



TOWN OF NEWTOWN
BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES FROM THE BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING HELD TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2016
TOWN HALL SOUTH CONFERENCE ROOM
3 MAIN STREET, NEWTOWN

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

PRESENT: Andy Sachs, Virgil Procaccini, Vice-Chairman Brian Budd and Chairman Joel Faxon

ABSENT: Dan Rosenthal

ALSO PRESENT: Chief James Viadero Captain Jose Rios, Union Vice-President Jeffrey Silver, Lieutenant Chris Vanghele, Lieutenant David Kullgren, Lieutenant Richard Robinson, one member of the press, and 2 members of the public

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

NEW BUSINESS:

Retirement Notice of Captain Jose Rios – Chairman Faxon announced that Captain Rios had submitted his retirement notice effective September 22, 2016. He added that the Captain had accepted a job in Norwalk. Chairman Faxon stated that the Captain had provided the Town with 26 years of service and achieved his rank have gone through the entire system. He told the Captain they were going to miss him very much and added that his input has always been very important to the Board. The Chairman noted that during his own 6-years service on the Board, Captain Rios had provided his assistance in many ways including serving as the liaison between the Department and the Board of Education after the Sandy Hook shooting on 12/14. Chairman Faxon stated that he was sure the Captain would serve Norwalk admirably and thanked him for his years of service in Newtown.

Vice-Chairman Budd said he wanted to echo the Chairman's sentiment. He stated that he has served on the Board 9-years and when Chief Michael Kehoe left Captain Rios stepped right up to transition Chief James Viadero in. The Vice-Chairman suggested that the Captain didn't rise up to the rank he has without dedication and perseverance. He reassured Captain Rios that they would miss the Captain greatly.

Chief Viadero stated that he echoed what the Chairman and Vice-Chairman had said. The Chief thanked the Captain Rios for sticking by him and introducing him to everyone. He reassured the Captain he was making a good career move at Norwalk Police Department.

In recognition of his years of dedication and service, Chief Viadero presented Captain Rios with a plaque.

Captain Rios thanked the Board stating that he has had some great opportunities with the Department and is retiring with mixed emotions. The Captain said he cherishes the memories working with everyone and added that he has had a great career. He thanked Chief Viadero

stating that it was a relatively smooth transition. Captain Rios added that the Chief was a true gentleman and added that the Department is in good hands.

The Captain concluded adding that he wished everyone and their families the best and the best of health.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Herman Valentin, 9 Pearl Street, stated that he was looking for an update on the next reading of Pearl Street. Chairman Faxon asked Mr. Valentin to hold on as it would be coming up on the agenda under Old Business.

POLICE UNION PARTICIPATION: Union Vice-President Silver stated that the Union was still working with the Department on the Body Cams. He stated that the cameras were being worn by 5 or 6 different officers on different shifts. Chief Viadero added that the Body Cams were being worn by different individuals shift to shift. He told the Board the Department was trying the different products that were out there to see which out is best. Chairman Faxon asked if there had been any issues and Union Vice-President Silver stated they have had no actual complaints. He added that some will embrace use of the cameras and some won't. Chief Viadero reassured the Board that they were trying different cameras and that there was no rush on making a choice.

CONSIDERATION AND ACTION ON THE MINUTES: August 2, 2016 – Vice-Chairman Budd moved to accept the minutes from the Board of Police Commissioners Regular Meeting August 2, 2016. Commissioner Sachs seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

CHIEF'S REPORT: Chief Viadero stated that there was a lot of stuff going on.

Massachusetts' Warrant – The Chief reported that an individual had been arrested on a warrant out of Massachusetts. **Local Burglary Suspect Arrested in Rhode Island** – Chief Viadero

stated that an individual who was responsible for several burglaries in Town was recently released on bond and subsequently picked and held by the authorities in Rhode Island on similar charges. **Ballistic Shields** – The Chief reported that the Department received training using

ballistic shields by Rich Miller, retired NYPD. He added that training was provided for 10 individuals. **Emergency Services Unit (ESU)** – Chief Viadero stated that the ESU participated

in the SWAT Challenge in Danbury and added that Newtown's officers did very well. **Child Safety Zone Signs** – The Chief reported that the Child Safety Zone signs are going up and are

being received well. **DUI Patrols** – Chief Viadero stated that the DUI Patrols have been successful yielding several arrests, and the **Grants for the SUDs Patrol** have allowed them to

focus on the liquor stores to make sure they are obeying the law. **Labor Day Parade** – The Chief stated the Parade went very well and added that Lt. Vanghele was the Commander for that.

Prevention Council's Opiate Recognition Forum – Chief Viadero stated that the Department has been working with the Prevention Council of Newtown. He advised Board members that an

Opiate Recognition Forum will be held October 5, 2016 at Edmond Town Hall. He noted that hospital personnel, first responders and doctors will be on hand and that the focus group will be

parents and youths. **Hearts 911** – Chief reported that Hearts 911 was currently rebuilding the house of a veteran who suffers PTSD. Lt. Kullgren added that this team building method brings

departments who have been together through tough times to work together in different environment. **Aid to Fairfield PD** – Chief Viadero stated that four of Newtown's officers went

down to provide patrol aid to Fairfield Police Department when Donald Trump came. **Traffic Signal Approval** – The Chief informed Commissioners that following the request for traffic

signal sent in by Chief Kehoe to the State April 2015, the State approved the traffic signal at the intersection of Route 34/Bennetts Bridge. He added that a signal would be designed based on the

accident information that was sent to them. In addition, Chief Viadero stated that the Town's

request for speed limit changes was approved as well as their request for a Rural Road Grant which will fund the changing of signage and painting along 26 roads. **Injured Officers Return** – the Chief stated that both officers that were out injured have since returned to work. **October Graduation** - Chief Viadero said that Officer Chelsea Harold would be graduating from POST on October 15, 2016. **Equipment Donation** – the Chief told Police Commissioners that the Department had received a donation of two night vision flare devices that could be used when searching for a missing person or suspect. In addition, he stated that the **Newtown Police Building Foundation** had had given the Department funds for new furniture. Lt. Kullgren added that the Foundation was started in mid -2012 prior to 12/14 by Scott Ciccari. He said that Mr. Ciccari saw the need for a new police facility and has done a lot of great work providing funding for such equipment as an overhead projector, TVs, and a 60” screen for the communications room to view the school cameras. Mr. Ciccari stated that the donations are from residents who want to stand behind the Newtown Police Department. **K-9 Challenge** – Chief Viadero reported that Officer Felicia Figol would be hosting the K-9 Challenge at Fairfield Hills. He added that the Chief would benefit Newtown’s K-9 Fund and the 2nd Company Horse Guard. **School Opening** – The Chief recognized Lt. Robinson for his work over the summer training the SSO’s for the opening of school. He said it was a tense day that first day but that training made the opening a lot easier; and he wanted to thank everyone especially Lt. Robinson. **Threatening Caller Arrested** - Chief Viadero recognized Officer Chapman for his good work arresting the individual responsible for making threatening calls. He added that the individual was taken into custody on Friday, Sept. 2, and scheduled to appear in court Sept. 28.

CAPTAIN’S REPORT:

Statistic Reports for August 2016 – Captain Rios reported that there were 72 Accidents and 468 Traffic Stops. **Traffic Unit Report for August 2016 written by Officer Jay Flynn** – The Captain stated that the Traffic Unit was kept busy handling numerous complaints and with the continued enforcement on Pearl Street as well as various other roads in Town. **Detective Division Report for August 2016 written by Lt. Robinson** - Captain Rios stated that there was only 1 burglary last month. He added that the division made the arrest of the individual who had threatened the school and the Captain commended Lt. Robinson for all his efforts with the schools. Captain Rios said he is very proud, adding that the Department is at a high point with the community and with the schools. He also commended the Superintendent Dr. Joseph Erardi, Jr., for all his help.

OLD BUSINESS:

Discussion and Presentation of Data Compiled Pertaining to Pearl Street – Chief Viadero told the Police Commissioners that the report was in their packets. He noted that it showed a definite increase in traffic 1194 vehicles up from 1095 in December. The Chief said that the speed of the vehicles has increased also. Chief Viadero indicated that the most recent study had some figures that were affected by other variables and stated the Traffic Unit would hopefully be redoing it this week. He added that with the opening of the schools there would be a definite increase in traffic.

At this time, Chairman Faxon asked Mr. Valentin to speak.

Mr. Valentin asked that when the Traffic Unit put the tubes out, if it could determine the difference between a car and a truck. Sgt. Silver said they could only determine the number of axels. Mr. Valentin indicated that there were not a lot of the larger trucks but rather contractor trucks. He added that there have been a few close calls and described one situation in particular where two pedestrians were almost struck.

Vice-Chairman Budd urged the Department to get the tubes back out there.

Chief Viadero reassured Police Commissioners that he would have an update for them next month.

Mr. Valentin asked about the No Thru Trucks sign and Chief Viadero stated Sgt. Bahamonde would get that done.

Lt. Kullgren clarified that a No Thru Trucks road meant that vehicles that don't have a destination A or B in Town can't use it.

Sgt. Silver stated that "trucks" referred to vehicles over 18,000 pounds.

Chairman Faxon stated that the intent was to slow vehicles down.

Captain Rios assured Mr. Valentin that the Board was paying attention to it.

Discussion and Presentation of Flagpole Accident Data 2012 to Present – Chief Viadero indicated that the sub-committee met with CTDOT and subsequently gave them the accident information that was requested from 2012-date. He said the cluster of the accidents was in that one area and it was up to CTDOT to go through that data. According to a woman he spoke to at CTDOT, Newtown would receive a response in two months.

Chairman Faxon said that the greatest concern he has is to make that intersection safe. The Chairman stated that his daughter doesn't want to drive through that intersection and his son has no desire go through it. He suggested that Police Commissioners have a responsibility to make every intersection as safe as they can. Chairman Faxon added that it may require the subcommittee to revisit CTDOT.

CORRESPONDENCES:

Chief Viadero stated that he had given the Board all the letters of thanks and correspondences. Chairman Faxon said had all the letters and he suggested that kind of feedback was very impressive. The Chairman said kudos to everyone.

NEW BUSINESS: no additional New Business

COMMISSIONER'S PARTICIPATION:

Vice-Chairman Budd suggested that they needed to address the CIP going into the budget season and the CIP with respect to the Building Project moving forward.

Chief Viadero said he had a meeting scheduled for September 12 and said the Selectman had a meeting that evening (Sept. 6) and again on September 19.

The Chief added that Lt. Kullgren prepared an excellent power point on the Departments space needs. He added that anyone who views it will understand where we are.

Chief Viadero stressed that the Police Department needs a modern facility. He added that the men and women of the Department deserve it as well as the community.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Mr. Cicciari, a resident in Town for 13 years, thanked Captain Rios for all his years of service and told the Captain he was greatly loved and respected.

ADJOURNMENT: Vice-Chairman Budd moved to adjourn at 7:11 pm. Commissioners Sachs seconded and the motion unanimously carried.

Ted Swigart, Clerk