



TOWN OF NEWTOWN
BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES FROM THE BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING HELD TUESDAY, June 7, 2016
TOWN HALL SOUTH CONFERENCE ROOM
3 MAIN STREET, NEWTOWN

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

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

ABSENT: none

ALSO PRESENT: Chief James Viadero, Captain Joe Rios, Union President Lenny Penna, Public Works Director Fred Hurley, 1 member of the press, and 3 members of the public

Chairman Faxon called the regular meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. He opened by stating that the Board and Town experienced a tremendous tragedy with the loss of Commissioner Bob Myers last month. The Chairman said that their hearts went out to the family and Westport Police Department. Subsequently, he asked for a moment of silence.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Deborah Pond, Pearl Street, informed the Board she was present fellow Pearl Street resident Herman Valentin could not attend the meeting. Ms. Pond said she was Lindsay's teacher and her heart was with them as well. She thanked the Board and Police Department for everything they have done so far to make Pearl Street safer. Ms. Pond noted that there was definitely a police presence there, but urged the Board to consider putting speed tables on the road as traffic was still going fast. She assured Commissioners that she understands they have a whole Town to take care of, and she said that Mr. Valentin understands there are a lot of steps in the traffic calming process. Chairman Faxon thanked her for her input.

POLICE UNION PARTICIPATION: Union President Penna reported that the Union had nothing going on at the present moment and added that everything was good.

CONSIDERATION AND ACTION ON THE MINUTES: Regular May 3, 2016 – Vice-Chairman Budd moved to accept the minutes from the Regular Meeting May 3, 2016. Commissioner Rosenthal seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

CHIEF'S REPORT: Chief Viadero told Commissioners that he had given them an up dated budget sheet and vehicle expenditures. He called their attention to a line item for the SSOs on the sheet indicating it was a reimbursement for the SSO at St. Rose. **Fleet Report** – The Chief reported that the Department put 3 new vehicles into service last month and has a new Detective Bureau vehicle going into service. **Awards Ceremony** – the Chief thanked everyone who attended the Department's awards ceremony recently. **Patrol Report** – Chief Viadero reported

that officers made an excellent arrest on 26 Pine Tree Hill Road. He said that the Department received a report of a burglary in progress. He added that a plate number was obtained from a vehicle leaving the scene which enabled officers to locate and arrest the suspect. In addition Chief Viadero stated that there had been two burglaries as well as several commercial burglaries all within a three or four day period all overnight. He noted that Danbury had the same thing. **Traffic Studies** – The Chief told Commissioners that they were currently working on three traffic studies – Bennett’s Bridge, School House and Boulevard, Pearl Street and the Flag Pole. **Construction** – Chief Viadero noted that there was continuing construction on Route 34, Church Hill Road and Hawleyville Road. **Mansion Fire** – Chief Viadero informed Commissioners that the recent fire at the Mansion was believed to be arson. He added that there had been a few incidents up there over the past couple of weeks prior to the fire and the owner had a camera up there. **Walnut Tree Hill Road** – the Chief indicated that there had been quite a bit of enforcement activity up on Walnut Tree Hill Road resulting in several traffic stops. **Motor Vehicle Activity** – Chief Viadero stated that there were 473 motor vehicle stops last month and said that the Department was focusing on the quality of the stops not the quantity. **“Simunition” Training** – The Chief reported that the Department participated in “Simunition” training He said it has the look and feel of a real gun but is more like paint ball. He added that it was the best training putting officers through various scenarios with a full-debrief at the end. The Chief indicated they spent more on over-time due to the length of the training but said it was the best training with regard to use of dead force. **Torch Run** – Chief Viadero announced that the Department would be taking part in the annual Torch Run Saturday, June 11, 2016, at 11:30 am starting at Dodgingtown Mark\et. He said that Newtown together with Officers from Redding and Garner Correctional will be participating.

CAPTAIN’S REPORT: Incident Statistics: Written Report May 2016 – Captain Rios reported that burglaries were up totaling 6 last month and accidents were up as well. **Traffic Unit Report: May 2016 – written report by Sgt. Bahamonde** – The Captain noted that the report speaks for itself adding that the Traffic Unit stayed busy with enforcement and handling complaints in addition to other duties. **Detective Division Report: May 2016 – written report by Lt. Robinson** – Captain Rios stated that the Detective Division’s latest work activity was investigating white collar crimes and burglaries. The Captain commended the citizen who came forward with the accurate description of the vehicle following the Pine Tree Hill Road burglary. Chairman Faxon added that the partnership between the agency and the public is very important. He too suggested that the gentleman did the right thing and should be commended. **Body Cameras** – The Captain stated that the Department will be testing and evaluating 3 body cameras – one to be used on each of the three shifts. He thanked their IT specialist Al Miles for setting them up. Captain Rios noted that they were in the testing and evaluating stage because they needed to be realistic with regard to policy concerns and privacy issues.

Commissioner Rosenthal asked the Chief if there had been another reduction to next year’s budget. Chief Viadero stated that the First Selectman was tasked by the Legislative Council to find \$60 K in savings in every budget in town. He said he found money in security costs and that reduction was \$10,000.

Chairman Faxon left the meeting at 6:40 pm due to another obligation. Vice-Chairman Budd officiated for the remainder of the evening.

OLD BUSINESS:

Pearl Street – Chief Viadero stated that the volumes have increased on Pearl Street. He suggested that they needed to do it one more time. Vice-Chairman Budd questioned whether it would be better to do it when school was in session or when it was out.

The Chief said it would be a good idea to see the data when school was out. He added that they should not only do it when school gets out but again when school starts. The Vice-Chairman agreed.

Boulevard and School House Hill – Chief Viadero suggested that Chairman Faxon had recommendations for the intersection. The Chief said the Department looked at it and will put signage up as recommended.

Chief Viadero told the Board that there were various speed limit changes needed on several roads and to expedite those changes he signed off on them.

Flag Pole (Committee Report) – Commissioner Rosenthal reported that last Tuesday, Vice-Chairman Budd, Chief Viadero, Captain Rios, and he, went to Newington DOT along with Traffic Engineer Mike Galante to discuss the Flag Pole intersection. He said that there was a bit of a miss-match of information with regard to accidents – the DOT had less. Chairman Rosenthal said that their response was the more data the better and they would take a look at it. He said that they didn't go into the most recent traffic study in much detail and he indicated that the DOT officials were at a loss as to what to do, but did suggest turning the white median striping into actual medians to help slow traffic down. Additionally, Commissioner Rosenthal said the DOT officials recommended extending the driveways at the home and curb where the bank is to neck down traffic.

Vice-Chairman Budd said that the DOT needed to look at the data points again to see if it meets the criteria for them to look at the intersection again. He added that the officials were very receptive and he didn't feel they would take the project over from the people of Newtown. The Vice-Chairman added that the Town would have the input as to what can be done. He said the DOT officials knew how challenging an issue it was.

NEW BUSINESS: none

COMMISSIONER'S PARTICIPATION: none

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Vince Imerti, 28 Pearl Street, suggested that the traffic would pick up once summer starts. He thanked the Board and the Department for what they have done so far.

Policy and Procedure Wearing of Uniforms – Captain Rios stated that it was time to update the policy. He said there has been a significant change to the uniform and he felt the changes to the policy reflect that.

Vice-Chairman Budd asked Union President Penna if the Union had been involved in the changes and the Union President stated that the Union had given quite a bit of consideration with what to wear.

Captain Rios thanked Union President Penna, the Union, as well as the former Union President for their input.

Commissioner Rosenthal moved to accept the changes to the Policy and Procedure Wearing of Uniforms as submitted. Commissioner Sachs seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Bennett's Bridge Road/Route 34 – Public Works Director Hurley presented the Board with two large maps detailing the Bennett's Bridge/ Rte 34 intersection which he referenced during their discussion.

He indicated that the Department put in a request a year ago for a traffic light and it was turned down by the CT DOT.

The Public Works Director said that the intersection was not easy to fix and wouldn't be cheap. He suggested that 500 to 800 feet of land would be affected on either side of the intersection to create sightlines.

Public Works Director Hurley recommended that the Department put together a list of where they want to do projects – a top 10 list - to give to the DOT to get things moving.

According to the Public Works Director, the Town would have to bear the engineering costs and upfront expenses.

Commissioner Rosenthal asked what the guarantee of the State following through with it was if the Town paid for the engineering costs, and Public Works Director Hurley said none.

ADJOURNMENT: Commissioner Rosenthal moved to adjourn at 7:25 pm. Commissioners Sachs seconded and the motion unanimously carried.

Ted Swigart, Clerk