

Norwalk Board of Police Commissioners

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

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

BY VIDEO CONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE

ATTENDANCE: Commissioner Collier-Clemmons; Commissioner Straniti

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

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Straniti called the meeting to order at 4:27PM. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FEBRUARY 22, 2021.

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 22, 2021 AS SUBMITTED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

OPERATIONS REPORT

Patrol Staffing

Deputy Chief Walsh reported and said for the month of February there were currently 176 sworn personnel and that there are five patrolmen vacancies and Officer Brent Crawford is still on a leave of absence. He said the sworn personnel used 161.75 sick days, 78.25 workers compensations days and four officers are on extended workmen's compensation.

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Deputy Chief Walsh said Detective Bureau opened 27 cases in the month of February and had made a significant arrest and arrested Chris McFadden on seven counts of night time commercial burglary that occurred in December 2020. He said there are several ongoing background investigations for the new NPD employees and officers, and there are two ongoing sexual assault investigations.

Deputy Chief Walsh said that Special Services opened 25 cases in the month of February and had made a prostitution arrest at the Red Carpet Inn which had originated from a social media post, and are still investigating two non-fatal overdoses to determine the source.

Deputy Chief Walsh said the Special Victims Unit remained busy with 34 open cases in the month of February, and the School Resource Officers are still assisting the Norwalk Public Schools with contacting students who are not in compliance with distant learning attendance, as well as investigating some online cases that originated from remote learning.

Deputy Chief Walsh said the Traffic Unit remained busy and 197 stops which resulted in 18 citations; 3 misdemeanor arrests; 162 written warnings and 14 verbal warnings.

Deputy Chief Walsh said the total enforcement for the month resulted in 337 infractions being issued and the activity for citations continues to be more robust than the latter part of 2020.

Deputy Chief Walsh said the Patrol Unit investigated 3,763 calls for service and had 144 total criminal arrests for the month of February.

Commissioner- Collier Clemmons asked if the increase in citations were due to any emphasis that was placed on the items. Deputy Chief Walsh said in some areas “yes” through community policing and citizen complaints but there has also been a general uptick in activity among the platoons.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Training Report- February

Deputy Chief Zecca reported and said the training was fairly standard for the month of February and that the monthly E.S.U. Scuba training was held, and are also continuing with the annual firearms training. She said the only additional training was social media and officer discipline training for the chiefs as well and civil liability training for supervisors.

Deputy Chief Zecca said that February was a relatively slow month for training but will be picking up with the review credit cycle. She also said the LEEDS de-escalation training is moving forward for March.

Commissioner Collier-Clemmons asked how many K-9 units there currently are. Deputy Chief Zecca said there are six dogs and four handlers. Commission Collier- Clemmons asked if there is still a collaborations with other cities who don't have a K-9 unit. Deputy Chief Zecca said “yes” there is mutual aid for pretty much any resource for the surrounding towns that we have the agreement with.

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PERSONNEL MATTERS

Tuition Reimbursement- Sergeant Ryan Everts

Commissioner Collier-Clemmons said that they seldom see any grades that are less than "A" and with honor she will move the item.

****COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE TUITION REIMBURSEMENT FOR SERGEANT RYAN EVERTS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,445.00
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ADD AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE A COURSE APPROVAL FOR DETECTIVE IMPARATO FOR COURSES RELATED TO HIS MASTERS DEGREE IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE.**

Drop Request- Lieutenant Arthur Weisgerber

Chief Kulhawik said the request is not specifically in line with the collective bargaining agreement and Mayor Rilling is currently in discussions with the Personnel Director and requested that the item be tabled until next month.

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO TABLE THE DROP REQUEST FOR LIEUTENANT ARTHUR WEISGERBER.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Drop Request- Lieutenant Praveen John

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE DROP REQUEST BEGINNING ON APRIL 1, 2021, AND ENDING MARCH 31, 2026 FOR LIEUTENANT PRAVEEN JOHN.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

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INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Complimentary Letters

Chief Kulhawik said he received a complimentary email from the Norwalk EMS Director regarding an emotionally disturbed person call on South Main Street and had commented on Officers Ortiz, Ham, Silva, Gay and Mitchell as well as Sergeant Sherry for the excellent job they had done de-escalating the situation and the situation was resolved without any major issues.

Chief Kulhawik said he received a complimentary email from a resident from Woodbury regarding Officer DeVito in regards to a suicidal person call and complimented him on the way he had handled the call.

Chief Kulhawik said he received a complimentary email for the department wishing us well.

Chief Kulhawik said he received a complimentary email regarding Officer Aldarondo regarding his performance during a medical call.

Chief Kulhawik said he received a complimentary email for Sergeant Gulino for her great work with a neighborhood watch and community outreach.

Commissioner Collier-Clemmons said she is glad that citizens send letters to let us know what a good job our officers are doing in this particular time of need. It attests to what I see our officers are doing professionally all of the time. She said she is proud of the training and professionalism and thanked Chief Kulhawik and the Deputy Chief's for keeping that in order.

Commissioner Straniti agreed and said since she has been on the commission there has not been a month that complimentary letters were not received, and it shows what a great job we are doing with training and our officers are professional and compassionate which is so important to have in our communities. She also said if anyone has any ideas on how to get this out to the public to bring their suggestions to the commission.

Commissioner Collier-Clemmons requested that Chief Kulhawik relay to the officers how proud the commission is of them for what they do every day and how they do it.

Presentation on CALEA

Chief Kulhawik presented and said the CALEA organization was founded in 1979 and was created as a voluntary program for public safety agencies to get accredited and maintain their accreditation. The commission ensures that the agencies have specific policies in place that meet the standards that have been set by CALEA and have to prove they have the policies and procedures in place. The standards are set by the commission on accreditation and the commission is made up of 21 commissioners and are appointed to three year terms and he was appointed a commissioner in January, 2020, for a three year term, and the commissioners are from across the nation and it is a non-profit organization and is managed by an Executive Director and the headquarters is located in Gainesville, Virginia but a majority of the work is done remotely.

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Chief Kulhawik said that CALEA has four different programs which include law enforcement which was the first program; communications; training academy and campus security. There are currently 484 standards and have to comply with a certain percentage of them and many are mandatory for all agencies and some are optional depending on size.

Chief Kulhawik said one of the major components of CALEA is the standards review and Interpretation Committee and is comprised of members of the commission and he is one of the members that is currently assigned to the committee. He said the committee meets and determines if we should add new standards, revise current standards and amend standards as appropriate. He said conferences are held three times per year and the sub-committee meets one month prior to that.

Chief Kulhawik said agencies engage in CALEA process in order to ensure that they do the right thing, for the right reason. CALEA is a voluntary process and they objectively verify and maintain high quality in agency operations as well as conduct periodic evaluations which are conducted by an independent non-governmental body on an annual basis over a four year period, and at the end of the four years an onsite assessment takes place with a team of two assessors and at the end of the process the team leader writes a comprehensive report which gets sent to the commission and the commission decides whether the agency should be accredited or reaccredited.

Chief Kulhawik said we first started our accreditation back in 1995 and at that time he had assisted in revising all of the directives which are still used today and were all written based on the CALEA standards so that we would come into compliance. He said it provides the framework of operating the agency and provides us with guidance of certain statistical reports, annual analysis of use of force, pursuits etc. and are now in the process of just completing the various reports that need to be done for accreditation, and the reports make us take a hard look ourselves and we now track a lot of data that was not tracked prior to accreditation which has allowed us to be more accountable to the community. He said a lot of the things we heard this past summer because of some national events that took place and because of accreditation a lot of the things were already being done and we have always tracked the use of force, done an analysis on the types of force and why and who it was used on to ensure that every use of force is reviewed by not only the shift commander but also by himself and the deputy chiefs. CALEA has set the framework that puts us above and beyond “what was needed to be done” and when some state laws were changed in the last two to four years regarding a variety of things associated with use of force, discipline etc. We had to change very little in Norwalk because accreditation is always revising standards so a lot of those things were being done already.

Chief Kulhawik said everything is now done through a data management system and the compliance service managers will log in remotely and look through each of the documents for each year to ensure we are on track and we are always in a continual compliance phase.

Chief Kulhawik said our initiation was in 1995 and we have been getting reaccredited ever since and is now done on a four year cycle, and our upcoming site assessment will be this year and is scheduled for November 8th through November 11th.

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Chief Kulhawik said we are also state accredited which is similar the CALEA just not as robust but there is a state accreditation program and we have been state accredited since it has started. He said currently there are 17 Connecticut agencies that are CALEA accredited but we are the largest municipal agency that is CALEA accredited, and there are 45 agencies in the state that are state accredited.

The commissioners thanked Chief Kulhawik for his very thorough presentation.

ADJOURNMENT

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 5:20PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Dilene Byrd