



TOWN OF NEWTOWN
BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES FROM THE BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING HELD TUESDAY, April 5, 2016
TOWN HALL SOUTH CONFERENCE ROOM
3 MAIN STREET, NEWTOWN

**These minutes are not finalized until approved
At the next regularly scheduled meeting.*

Commissioner Faxon called the regular meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Dan Rosenthal, Bob Myer, Andy Sachs, Vice-Chairman Brian Budd and Chairman Faxon

ABSENT: none

ALSO PRESENT: Chief James Viadero, Captain Joe Rios, Union President Lenny Penna, 1 member of the press, and 2 members of the public.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Sherry Birmingham, Main Street, offered her condolences to the Department for the loss of former Officer Steve Ketchum.

Karen Banks, West Street, told the Board that she had attended the Board's meeting in October. She reminded Commissioners she had request there be a police presence monitoring the traffic at the Flag Pole but said that she hadn't seen anybody and wondered when there would be. Chairman Faxon reassured Mrs. Banks that the Board has talked about it a few times. He informed her there were different methods to regulate traffic and said he would rather defer her question to the Chief.

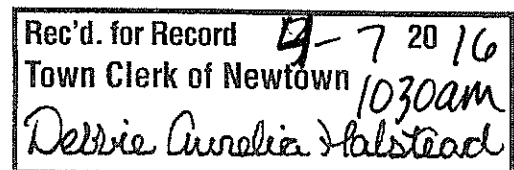
Chief Viadero suggested that the Department is forced to do triage when it comes to monitoring the traffic at the Flag Pole. He said they are monitoring it but due to manpower they can't put someone up there regularly. The Chief added that there were new traffic concerns up there now. Mrs. Banks agreed noting that since the new restaurant opened it was a "little hairy" up there especially if a car parked in front of the Dana Holcomb House.

Chief Viadero reassured Mrs. Banks that the Department was out there trying to do as much enforcement as possible.

Vice-Chairman Budd noted that other things impact manpower. He said that in the morning if a school crossing guard calls out a police officer has to take their place.

Commissioner Myer asked Mrs. Banks what she would do if she was forced to make a right turn off West Street onto Main Street. Mrs. Banks suggested she might go out to Route 302 but said sometimes getting out onto Route 302 is bad as the sightline is not so good.

POLICE UNION PARTICIPATION: Union President Penna reported that all was good. He said that the Chief has been working harmoniously with the Union and morale has greatly improved. He concluded reassuring Commissioners that if they needed anything they can contact the Union.



Commissioner Rosenthal said he went to the Sandy Hook 5K. He told the Board that Officer Penna ran in it and joked that the Chief was there too. The Commissioner then congratulated Officer Penna.

CONSIDERATION AND ACTION ON THE MINUTES: Regular March 1, 2016 –
Commissioner Rosenthal moved to accept the minutes from the Regular Meeting March 1, 2016 as corrected. Commissioner Budd seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.
Corrections: Page 3, Old Business, 2nd paragraph, 3rd sentence, “He told *they* Board ...” should read, “He told *the* board...”; Page 3, OLD BUSINESS, 2nd paragraph after the motion, last name *Odessy* should be *Addressi*.

CHIEF’S REPORT: Chief Viadero thanked Mrs. Birmingham for her condolences for Steve Ketchum. He noted that unfortunately he was away. The Chief stated that Steve was a Class A officer. **Police Academy** - Chief Viadero reported that Officer Wood had started the Citizens Police Academy on Wednesday. He said 16 individuals signed up. **Blue Plan** – The Chief announced that Lt. Kullgren attended a Blue Plan meeting hosted by the Fairfield County Police Chiefs Association. He said that a Blue Plan is a finalized response in the event an Agency in Fairfield Country needs help such as Newtown did with the incident in Sandy Hook. Chief Viadero stated that every Agency is designated a point of contact. **Probation Visit** – The Chief announced the Department will be having a probation visit targeting sex offenders or anyone on probation. **Town Ordinance** – Chief Viadero announced that the Town has written an ordinance warning sex offenders where they can and can’t be. He said that the ordinance was written to make Newtown a safe community. The Chief stated that per the ordinance there has to be signage and notification. **NARCAN Save** – Chief Viadero reported that the first NARCAN save in Newtown occurred on Dodgingtown Road. He said that Officer Pirahla arrived on the scene of a potential drug overdose. The Chief said CPR was performed, Officer Pirahla passed off the NARCAN to the EMS who arrived shortly after he did, and the individual’s life was saved. **Budget Transfer** – Chief Viadero told Police Commissioners that there was a budget transfer in their packets - \$25,000 from the salaries account to overtime. He suggested this would help offset the cost to pay Chelsea Harold the officer that was just hired. **Distracted Driving Grant** – Chief Viadero announced that the Department began its Distracted Driving enforcement campaign April 1. The Chief said that per the Grant the State will cover 75% of the cost of the initiative and Newtown will cover the other 25%. He indicated that one of the areas they will go up to is the Flag Pole. He added that there are lots of drivers talking on cell phones and texting up there. **Command Truck** – Chief Viadero informed Commissioners that thanks to a vendor the Department’s Command Truck was repainted and updated at no cost. **Sandy Hook 5K Race** – The Chief reported that the 5K Race was very well attended. He estimated that approximately 3,000 people were there despite the fact it was a cold, wet, windy day. **Monte Frank Team 26 for Newtown** – Chief Viadero announced that on April 9 Newtown’s officers will lead Monte Frank and Team 26 to the State line beginning the Team’s ride to Washington, D.C. **Stolen Car Cases Progress** – The Chief reported that progress had been made in the stolen car cases. He indicated that the thefts were not done by one or two individuals but by more like thirty or so individuals. **Combined Dispatch Legislation** – Chief Viadero stated that there is a Combined Dispatch Bill legislation that is really looking for it to happen. He said the Bill would be looking at taking away money from Agencies that don’t do it. **Meeting with Legislative Council** – The Chief indicated that they met with the Legislative Council last week. He said that the funding that was cut from the budget for the SSO was put back into place thanks to the great cooperation from the Council. **Sexual Assault Case** – Chief Viadero commended Officer Seabrook for his investigation into a sexual assault case of minor and subsequent arrest of the 22-year old suspect.

CAPTAIN'S REPORT: Incident Statistics: Written Report 2016 – Captain Rios stated that a copy of the report was in the Commissioners packets but noted that burglaries were down.

Traffic Unit Report: March 2016 – written report by Sgt. Bahamonde – The Captain assured those in attendance that although it might not seem like there is a police presence at the Flag Pole they frequently have unmarked cars up there. He indicated that there were over 70 motor vehicle stops for the month of March. **Detective Division Report: March 2016 – written report by Lt. Robinson** – Captain Rios stated that the report was self explanatory. He noted that burglaries were down and the Division was working with Probation Department looking for various sex offenders and working with the Board of Ed to abide by the new ordinance and where to designate the signage. The Captain told Commissioners that car thefts were down. He commended their Department for taking the forefront in the effort adding that Lt. Robinson was working directly with the New York State Police, various police departments in Fairfield County as well as Waterbury Police Department.

OLD BUSINESS: Flagpole Traffic Study Update – Chief Viadero reported that he made contact with CTDOT. He suggested that after speaking with Commissioner Rosenthal and Vice-Chairman Budd about availability, he planned to get the dates out to the individual that they planned to meet with. The Chief indicated that he hoped they could get together before the Board's meeting next month.

NEW BUSINESS: Chairman Faxon stated that he had received a correspondence from former Commissioner Virgil Procaccini regarding the intersection of Wasserman Way and Trades Lane specifically the eastbound lane of Wasserman Way heading towards the highway. The Chairman said that he thought what Mr. Procaccini observed was correct and that having two thru-lanes is dangerous. According to Chairman Faxon, Mr. Procaccini recommended that they make one of the lanes a dedicated turn lane to make the intersection safer.

Chief Viadero agreed and noted that they there have been several accidents up there.

Chairman Faxon asked if it would be appropriate to have one of the lanes be a right turn only to eliminate the chance of collision and Chief Viadero suggested that the Department would do a quick study of the intersection. The Chief suggested that the situation warrants the Department to take a look at it and he said he would ask Sgt. Bahamonde to do a study.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: none

COMMISSIONER'S PARTICIPATION: Commissioner Faxon stated that Officer Ketchum was a great guy. He said he personally remembers him hiding behind the red barn on Hanover Road stopping motorists and warning to them.

Chief Viadero informed the Board that Officer Ketchum was the last certified officer to ride the Department's motorcycle. He indicated that they would be barrowing a motorcycle from another Department so they could have two officers go through the training in June.

With regard to the budgetary process, Vice-Chairman Budd asked the Chief if he was comfortable with where everything was and Chief Viadero said yes.

Commissioner Rosenthal thanked Chairman Faxon and Vice-Chairman Budd for attending the Legislative Council meeting to make appeal.

Chairman Faxon noted that although the Department's \$15,000 budget line item for traffic studies was reduced to \$1,000, the Board would find ways to make the roads safe with that small amount of money.

ADJOURNMENT: Vice-President Budd moved to adjourn at 702 pm. Commissioner Sachs seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Ted Swigart, Clerk



James Viadero <james.viadero@newtown-ct.gov>

FW: Wasserman Way/Trades Ln

2 messages

Joel Faxon <jfaxon@faxonlawgroup.com>

Tue, Mar 29, 2016 at 9:56 PM

To: "danlaxnewtown@gmail.com" <danlaxnewtown@gmail.com>, "ahsachs@gmail.com" <ahsachs@gmail.com>,
James Viadero <james.viadero@newtown-ct.gov>

Cc: Brian <bbuddnrct@gmail.com>, "rmyer@westportct.gov" <rmyer@westportct.gov>

From our esteemed former colleague, a very wise observation. Chief please docket for the agenda next week.

Joel T. Faxon
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From: vvpjr0213@aol.com [vvpjr0213@aol.com]

Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2016 9:48 PM

To: Joel Faxon

Subject: Wasserman Way/Trades Ln

Board of Police Commissioners
Town of Newtown
Town Traffic Authority

Chairman Joel Faxon,

I would like to bring to the attention of the Town Traffic Authority a dangerous traffic condition that exists today that can easily be corrected at a minimal cost.

Motorists traveling easterly on Wasserman Way, approaching the traffic control light at Trades Lane, encounter 3 marked travel lanes. The left lane is marked for LEFT TURN ONLY, the center and right lanes are not marked allowing motorists to travel straight or make a right turn onto Trades Lane towards the Municipal Center. On many occasions, motorists use the right lane to increase their speed and pass vehicles in the center lane (on their right) as they continue traveling down Wasserman Way creating a reckless condition. I have personally seen this happen many times as overzealous drivers in the far right lane pass vehicles in the center lane especially when the traffic light turns from red to green. In February 2016, a motorist traveling west on Wasserman Way turned left to enter Trades Lane and was t-boned by an eastbound motorist doing exactly that. Fortunately, nobody was seriously injured but it could have resulted in very serious injuries. I am suggesting that you review this condition and recommend to the State Traffic Commission that the far right eastbound lane be marked as RIGHT TURN ONLY which would restrict motorists from passing vehicles on the right making the intersection much safer and preventing a tragic accident.

My work schedule does not allow me to attend the monthly Police Commission meetings but please feel free to present this complaint for review to the members of the Town Traffic Authority.

Thank you,
Virgil Procaccini Jr.
52 Brushy Hill Rd