

Public Safety and General Government Committee of the Common Council

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Public Safety and General Government Committee of the Common Council

June 22, 2023, 7:00pm VIA Zoom

Meeting Agenda

I. Welcome and Roll Call

II. Acceptance of Minutes- May 25, 2023

III. Public Participation

IV. New Business

Police Department

Authorize Mayor Harry W Rilling to sign a memorandum of understanding between the City of Norwalk Police Department and Liberation programs to provide a part-time clinician to our current Behavioral Health Unit. This partnership will expand our current B.H. U. services by adding the C.L.E.A.R. (Community and Law Enforcement for Addiction Recovery Participants) program to the City of Norwalk. The goal of this program is to build a partnership with the Liberation Program for the prevention of overdoses and to provide clinicians for addiction services. This is a no-cost program for the Norwalk Police Department and will provide much-needed services to the City.

Fire Department- No action items

V. Discussion

Water/Marine Safety- Pam Raila (Recreation and Parks)

VI. Old Business

Next Meeting: July 27, 2023

**CITY OF NORWALK
PUBLIC SAFETY AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE OF THE COMMON
COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
MAY 25, 2023**

Attendance: Jenn McMurrer, Chair; Josh Goldstein; Bryan Meek (arrived at 7:04PM); Diana Revulus (arrived at 7:16PM)

Absent: Heidi Alterman; Edwin Camacho; Nicol Ayers

Staff: Michele DeLuca, Deputy Director Emergency Management; Chief James Walsh

I. WELCOME AND ROLL CALL

McMurrer called the meeting to order at 7:01PM.

II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES- MARCH 23, 2023 (APRIL 27 MEETING- CANCELLED

**** MR. GOLDSTEIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH (3) THREE IN FAVOR AND (1) ONE ABSTENTION- MR. MEEK**

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no public comments this evening.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

POLICE DEPARTMENT- NO ACTION ITEMS

FIRE DEPARTMENT- NO ACTION ITEMS

V. DISCUSSION

1. Update on Traffic Violations and Traffic Patrol-NPD

Chief Walsh provided an update on traffic violations and traffic patrol and said the staffing level will soon be at 100% and since the new year they have put 22 officers through field training, and are pre-planning into the spring of 2024 to prepare for those officers that will be retiring. He said they have been doing a lot of interviews and background investigations and are not lowering their

standards at all and have disqualified many candidates based on information from the background investigations and it is working out well.

Mr. Meek joined the meeting at 7:04PM.

Chief Walsh said that approximately two months ago the increased manpower allowed them to transfer two officers into the traffic unit, and they are all motorcycle certified and have been doing a lot of selective enforcement. He said the citations are up 145% compared to last year at this time and in April alone there was 1014 citations issued, and they did have a initiative through a grant program on distracted driving, so that in combination with the new traffic officers the morale has increased, and are seeing a whole new younger generation of officers just graduating the academy and field training and there have been a lot more self-initiated car stops coming from the patrol division, and 1910 citations have been issued since the new year and at this point last year there were 778 citations issued, and a lot of the locations that they are conducting enforcement on are in locations where they receive e-mails and text tips on. He said that the call volume has also increased within the patrol division and has seen a general increase in the overall activity in the patrol division, traffic unit, and community policing.

Ms. McMurrer said that is great to hear but it's sad that there are that many traffic violations and reminded everyone to slow down, don't do distracted driving, and to keep the cell phone away when driving.

Chief Walsh said they had partnered with the Connecticut State Police Truck Unit yesterday and issued 13 citations for commercial violations on trucks and as they have seen the development in the city there is a lot more commercial trucking. Mr. Goldstein asked how often the State Police will give access to this equipment and tools. Chief Walsh said that the State Police have to be present but have already said they will come back and that it just needs to be scheduled.

Chief Walsh said they also had two sound enforcement days and there has been two details where the traffic unit has gone out and enforced in certain areas and are enforcing some of the noise that is created by vehicles and that a lot is due to aftermarket mufflers and things like that which creates excessive noise so they have had two of those operations in the past month and plan to continue those through the summer.

2. School Safety and Information from Chief Walsh regarding his statement on the group that calls themselves the 504's

Ms. McMurrer said last month Chief Walsh issued a statement about a group of particular individuals that have been in and out of the schools and she thought now would be a good time for an update on school safety and to see if there are any updates on the group called the 504's that Chief Walsh can share as it is probably an ongoing investigation. Chief Walsh said a lot of the activity has slowed down but in January they begin to receive information of a loosely organized group of mostly middle-aged kids who organized a group called the 504's which is the calling code from the country of Honduras, and there were a lot of instances of vandalism as well as threatening behavior and fighting. He said they worked a lot with the community stakeholders who had provided information and at a minimum there were nine arrests made when the statement was released a month ago, but there have been no arrests since because they had partnered with Norwalk Public Schools and had two collaborative meetings with the head of

Public Safety for Norwalk Public Schools and things are going well. He said regarding overall school safety things are status quo and are still maintaining six School Resource Officers and still have five security hires which rotates schools.

Ms. Revolus joined the meeting at 7:16PM

Ms. McMurrer said that almost a year ago there was a statement issued that there would be more police presence on school grounds, and she has noticed that has continued and requested Chief Walsh address that. Chief Walsh said that last year officers were deployed and assigned to every school and since then have assigned two more School Resource Officers and established a plan of school security officers hired on overtime and there are five full-time hires, and one is assigned to each high school and the other three rotate geographically to the combination of schools in that area. Ms. McMurrer said that is great and that there is money being allocated to school security as part of the budget. Chief Walsh said they have partnered with Norwalk Public Schools and Mr. Ryan Harold has been for forward leading with the Norwalk Public Schools and work with him daily and have made a lot of strides in our partnership.

Ms. Revolus said she is very happy to hear about the School Resource Officers and asked if there is space for them to have an office space at the schools that will bring back engagement between the children and the officers. Chief Walsh said that the School Resource Officers have a dedicated office in the high schools and is centrally located for access by the students and he believes the School Resource Officer at the middle schools do have a central point. Ms. Revolus said the sooner there is engagement with the officers the better. Chief Walsh said as things improve, they definitely want to get back to those goals but still have a very young police department and a lot of the officers are just finishing the training so before they start removing senior officers from the patrol division, they need to be sure the new officers are adequately trained and are mentored and supervised before they make further transfers.

Mr. Meek said with respect to the 504 gangs what kind of follow-up is done and asked if the children are accompanied by legal guardians. Chief Walsh said in any case when they are dealing with a juvenile, they make sure that they have adequate supervision and have proper care and all of their needs are taken care of the best they can.

Mr. Goldstein asked if there are various tactics or trainings that the police department can be doing with the school system to try and mitigate these kinds of issues from happening in the future. Chief Walsh said if it is happening in the school setting there is a collaborative effort between the Norwalk Public Schools and the Police Department and they are very effective, and there are all kinds of resources through the Department of Children and Families, and the Police Department has their own Behavioral Health Unit which is very effective and communication with their parents or guardians is also effective. Mr. Goldstein asked if there are available kinds of training modules that the police department can provide or are already providing to the Norwalk Public Schools to deal with this kind of thing and if so, is that administered on a routine basis. Chief Walsh said he can't recall any specific training that they do together, but all of the School Resource Officers are natural certified and there are a lot resources the Norwalk Public Schools that they collaborate with.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business discussed this evening.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. REVOLUS MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:35PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd



**CITY OF NORWALK
Norwalk Police Department**

To: Councilwoman Jenn McCurrer

From: Chief James Walsh

Re: Liberation program - Action Item for Common Council

Date: June 2nd, 2023

In October 2022 the Norwalk Police Department established its Behavioral Health Unit (BHU) in partnership with the Recovery network. Currently, BHU is staffed with one sworn officer, one full-time clinician, and one part-time clinician. As of July 1, 2023, the part-time clinician will become full-time with newly approved funding. The goals of the BHU are to provide social work resources to the residents of Norwalk by providing social work outreach, and referrals.

In April of 2023, the department was contacted by Liberation Programs with a proposed partnership with their agency as an addition to our current BHU. The program is referred to as the CLEAR (Community and Law Enforcement for Addiction Recovery Participants). This no-cost program to the City of Norwalk will provide a social worker 8-12 hours a week to provide outreach to those at risk of overdose, and to reduce overdose occurrences. The Police department will be required to provide a liaison to the Liberation clinical when on outreach calls, and to track and gather data on overdose investigations occurring in the city to provide outreach services.

Liberation programs will provide diversion training to officers and have agreed to compensate for any overtime cost incurred by the City. I have attached the MOU for your review which was also reviewed by Norwalk Corporation Counsel.



CITY OF NORWALK
Norwalk Police Department

To: Health Welfare and Public Safety Sub Committee

From: Chief James Walsh

Re: Action Item / Authorization

Date: June 15, 2023

Authorize Mayor Harry W Rilling to sign a memorandum of understanding between the City of Norwalk Police Department and Liberation programs to provide a part-time clinician to our current Behavioral Health Unit. This partnership will expand our current B.H. U. services by adding the C.L.E.A.R. (Community and Law Enforcement for Addiction Recovery Participants) program to the City of Norwalk. The goal of this program is to build a partnership with the Liberation Program for the prevention of overdoses and to provide clinicians for addiction services. This is a no-cost program for the Norwalk Police Department and will provide much-needed services to the City.



Memorandum of Understanding between Liberation Programs Inc. and Norwalk Police Department

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to establish a partnership to address the overdose epidemic in the community. This agreement brings Law Enforcement and Behavioral Health together to a common goal of outreach to those at risk of overdose and to reduce overdose occurrences. The program is referred to as the CLEAR (Community and Law Enforcement for Addiction Recovery Participants) Initiative. In order to provide the best quality program and outcomes, each agency will follow the protocols below.

Liberation Programs Inc. (LPI) will:

- Employ a CLEAR Project Site Lead for the region, to administer the Project's operation. All assignments of outreach events will be approved and directed by the Project Site Lead. This includes the approval and assignment of individuals on the outreach team and any collaborative partners assigned to the response and follow up visits.
- Establish and maintain collaborative relationships with local partners as deemed appropriate.
- Organize regular training opportunities for the outreach team including training in deflection, data entry, and pertinent areas of outreach, case management and recovery support services.
- Employ a Program Manager who will support the outreach team and assist in monitoring Cordata, scheduling co-responses and follow-up visits, in addition to providing logical assistance with community spike alert responses.
- Employ and train outreach staff for overdose response and follow up with each incident within 24-72 hours.
 - When conducting outreach visits, the outreach team will assist individuals in a range of recovery supports, including navigation of availability and access for those who accept treatment referral options, and for those struggling with substance use, a range of recovery support services including harm reduction, access to MAT, IOP, etc.
 - If a visit is with a family member outreach teams will assist family members to locate resources, connect with a clinician if interested, and a Family dedicated resource will offer services.
- Liberation Programs Inc. agrees to compensate Norwalk Police Department at a rate of (\$49.38-\$61.23) per hour spent on conducting the agreed upon activities; the total funds allotted for each fiscal year, for the activities listed is \$15,000, up to \$36,500, over the term of the contract, as per the schedule below;
 - Year 1 - May 1st – Sept 31st 2022 (no funds allocated as year is dedicated to planning and implementation)

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- Year 2 - Oct 1st – Sept 30th 23 (up to \$15,000 allocated towards Norwalk PD overtime, as required)
- Year 3 - Oct 1st – Sept 30th 24 (up to \$15,000 allocated towards Norwalk PD overtime, as required)
- Year 4 – Oct 1st – March 30th 25 (up to \$6,500.00 allocated towards Norwalk PD overtime, as required)

Additional funds may become available throughout the contract term for additional training opportunities and may be negotiated as necessary.

The Norwalk Police Department will:

- Provide team members to respond to overdoses on designated days of each week providing adequate staffing is available.
- Respond to overdose calls with a minimum of two team members.
- Enter data into a secured database within the shift of the incident into a database provided by Liberation Programs Inc. or it's subcontractor.
- Identify and send officers to necessary training including the 16-hour Deflection Academy. Participate in training by Department Leadership and Officers in Deflection techniques throughout the program.
- Allow team members to utilize their discretion regarding on scene arrest. Assure that team members abide by CT state laws pertaining to persons with arrest warrants and persons in violation of protection, and restraining orders. To assure that team members conduct outreach interactions without causing fear of arrest to those in need.
- Understand that Norwalk Police Officers are mandated reporters and must report any findings of wrong doings, issues impairing the morals of children, and situations where a child is in danger to the Department of Children and Families.
- Participate in an initial two-hour PMAT (Project Management Adherence Tool) and a two-hour summary PMAT to assess the needs of the service area. Conduct PMAT surveys yearly during award term.
- Assign Data Designees to enter and maintain the IPIS database reporting system.
- Recognize the program methodology for Outreach and Harm Reduction.
- Maintain procedures for the Norwalk project commander or team leader with a goal to contact outreach response team members to conduct an initial contact with overdose survivors within 36-72 hours of an overdose.
- Meet with Liberation responders at a designated location where a briefing will be conducted. In the briefing Norwalk Police Team members will provide Liberation responders with a response risk assessment outlining the person in need of resources to include, arrest history, residence, photo (if possible) and any and all relevant information that will assure safety to all responders. The Norwalk Police response team will be in plain clothing, and will wear a body camera.
- Maintain a complete outline of every response by a team member. The outline will consist of the risk assessment, team members who responded, initial findings, treatment plan, and suggestions.

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Hold Harmless, indemnification and Insurance. Parties will to the extent permitted by law, indemnify, defend, and hold harmless one another including their respective board of trustees or directors, officers, agents, and employees from and against any and all claims, costs, demands, expenses (including attorney's fees), losses, damages, injuries, and liabilities arising from any accident, death, or injury whatsoever, however, caused to any person or property, because of, arising out of, or related to the active negligence of the other(s). Such indemnity will survive this MOU. Parties will be responsible for their acts and omissions and will be liable for the expense related to that portion of any and all claims, liabilities, injuries, suits, and demands and expenses of all kinds resulting or arising out of any alleged malfeasance or neglect caused or alleged to have been caused by said Party, its trustees, directors, officers, employees or agents in the performance or omission of any act or the responsibility of said Party under this MOU. If a claim is made against any Party, the Parties will cooperate with one another in the defense of said claim and to cause their respective insurers to do likewise. Parties will, however, retain the right to take all actions necessary to protect their respective interests.

Each of the POLICE Department and Liberation Programs Inc. shall be solely liable for its handling of HIPAA protected information and will be responsible for any improper handling of such information. The Hold Harmless and Indemnification provisions of this MOU shall apply to any mishandling of HIPAA protected information.

Both parties agree to the responsibilities and procedures stated above. Any changes to this MOU will be made with the approval of both parties. This agreement will be in effect on date signed below until either party provides a 30-day written notice requesting termination.

Norwalk Police Department
Chief James Walsh

Liberation Programs Inc.
John Hamilton, CEO

Dated: _____

Dated: _____