:30PM where officers were dispatched to an emotionally disturbed male who was armed with a knife and was making comments that he wanted the police to come to shoot him. The officers responded and were able to take a position of cover and deescalated the situation and provided him with the medical attention that he needed, and their sergeants forwarded the recommendation of the officers for their calm demeanor and handling a situation that could have quickly gone bad.

(The commissioners offered Officer Sgritta, Officer Wargo and Officer McSally congratulations)

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October Officer of the Month- Detective Patrick English

Chief Kulhawik said there was an incident that occurred in the early morning hours of October 9, 2021, where a mother called 911 stating that a male had forcefully entered her residence and was attempting to sexually assault the daughter and when she saw this, she confronted the male, he fled, and the officers had responded, and Detective English was assigned to the investigation. Sergeant Orr who is assigned to the special victims unit made a note that Detective English worked extremely quickly and gathered the evidence needed and in nine days was not only able to obtain the warrant but also arrested the person responsible for the home invasion and we agree that he deserves the recognition.

Detective English said he attended the meeting today not for himself but of course he appreciates the recognition but wanted to recognize two incredible officers who were instrumental in doing the work that we did and went on to say that Officer Delgado's knowledge of the South Norwalk area and the people in the community, and without his specific skillset he does not believe this case would have been solved in nine days. He also said that on the night of the arrest Officer Roncinske who was handling a stolen car complaint which turned into a possible child abduction case also did an excellent job so both officers were instrumental in bringing this case to a successful closure.

(The commissioners offered Detective Patrick English congratulations)

OPERATIONS REPORT

Patrol Staffing- September

Deputy Chief Walsh reported and said for September there were 173 sworn personnel, 8 patrolmen vacancies and the sworn personnel used 199.5 sick days and 247 workers compensations days, and 11 officers were on extended workmen's compensation and two officers on light duty.

Selective Enforcement-September

Deputy Chief Walsh reported on the activity for the Detective Bureau in September and said there was one residential burglary, 14 burglaries into vehicles and most were involving one individual who was targeting the Rowayton, and Wilson Point are and has been arrested on three warrants for three stolen cars and in incarcerated. He said that four robberies, six larcenies and one assault were also investigated as well as one shooting incident with no victim, two death investigations, two overdose investigations and two sexual assault investigations. He said the Detective Bureau remained busy with 19 arrest warrants executed and an individual was arrested for two counts of robbery in the first and larceny in the third and are also continuing a cold case investigation from 1990.

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Deputy Chief Walsh reported on the Special Services activity and said they opened 37 cases in September, made 10 felony arrests, 10 misdemeanor arrests and executed nine warrants. They also did an undercover operation and made five arrests for underage vape sales and executed a search warrant on Loundsbury Avenue and made one arrest and conducted two fatal overdose investigations.

Deputy Chief Walsh reported on the activity for Special Victims Unit for September and said they opened 45 cases and made two felony arrests, executed three search warrants, and closed one sexual assault in the first degree with an arrest and made closure on an out of state extradition for a sexual assault in the first degree.

Deputy Chief Walsh reported on the activity for the Traffic Unit for September and said they had made 128 stops, issued 39 citations, five misdemeanor arrests, 72 written warnings and 14 verbal warnings.

Deputy Chief Walsh reported on the Community Policing and Community services remained busy for the month of September conducting enforcement and putting up the traffic signs in the areas that were identified by the residents, as well as with the coordinating of the SONO half marathon, the Oyster Festival, and the Cove Marina Boat Show.

Deputy Chief Walsh reported on the Marine Division for September and said they had 42 calls for service and are scaling down operations for October.

Deputy Chief Walsh said the total criminal arrest for September 2021 was 168 and there were 4895 calls for service, and in September 2020, there were 4003 calls for service.

Deputy Chief Walsh reported on the infractions and citation data for September 2021, and said there was a total of 261 infractions, written warnings and summons issued.

Patrol Staffing- October

Deputy Chief Walsh reported and said for October there were 169 sworn personnel, 12 patrolmen vacancies and the sworn personnel used 200.5 sick days and 268 workers compensations days, and 11 officers were on extended workmen's compensation and three officers are on light duty.

Selective Enforcement-October

Deputy Chief Walsh reported on the Detective Bureau activities for October and said they have slowed down slightly but there were two residential burglaries, eight motor vehicle burglaries, five robberies, 6 larcenies and two assaults. He said they had two shooting instances with no victim and two arrests were made, and there were also two death investigations and two overdose investigations. He said that there was an armed robbery at Starbucks which is currently under investigation and the suspect of several of the motor vehicle burglaries was arrested and there are

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more arrests pending. He said the suspect has been identified and was arrested for the shots fired in September on Washington Street.

Deputy Chief Walsh reported on the Special services activity and said there were 38 cases, 16 felony arrests, and issued 16 arrest warrants. SNET officers arrested an individual in possession of a handgun and crack cocaine, and they also conducted selective enforcement on Washington Street. He said that proactive patrol has also continued in hotspots throughout the city.

Deputy Chief Walsh reported on the Special Victims activity and said they opened 44 cases, made five felony arrests, three misdemeanor arrests, and issued three search warrants. He said they also investigated two threat investigations and one was at Norwalk High School and the other was at Brien McMahon High School. He said one arrest was made for the home invasion and attempted sexual assault, and they have several ongoing sexual assault investigations.

Deputy Chief Walsh reported on the community policing and said that on October 16, 2021, they had the gun buyback program and 30 guns were turned in and we gave them gift cards to Stew Leonard's. He said they also participated in the Touch-A-Truck event at All Saints School, and selective enforcement at Wilson Point was increased due to the burglaries that occurred in September. He said the Auto theft Task Force started targeting neighborhoods with high rates of stolen motor vehicles and motor vehicle burglaries.

Deputy Chief Walsh said the total criminal arrests in October 2021 was 204 and there were 4,483 patrol calls for service, and in October 2020 there were 4,039 calls for service. He said in October 2021 there were 194 total infractions.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

September and October Training Reports

Deputy Chief Zecca reported and said that monthly ESU training was held as well as SCUBA, crisis negotiation and the drone operator also did some training and one supervisor had gone to training for a supervision and management. Additionally, some firearms training continued, and some officers had completed some NCIC recertification that is required every two years. The Lieutenants that oversee internal affairs attended a one-day internal affairs investigation class, and multiple use of force instructors had attended the new mandated use of force training for the new curriculum but not a whole lot has changed from what is currently being done and has been done for many years. She said multiple panelists were also trained to handle the entry level interviews, as well as sending some of the detectives to new applicant background investigation training. She reported on the review credit that was done and was mostly for legal updates.

Deputy Chief Zecca reported for the month of October and said that the monthly ESU training was done and review credit training for crime scene, domestic violence, human trafficking, rape crisis and sexual assault. She said the annual low light and use of force qualifications continued as well as the annual rifle qualifications and one detective attended a post blast bomb investigation training for additional specialized training.

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Deputy Chief Zecca noted that within the firearms training and use of force training we have been using the simulator that we had purchased for real life scenarios on use of force and de-escalation sceneries.

PERSONNEL MATTERS

Drop Request- Officer Christopher Holms

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE DROP REQUEST FOR OFFICER CHRISTOPHER HOLMES BEGINNING FEBRUARY 1, 2022, AND ENDING ON JANUARY 31, 2027.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Drop Request- Officer David Vetare

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE DROP REQUEST FOR OFFICER DAVID VETARE BEGINNING DECEMBER 1, 2021 AND ENDING ON NOVEMBER 30, 2026.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Tuition Reimbursement- Sergeant Rafael Fonseca

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE TUITION REIMBURSEMENT FOR SERGEANT RAFAEL FONSECA IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,468.66.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

COMPLIMENTARY LETTERS

Chief Kulhawik said he received an email from Nicole Hampton of the Norwalk Hospital commending Officer Holmes on his empathetic demeanor when responding to a call at the Open-Door Shelter for someone who was suffering for mental health and addiction.

Chief Kulhawik said that Deputy Chief Walsh received a complementary email from a retired member of the NYPD regarding Dispatcher Vanessa Barrett for her response for an incident that occurred with one of his family members.

Chief Kulhawik said that he received a complementary email from Thomas Mattera regarding Officer Sixto, Officer Delgado and Officer Bell for their response to the bank robbery and for staying beyond their shift to help the detectives.

Chief Kulhawik said that he received a complementary email from Sergeant Gulino regarding Officer Egui for her response to a call at Walmart where an aid lost an Alzheimer's patient and she was able to reunite the person with their family.

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Chief Kulhawik said he received a complementary email from Amanda Fisher of Naramake School thanking the police officers for their increased presence and for providing a positive relationship with the students and staff of the school.

Chief Kulhawik said he received a complimentary email from Principal Thomas of Columbus Magnet School stating he had an interaction with Officer Liepicka and complemented him for his response during a traffic stop. He also mentioned Officer English on how he handled the traffic control while working at the Oyster Festival, as well as Officer Richard Holmes and Lieutenant Orr on how they interacted with a person who was illustrating strange behavior. He also said despite the national tension between the police department and people of color, I can only speak to my experiences, and those I have witnessed from afar and your force is remarkable.

Chief Kulhawik said he received a complimentary email from Chief Gatto thanking the department for their assistance at Firefighter Ralph Geter's funeral.

Chief Kulhawik said he received a complementary email regarding Officer Aldarondo for his assistance that a 90-year-old turtle that was crossing Wolfpit Avenue and for going above and beyond and getting the turtle to a safe place.

Chief Kulhawik said that Lieutenant Blake received a complementary email from a social worker regarding officer Amparo and Officer Lusniak for their response to an emotionally disturbed person and how they handled the situation.

Chief Kulhawik said he received a complimentary email from a resident of New Cannan regarding Officer Nyquist for his response to an elderly person who was lost and was able to reunite her with her family.

(The commissioner's offered their congratulations and thanks to the people for taking the time for sending the complementary emails)

ADJOURNMENT

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 5:20PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd