

Norwalk Board of Police Commissioners

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

CITY OF NORWALK BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING June 17, 2024

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

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

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rilling called the meeting to order at 4:32PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES-MAY 20, 2024

On page 4, change "readers" to "reader"

On page 5, change "commission" to "commissioner"

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH TWO ABSTENTIONS- COMMISSIONER LOPEZ AND COMMISSIONER PALADINO.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Levin said the Norwalk Police union contract expires at the end of this month and he has not seen any discussions regarding the union contract on any of the police commission agenda's and asked the commissioners to raise their hand if they have read the current union contract. Mayor Rilling said he does not know if that is an appropriate question and that the contract is available to the commissioners and they are currently in the process of negotiations and when the new contract is proposed it will be presented to the board of police commissioners, but ultimately must be passed by the Common Council. Mr. Levin said that has been true in prior years, but he would expect there to be some discussion regarding matters in the current contract that the commission may have a concern about. He said the current contract allows for random drug and alcohol testing of officers as did the proceeding contract, the proceeding

City of Norwalk
Board of Police Commissioners
June 17, 2024

Norwalk Board of Police Commissioners

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Commissioner Nathan Sumpter

contract also has a requirement that any officer selected for random testing must be notified at least 24 hours in advance of the administration of that test which seemed odd to him however, it seems the requirement of advanced notice was deleted from the current contract and ask if that can be confirmed. Mayor Rilling said he cannot at this point but again this is not an item that is on the agenda and agenda items are what the limit is for discussion the reason being is that any item that is discussed that is not on the agenda becomes a Freedom of Information violation.

Mr. Levin said he thinks the commissioners need to be free-thinking and curious and consider what they are possibly not being told and have enough courage and integrity to ask for it directly. He said for example missing from the monthly reports are the number of grievances filed by officers during the month, the number of officers on administrative leave during the month, the number and type of disciplinary actions taken during the month and how many officers were subject to these actions, the number of officers subject to random drug and alcohol testing during the month and the number of officers with adverse drug and alcohol tests random or otherwise, the number of overtime hours worked during the month and the number of officers who worked that overtime, the number of extra duty hours worked during the month and the number of officers who worked those extra duty hours, the number of overtime and extra duty hours combined representing the highest amount worked by a single officer during the month, as well as the identity of the entity which contracted the NPD for the greatest number of extra duty assignments and hours, and the number of extra duty assignments that were cancelled or terminated early (within less than four hours) for the month. He said the list is long and is not complete but may serve useful for a person to understand how or why NPD members are consistently are an overwhelming majority year after year of the highest paid city employees. He said he thinks the commission has done an excellent job offering praise and encouragement to the officers and their leadership who do this very important work and who as far as he can tell do it exceptionally well but there is a need for more than that as the residents of Norwalk and taxpayers deserve better transparency. He said he has given these questions much thought and invites each commissioner who might be interested to contact him directly as he would be happy to help.

MAY OFFICER OF THE MONTH- LIEUTENANT KRUGER; SERGEANT PETRAFESA; OFFICER GIANNATTASIO; OFFICER AMPARO; OFFICER REYES; OFFICER HOWARD; OFFICER COLLETTA; OFFICER DARROW; OFFICER LINDSEY; OFFICER GREEN; LIEUTENANT LEPORE; AND OFFICER TABORDA

Deputy Chief Blake said that Chief Walsh wrote a memo honoring the following officers that have been named officer(s) of the month for May 2024. On May 16, 2024, several officers from the second platoon and members of the crisis negotiation team responded to a possible violent domestic situation involving an armed juvenile and de-escalated the professionally.

Norwalk Board of Police Commissioners

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Commissioner Tony Lopez

Commissioner Nathan Sumpter

He said the officers include Lieutenant Kruger; Sergeant Petrafesa; Officer Giannattasio; Officer Amparo; Officer Reyes; Officer Howard; Officer Colletto; Officer Darrow; Officer Lindsey; Officer Green; Lieutenant Lepore; and Officer Taborda.

Deputy Chief Blake said the incident occurred during the police memorial event and the officers did an incredible job of slowing the scene down, de-escalating the situation. He said he 14-year-old was having some issues and they worked through it and Lieutenant Lepore and Officer Taborda spent a considerable amount of time speaking with the individual and got him to give up and was provided services and additional services through the behavioral health unit. He said the officers did a fantastic job in a situation that could have certainly ended a different way.

(The commissioners congratulated Lieutenant Kruger; Sergeant Petrafesa; Officer Giannattasio; Officer Amparo; Officer Reyes; Officer Howard; Officer Colletto; Officer Darrow; Officer Lindsey; Officer Green; Lieutenant Lepore; and Officer Taborda)

PATROL STAFFING (MAY)

Deputy Chief Blake reported on the patrol staffing for the month of May and said the staffing was at 183 sworn personnel and there are no vacancies in patrol. He said a total of 147 sick days and 42 workers compensation days were used by sworn personnel and there are still two officers on long term injury.

SELECTIVE ENFORCEMENT REPORT (MAY)

Deputy Chief Blake reported on the Detective Bureau activity and said that 48 cases were opened in the month of May and noted that a suspect was arrested by warrant for two robberies that occurred on Westport Avenue, a Pennsylvania child rape suspect was arrested and charged as a fugitive from justice, and a suspect was arrested and charged with sexual assault 1.

Deputy Chief Blake reported on the Special Services activity and said they opened 64 cases for the month of May and noted that a search warrant was executed at a suspect's residence on West Avenue and seized 83 grams of fentanyl, 1,167 bags of fentanyl, 739 ecstasy pills, and 15 grams of crack cocaine. The suspect was charged with numerous violations and parole violation. He said a search warrant was also executed at ZaZa Smoke Shop, and 1.5 lbs of marijuana and \$1,700 was seized and the suspect was arrested.

Deputy Chief Blake reported on the Special Victims activity and said they opened 57 cases for the month of May and noted that that a suspect was arrested on a warrant charging six counts of sexual assault in the 2nd, risk of injury to a minor, and harmful communication with a minor. He said a suspect was also arrested on a warrant charging here with reckless endangerment in the 1st and cruelty to persons.

Deputy Chief Blake reported on the Marine Unit activity and said they had 52 cases for the month of May and have seen a 20% increase in call volume already this year. He noted that

Norwalk Board of Police Commissioners

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two people were rescued from a stranded kayak near Calf Pasture Beach, they responded to the Norwalk River during a tanker fire to monitor waterway runoff, responded to 15 boating violations, conducted safety outreach with Sprite Island Yacht Club and hosted students from Side-by-Side school, and once again partnered with the Norwalk Hospital Emergency Medical Service to have paramedic on board during the Memorial Day weekend.

Deputy Chief Blake said there were 6,984 calls for service, and 192 total arrests in May, and that 769 total citations, summons, and written warnings were issued for the month which makes a total of 4,905 for the year which has increased from last year.

Commissioner Collier-Clemmons asked if there were any motor vehicle burglaries this year.

Deputy Chief Blake said there have been and he will report back on the statistics. Commissioner Lopez said aside from the arrest at the smoke shop and if there were any issues with the state. Deputy Chief Blake said they are not legal marijuana sellers so therefore do not have a license and are selling it illegally, and one of the smoke shops was shut down as a result of several search warrants that were executed by the special services division, and they are on top of this and spend a significant amount of time and there is good reason and have had citizen complaints that their children are buying marijuana and is obviously not okay and the investigators remain vigilant.

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

TRAINING REPORT (MAY)

Deputy Chief Dinho reported on the Community Police Services Division and said they handled 715 calls for service. He said the major events they attended/assisted during the month of May included the bridge fire on I-95, Touch-a-Truck at Stepping Stones, Norwalk for mental health, SONO food pantry, Stamford Police Memorial Ceremony, SONO health walk, Norwalk Police Memorial Ceremony, Shea McGrath Memorial Ceremony, Rowayton Memorial Day parade, and Law Enforcement Special Olympics Torch Run.

Deputy Chief Dinho reported on the Traffic Unit and said they had conducted 242 motor vehicle stops. He said some of the major selective enforcement locations were held on Calf Pasture Beach Road, Fox Run Road, East Avenue, Grist Mill Road, West Rocks Road, Murray Street, Riverside Avenue, and Winfield Street.

Deputy Chief Dinho provided an overview of the Behavioral Health Unit and said it has been extremely successful in reducing repeat calls for service for individuals with need. He reported on the Behavioral Health Unit and said they opened 43 cases in May, addressed 42 cases and closed out 37 cases. He said one case was referred to by outside agencies, 34 cases were referred from within the police department, and 8 cases were self-initiated.

Deputy Chief Dinho provided an overview of the training for May and said there were a total of 12 subject areas, and a total of 93 officers in attendance receiving recertification training and is ongoing each month.

Norwalk Board of Police Commissioners

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Commissioner Nathan Sumpter

Deputy Chief Dinho provided an overview of the POST required training and said 60 hours of training is required every three years for each of the officers and is on a rotating schedule so that not every officer expires on the same year, and is spread over a three-year cycle and is a constant rotating schedule so that all of the training that is required by the State of Connecticut police academy is completed, but they also go far above and beyond what is required and the officers are some of the best trained officers in the state. Commissioner Paladino said he has gone back and looked at the training the officers have received and the higher education they have, and it is amazing. Commissioner Lopez agreed and said they just saw the remarkable performance earlier in this meeting which goes back to the training that is currently being discussed.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT (MAY)

Deputy Chief Lepore provided an overview of the commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) and said the NPD is a nationwide accredited agency and has held that status for many years. She said there are 483 standards that they abide by and are audited each year to be sure they are in compliance with the standards and are held to a higher level of professionalism and are at a nationally acceptable level.

Deputy Chief Lepore reported on the grants and inspections and said that they had worked with administrators City Hall to bring grant balances up to date and completed all reporting requirements, they are awaiting the Dept. of Justice authorization to re-open the high visibility grants, there were 9 DUI grant hires for Memorial Day weekend resulting in 55 car stops and conducted 7 field sobriety tests and five breathalyzer tests, leading to 9 DUI arrests, and issued 44 infraction tickets. The Lieutenant, in conjunction with the Marine Unit, are completing an application for a port security grant, and were awarded a DOT speed and aggressive driving grant for \$72,000, to be utilized in July and August.

Deputy Chief Lepore reported on the staff inspections and said the next inspection will be unannounced, and there was one of the property room this month.

Deputy Chief Lepore reported on the Crime Scene Unit and said that 105 persons were fingerprinted (48 were for pistol permits. She said 38 DVD's were created for case requests, 26 cases were processed for evidence, and 109 patrol cases required camera/photograph downloads, backgrounds were conducted for three massage therapists for the Hand and Stone Spa, and there were no solicitor permits requested for the month of May.

Deputy Chief Lepore reported on the professional standards and accreditation and said the Powertime software is currently being expanded to the dispatch center personnel. She said they are also assisting Corporation Council with investigative material for cases involving the City of Norwalk.

Norwalk Board of Police Commissioners

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Commissioner Tony Lopez

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Deputy Chief Lepore reported on the body and dashboard cameras and said that one body camera, one dashboard camera, and one control HUB were all returned to Axon for repair/replacement.

Deputy Chief Lepore said that there were 40 new requests for case videos, seven disks were burned with videos, and 17 electronic shares were completed for Stamford Court. Deputy Chief Lepore said the Axon performance software was installed and is being utilized to help supplement monthly compliance audit reports.

Deputy Chief Lepore reported on the accreditation and said a new directive for the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) is currently being developed and are continually reviewing directives for policy compliance and updates in accordance with CALEA standards and federal/state laws. Commissioner Collier-Clemmons asked if the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) is within CALEA or a separate agency. Deputy Chief Lepore said it is with CALEA and is a new policy they have come up with that has to be implemented. Commissioner Collier-Clemmons said the police department did an excellent job directing traffic and keeping the city calm during the bridge accident that occurred in May while still responding to emergencies and calls within the city. Mayor Rilling agreed and said everything was done so well. Commissioner Lopez and Commissioner Paladino also agreed.

PERSONNEL MATTERS

DROP PLAN- DETECTIVE DANIEL FITZMAURICE

**** COMMISSIONER LOPEZ MOVED TO APPROVE THE DROP PLAN FOR DETECTIVE DANIEL FITZMAURICE EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2024, THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2029.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

VACATION CARRYOVER- DEPUTY CHIEF JOSEPH DINHO

**** COMMISSIONER PALADINO MOVED TO APPROVE THE VACATION CARRYOVER REQUEST FOR DEPUTY CHIEF JOSEPH DINHO.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

COMPLIMENTARY LETTERS

Norwalk Board of Police Commissioners

Mayor Harry W. Rilling

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Deputy Chief Blake said that Chief Walsh received a complimentary letter from Chief James Heavy of the Greenwich Police Department for the assistance from K-9 police officer Ricky Montanez and his K-9 partner Karo for their assistance in locating multiple auto theft suspects.

Deputy Chief Blake said that he received a complimentary letter from Dave Hoffman making him aware of incident involving officer Macari for assisting a woman who was loading large boxes into her vehicle.

Deputy Chief Blake said he received a text message from recently retired Fire Marshal Broderick Sawyer complimenting Officer Ben Kose that was working a contraction job outside his house where his wife runs a daycare and was a great impression on the kids.

Deputy Chief Blake said that Chief Walsh received a complimentary from Gary Mecozzi of Norwalk Community College for the canine unit that did a presentation in his careers in criminal justice class. He said that Officers David Peterson, Officer Konstantine Arvanitakis and Officer Montanez did an exceptional job explaining their jobs.

Deputy Chief Blake said Chief Walsh received a complimentary letter from Diane Mulvey in response to her call that her electric wheelchair had been taken from her hallway and put on the front porch. She wanted to thank Officer Nash for bringing it back to her hallway so that she could get into her apartment.

Deputy Chief Blake said that Chief Walsh received a complimentary letter from the Commodore of the Sprite Island Yacht Club for the CPR and AED training for their launch operators. He said the entire club is very grateful to Officer Lee, Officer Suda, and Sergeant Bisceglie as well as the entire Marine Unit

Mayor Rilling said there was a public comment relative to things covered in police commission meetings and encouraged people to get on the mayor's dashboard as there is a wealth of information not only about the police department, but every department within the city. He said some of the things that were mentioned during the public comment may be subject to HIPAA violations and there is a lot of information that deals with personnel issues that cannot be given out.

ADJOURNMENT

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 5:33PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd

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Board of Police Commissioners

June 17, 2024