

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 APRIL 17, 2023

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

STAFF: Chief James Walsh; Deputy Chief Terry Blake; Officer Nieves

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rilling called the meeting to order at 4:22PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES- MARCH, 2023

On page 2, change "deescalate" to "de-escalate"

On page 3, change "seized" to "ceased"

On page 3 paragraph 2, add "had"

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

MARCH OFFICERS OF THE MONTH:

Chief Walsh said that on March 9, 2023, there was a report of a robbery of the First County Bank and both officers David Nieves and David Vetare self-dispatched to the area and began a search for the suspect. Officer Vetare spotted the suspect walking on Connecticut Avenue and with the assistance of Officer Nieves detained the individual without incident and was taken into custody and the money was recovered. He said they did a great job and there was good communication and teamwork.

(The commissioners congratulated Officer Nieves and Officer Vetare)

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OPERATIONS REPORT

PATROL STAFFING (March)

Deputy Chief Blake reported on the patrol staffing for the month of March and said the staffing was at 181 sworn personnel and there are no vacancies in patrol. He said a total of 158.5 sick days and 72.50 workers compensation days were used by sworn personnel, and two officers remain on long term workers compensation.

SELECTIVE ENFORCEMENT REPORT (March)

Deputy Chief Blake reported on the Detective Bureau activity and said that 47 cases were opened in the month of March and noted that they arrested a suspect in the stabbing that occurred at Naramake Elementary School, and they also made an arrest on an individual who was involved in a shooting on Dry Hill Road.

Deputy Chief Blake reported on the Special Services activity and said they opened 36 cases and noted that they had executed three search warrants on vape shops and made three arrests for the sale of controlled substances. Commissioner Lopez requested additional details on the activity at the vape shops. Deputy Chief Blake said that they had received citizen complaints regarding open sales of marijuana at the particular vape shops and the Special Services Division conducted controlled purchases of marijuana from those locations and as a result had search warrants issued and arrest warrants for the individuals that sold the marijuana at these locations.

Deputy Chief Blake reported on the Special Victims activity and said they opened 59 cases for the month including an arrest of an individual for an assault of the second degree and they continue to have ongoing DARE instruction for the fifth graders. He also said that an SRO was added to the program at the end of March.

Deputy Chief Blake reported on the Behavioral Health Unit and said that 35 cases were opened in March and during that month addressed 42 cases and 16 out of the 35 cases were closed out. He said they continue to be very busy both with referrals and proactivity and it continues to be a successful program.

Deputy Chief Blake reported on the Traffic Unit and said that 49 citations were issued as well as 475 written warnings, 20 verbal warnings, and eight arrests. He said they also installed free car seats and were very active with selective enforcement, and two officers were added to the traffic unit.

Deputy Chief Blake reported on community policing and said they had Coffee with A Cop at Stew Leonard's, attended a movie night at the SONO elementary School, as well as a resident's meeting at 20 Day Street and they also participated in the Department of Justice Unity Against Hate event in Westport along with Chief Walsh.

Deputy Chief Blake said that there were 6,412 calls for service and 174 total arrests in March, and that 213 citations were issued in March.

Commissioner Collier-Clemmons asked if it is the realm of the Police Department for inspecting the shops that have lithium batteries. Mayor Rilling said that would most likely be the

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responsibility of the Fire Department. She said it is concerning because there have been so many fires reported in New York that were due to lithium batteries.

Commissioner Lopez asked when the new patrol officers will complete their training and be on the road. Chief Walsh said that three officers just finished last week and two of the officers' training had to be extended and five are still in training. He said since the new year 17 officers have been put through field training. Commissioner Collier-Clemmons asked how long field training is. Chief Walsh said 12-14 weeks once they graduate from the Police Academy.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

MARCH TRAINING REPORT

Chief Walsh reported and said that most of the training that occurred in March was review credit training. Mayor Rilling said the Norwalk Police Department is one of the most highly trained police departments and the training report illustrates that. Commissioner Collier-Clemmons agreed and said it shows in the officer's performance and duties, so the training is paying off. She also said that a lot of the training classes are led by officers, and she thinks it is wonderful that they are of the level and caliber to be able to teach their fellow officers' things that are so vitally important. Commissioner Lopez also agreed and said the training is superb and reflects how skilled the officers are.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS- COMPLIMENTARY LETTERS

Chief Walsh said he received a complimentary email regarding Alex Fitzner of the Behavioral Health Unit for speaking at a class on criminal justice at Western Connecticut State University and said she did an outstanding job.

Chief Walsh said he received a complimentary letter for Officer Nieves and Officer Bardos for responding to a call and significantly calming a tenant down and for handling the situation with great professionalism and skill.

Chief Walsh said he received an email from Alex Fitzner stating she followed up with a gentleman that the police responded to regarding psychotic/depressive episodes after the passing of a relative and he passed along his gratitude for the way the police dealt with him. Chief Walsh said that Alex is doing a great job in outreach and providing education.

ADJOURNMENT

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 4:48PM.
Respectfully submitted, Dilene Byrd

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April 17, 2023