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**HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
JUNE 24, 2021
VIA TELECONFERENCE**

ATTENDANCE: George Tsiranides, Acting Chair; Dominique Johnson;
Manny Langella; Thomas Keegan; Diana Revolus; Lisa Shanahan

STAFF: Deanna D'Amore, Director of Health; Michele DeLuca, Deputy
Director of Emergency Management; Ed McCabe, Deputy Fire
Chief; Deputy Chief James Walsh, Norwalk Police Department;
Brian Weeks, Epidemiologist,

WELCOME AND ROLL CALL

Mr. Tsiranides called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and called the Roll as indicated above.

APPROVAL OF THE MAY 27, 2021 MEETING MINUTES

**** MS. SHANAHAN MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public wished to participate this evening.

NEW BUSINESS

ACTION ITEMS

POLICE DEPARTMENT

**** MS. REVOLUS MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING TO ENTER INTO PLATFORM ACTIVATION AGREEMENT WITH GUARDIAN ALLIANCE TECHNOLOGIES, INC.**

Deputy Chief Walsh explained that the Police Department is in the process of re-vamping their background procedure for new hires. He reviewed the capabilities of the cloud-

based platform and noted that it provides for more transparency during the background process. He said the Police Department does not have any experience with this company.

Ms. Johnson asked if this request is related to something the Police Commission discussed and asked how it fits into the new hiring process. Deputy Chief Walsh explained that the entire hiring process has been re-vamped. More questions will be asked of the applicants. In addition, there will be a Chief level interview and an interview with the Mayor.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MS. REVOLUS MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS NECESSARY TO APPLY FOR AND ACCEPT GRANT FUNDS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE UNDER THE FY 2021 EDWARD BYRNE MEMORIAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$35,428**

AND TO AUTHORIZE THE POLICE CHIEF, THOMAS KULHAWIK TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL AGREEMENTS, DOCUMENTS, INSTRUMENTS AND AMENDMENTS THERETO AS MAY BE NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT ALL PROGRAMS THROUGH THE FY 2021 EDWARD BYRNE MEMORIAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM PURSUANT TO SUCH GRANT FUNDING

Deputy Chief Walsh explained that the Police Department has received these grant funds before. He described how the funds will be used, including addressing traffic issues.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MS. JOHNSON MOVE TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING TO EXECUTE SERVICE AGREEMENT (3 YEARS WITH AUTOMATIC 1 YEAR RENEWALS) WITH POLICE APP FOR SERVICES RELATED TO POLICE CANDIDATE TESTING, RECRUITMENT AND TRACKING**

Deputy Chief Walsh explained that this request is part of the revision of the hiring process for the Police Department. He said they want to go to the CPCA (Connecticut Chief of Police Association) exam process where testing for the Police Department will be on an on-going basis, rather than approximately every two years. This initiative will allow for continuous recruitment.

Deputy Chief Walsh described the testing procedure and said that candidates can choose what participating departments they want their test results sent.

Ms. Johnson said that Ms. Revolus commented that she hoped this exam process would help local residents join the Norwalk Police Department. Deputy Chief Walsh said the Police Department is looking at ways to help residents who may need financial assistance to pay for the test. Ms. Revolus expressed her appreciation that this initiative can result in more local representation on the Police Force.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion Items

Emergency Management Update and Discussion

Ms. DeLuca reported that the department held a hurricane tabletop exercise. She said there were some good takeaways. Messaging will be re-visited.

Ms. DeLuca said that currently she is working on messaging about heat safety. Mr. Tsiranides said he was on the call for the hurricane exercise and said Ms. DeLuca did a great job running the meeting.

Fire Update and Discussion

Deputy Chief McCabe shared Fire Department statistics for the month of May, including responding to 656 calls for an average of 21.2 calls a day. Between January 1, 2021 to May 31, 2021, the Fire Department responded to 2,745 incidents and made 4,326 runs. He noted they outpaces their call volume for 2020.

Deputy Chief McCabe reported that the Fire Department responded to a construction dumpster at Brien McMahon High School. No students were in the school at the time. They also responded to a structure fire at Reynolds Street. There were no injuries. The Fire Marine Boat made a water craft rescue where they removed five adults and two dogs from a boat.

The Fire investigation Bureau collected \$3,723.00. Deputy Chief McCabe said the Fire Department is back up to their staffing levels and are getting caught up on pending investigations.

Ms. Johnson asked if there were any reports of illegal fireworks. Deputy Chief McCabe said the Fire Department has not responded to any calls. Deputy Chief Walsh said the Police Department got a handful of complaints.

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Via Teleconference

Ms. Johnson asked what people should do if they wish to make a complaint about fireworks. Deputy Chief Walsh said that people can use the new text app. He noted that people use that all the time.

Health Department Update and Discussion

Ms. D'Amore reported that Covid vaccine efforts are continuing. She said that cases of Covid are very low now.

Ms. D'Amore said the Health Department started water quality testing at the Beach. They also re-launched their Grow Garden program. They are also looking at reaccreditation and updating their core functions.

Mr. Weeks gave a presentation and updated the Committee on the latest Covid statistics. He said that Connecticut is in the low category for cases, but noted that people should be mindful about traveling to states with higher Covid activity.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, there have been 11,576 cases of Covid with 225 deaths.

Mr. Weeks reported that as of June 23rd 65% of Norwalk residents received at least one dose of the Covid vaccine. He said there is an increase in transability with the delta variance; however, if someone is fully vaccinated, they should not have a lot of concern about that variance.

In addition to Covid, this is tick season. He said that pets are main targets for ticks. Mosquitos are not yet as prevalent as they will be later in the season. It is important to remove any standing water.

Ms. Shanahan asked if there were any Beach closings. Ms. D'Amore said the Beach was closed only once due to heavy rainfall.

Police Update and Discussion

Deputy Chief Walsh reported that there are currently 175 Officers and six Patrol vacancies.

Deputy Chief Walsh reported that the Detective Bureau has seen an increase in cases. They are actively pursuing leads for various cases.

The Special Services Division remains busy. With the re-opening they have seen an increase in businesses. The Norwalk Police Department assisted Stamford with a significant narcotics investigation. The Special Victims Unit has been busy with 55 cases.

The Norwalk Police Department assisted with middle school and high school graduations.

A total of 149 arrests were made in May. The Patrol Division received 4,744 calls for service. Staffing is up to pre-pandemic levels.

The Norwalk Police Department made 399 car stops and issued 237 infractions during May. Deputy Chief Walsh said they are deploying new speed signs that can also report data. He said they recognize there are speeding issues on East Rocks Road.

As a follow up to the recent Police Commission meeting, Ms. Johnson asked about the language line. Ms. Revolus explained that the language line access all languages and added that Norwalk has an account. Deputy Chief Walsh said that the Norwalk Police is the call center for the ambulance. When needed their Dispatcher dials the language line. He said they are looking at placing phones at the front desk at the Police Stations to connect residents to the language line. Ms. Revolus suggested getting signage showing the different languages available.

Deputy Chief McCabe said that the Norwalk Fire Department is in the process of putting call boxes on the outside of the Fire Houses so people can call the Police Dispatch. They will add the language line to that as well.

**** MS. REVOLUS MOVED TO ADJOURN**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business, and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services