



**TOWN OF NEWTOWN**  
**BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS**

**MINUTES FROM THE BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS**  
**REGULAR MEETING HELD TUESDAY, DECEMBER 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 Chris Vanghele, Union President Lenny Penna, one member of the press, and 8 members of the public

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

Chief Viadero presented Newtown Police Explorer Jordan Ciccheza with a plaque for a job well done. The Explorer was honored after he saw an individual fall down breaking his arm in the parking area at the K-9 Challenge in October. Jordan sought the assistance of his supervisor to help get care for the injured individual. Chief Viadero also recognized Officers Felicia Figol and Maryhelen McCarthy for the phenomenal job they have done with organizing and running the Police Explorers Program.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** Herman Valentin, 9 Pearl Street, informed the board that while blowing leaves in his yard he found a broken rearview mirror from a car. He suggested it may have happened on the corner before his house and was likely the result of a car cutting the corner.

Richard Mitchell, 45 Poverty Hollow Road, informed Police Commissioners about a wild turn of events that occurred at his house recently when a car knocked down a pole in front of his house, broke his fence, lost a wheel which ended up at his front door, and left the scene. Mr. Mitchell said he has lived there for five years and this was strike three as it was the third time his fence had been damaged. He noted that the driver had been arrested and added that the police have been good; but recommended that something must be done.

Tim Csizmadia, Property Manager at Red Gate Farm at 50 Poverty Hollow Road, echoed Mr. Mitchell's concern explaining that the Farm is located on a bend in the road where most accidents are. He said he has replaced posts in their fence several times and was trying to figure out how traffic could be slowed down. Mr. Csizmadia suggested maybe a speed bump but added that he knew they couldn't be put everywhere in Town.

Mr. Mitchell said he has two small grandchildren and suggested someone was going to get killed if something isn't done about the problem on their road.

Mr. Valentin suggested that he had spoken to a Representative about getting money from the State to put up cameras on local roads with traffic issues like Pearl Street and Poverty Hollow. Chairman Faxon suggested that would be great.

**POLICE UNION PARTICIPATION:** Union President Penna stated everything was going well.

**CONSIDERATION AND ACTION ON THE MINUTES: November 8, 2016 –**  
Commissioner Sachs moved to accept the minutes from the Board of Police Commissioners Special Meeting on November 8, 2016. Vice-Chairman Budd seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Faxon officially welcomed the soon-to-be-official Captain Chris Vanghele.

**CHIEF’S REPORT:** Budget 2017/2018 - Chief Viadero reported that they over the 2017/2018 Budget with Finance Director Bob Tait and would be presenting it to the First Selectman. Lieutenant’s Position – The Chief stated that the Lieutenants written exam was held recently and there would be an Oral one on December 12. He suggested that a week after they should get the results and will have three names for the Board to fill the vacancy. \$40K K-9 Donation – Chief Viadero said that the Department had recently received a \$40,000 donation for its K-9 by independent individuals with Danbury Police Department. Recent Events – The Chief told Commissioners that the Department had participated in several events recently including the Turkey Trot and Tree Lighting Ceremony. He thanked Reporter Andy Gorosko for putting the bit in the paper. CIP – Chief Viadero stated that the Department would be appearing before the Legislative Council on its final leg of the CIP. Officer Position – The Chief reported that the Department sent letters out to 26 candidates to fill the vacancy of the police officer position. He noted that an individual would be picked by the later part of February and that they had a seat at the Academy in March. Thanks to Scott Cicciari – Chief Viadero thanked Scott Cicciari of the Newtown Police Building Fund for the new furniture upstairs in the Police department as well as the three flat screen monitors. DUI Patrols – The Chief announced the department ran DUI patrols on November 2 & November 6 making 4 DUI arrests as well as 51 other stops. He said that the DUI Patrols will continue through the months of December and January. Poverty Hollow DUI Arrest – Chief Viadero reported that the person who hit the pole on Poverty Hollow drove 13-miles where he was tracked down in Bethel and arrested for DUI. Event at High School – According to the Chief, Officer Chapman spoke to Middle Students on issues they would confront in High School. The Chief praised the Officer’s work and added that Officer Chapman was well received and captivated the audience’s attention. Other Promotions and Appointments – Chief Viadero announced that Officer Rich Monckton became the new SRO and Officer Liam Seabrook was promoted to the rank of Sergeant. School Evacuation Drill – The Chief reported that Lt. Rich Robinson and Newtown School Systems Security Director Mark Pompano organized a school evacuation drill which ended with uniting the parent picking them up. He added that it went very well. Award Ceremony – The Chief informed the Board that an award ceremony was held by the American Auto Association. The Association gave Officer Paula Wickman the Traffic Hero award for leading the Department in DUI arrests. The Chief also noted that the Department received the Gold Award for Driver and Motor Vehicle Safety. SSO Search – Chief Viadero indicated that the Department was in the process of finding another SSO. Lake View Terrance Incident – According to the Chief, the son of a 92-year old woman with dementia passed away recently leaving her alone at her residence on lake View Terrance. He noted that Sgt. Rusczyk and Officers Rich Monckton, Adam Greco, and Maryhelen McCarthy helped get the mother into a safe place working with Social Services. Women in Command

Class – Chief Viadero reported that Officers Maryhelen McCarthy and Gladys Pisani recently attended the Women in Command Leadership Class at the Crown Plaza.

**OLD BUSINESS: Pearl Street Discussion (Final Reports on comparison data: Queen Street, Key Rock Road, Pearl Street)** – Commissioner Sachs asked what options exist for Traffic Calming with exception to speed tables. Chief Viadero suggested speed signage.

The Chief stated that they did a recent comparison of the data collected on Key Rock Road and Queen Street. He said that Pearl Street has a lot of traffic but doesn't have the same volume. In addition, he added that the average speed was 33 mph.

Chief Viadero offered reassurance to Pearl Street residents that the Department would continue to go up there on a regular basis.

Vice-Chairman Budd stated that they had to look at other projects they've done. He said that even though the average speed on Key Rock Road was reduced to 43 mph with the speed tables, the average volume of vehicles increased from 1300 vehicles to 1900 vehicles post-build.

He suggested that a lot of residents use the road to avoid I-95 and the Merritt Parkway.

Vice-Chairman Budd stated that Queen Street took two decades to resolve and was their first attempt at trying something out of the box such as speed tables. He said that pre-build there was an average of 5100 vehicles per day with an average speed of 35 mph and post-build there was an average of 3000 vehicles per day with an average speed of 28 mph. The Vice-Chairman noted that the most recent study of Pearl Street showed an average of 1100 to 1200 vehicles per day at an average speed of 33 mph.

Vice-Chairman Budd suggested that the Board needs to make the best decision not just for Pearl Street but for all residents of Newtown. He suggested that if speed tables were put in place on Pearl Street it might put more traffic on Riverside Road and Pole Bridge. The Vice-Chairman added that for this reason he recommends enforcement.

Chairman Faxon stated that whether it was a speed bump or table there is a strong presumption against them. He suggested that there 280 miles of roads in Newtown in which 3 miles of roadway are subject to speed tables. He suggested that Queen Street was the Golden Rule for speed tables as it had more traffic and more pedestrians. The Chairman suggested that vehicles' exceeding the speed limit by 4 or 5 mph was common on just about all the roads. He recommended that they must balance the positives of speed tables against downside of being the standard. With regard to Pearl Street, Chairman Faxon said he would be opposed to any type of speed table.

Commissioner Sachs suggested he likes speed tables and stated he would put them on every road in Town, but that wouldn't be appropriate. He added that should be based on the volume and average speed of traffic on a given road.

Chairman stated that although Commissioner Rosenthal couldn't be at the meeting, the Board could still vote on the matter.

Commissioner Sachs made the motion to approve traffic calming speed tables on Pearl Street.

Vice-Chairman Budd seconded and Commissioners unanimously opposed motion.

Chairman Faxon concluded by stating that the findings didn't rise to the level of having permanent speed tables on Pearl Street.

**CORRESPONDENCE (Letters of Appreciation, Letter from Concerned Citizen, Flagpole and West Street - Parking issues):** Chief Viadero indicated that they had correspondences with regard to signage and striping on Glen Road and signage and striping for Main Street and West Street by the Flag Pole.

Commissioner Sachs moved to accept the Chief's recommendation to the State for striping on the North side of Glen Road and Church Hill Road signage. Commissioner Budd seconded and motion was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Sachs made the motion to accept the Chief's recommendation to the State for a No Parking sign north of the crosswalk and north of the Flag Pole on Main Street. Commissioner Budd seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Chief Viadero stated that there was a letter concerning the vehicles using Juniper to Nettleton as a cut-thru and suggesting the road be made one way. The Chief said they would put "One Way" signage up, give it a try and re-evaluate it again.

Chairman Faxon suggested that the implementation of a One Way sign might adversely affect traffic on Birch Drive, so he recommended the Board move the matter to the next month's agenda to allowing people from Birch Drive to come in and voice their opinions.

**NEW BUSINESS:** none

**COMMISSIONER'S PARTICIPATION:** none

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** Mr. Mitchell said that he suggested that in the interest of safety on the roads in Town someone should be corresponding with the Highway Department to get things done. Commissioner Faxon reassured Mr. Mitchell that the Board was in contact regularly with the Highway Department. Chief Viadero also assured Mr. Mitchell that when there are any changes that need to be made they are in contact with Fred Hurley.

Mr. Mitchell re-iterated his earlier point with regard to traffic on Poverty Hollow Road stating that someone needs to do something before someone gets hurt.

Mr. Csizmadia suggested there were no water issues and the Poverty Hollow Road has been up. He added that the Police Department was doing its job. Mr. Csizmadia suggested that he is concerned that speed bumps would be in the way and added that he doesn't know the solution but wants something to happen.

Mr. Mitchell suggested that they should put up cameras to take pictures of the plates.

Chief Viadero stated that unfortunately there was no statute in place that allowed them to enforce that.

Commissioner Procaccini suggested that someone would need to go to Hartford to get the language changed.

Chairman Faxon stated that they can't have anything returnable to court through that camera.

Mr. Valentin suggested that despite the fact the speed signs are put up and people are pulled over once they are gone people will just go back to their habits. He said that personally he doesn't want speed bumps. Mr. Valentin recommended that the tolerance level be lowered and once the word gets around it won't happen as much.

Chief Viadero noted that last year Newtown was number one in the state for motor vehicle stops. Mr. Valentin suggested regularly posting in the newspaper the number of warnings and summons issued. He added that he knows the bar has been lowered on Queen Street, Key Rock Road and Pearl Street but he suggested that people are going to do what people do.

Chris Hoyas, 33 Main Street, asked about the striping on West Street and the No Parking on Main Street. Chief Viadero stated that the striping on the traffic island was being repainted and the No Parking signs were going to be erected again.

Mr. Hoyas said he asked the Town to stripe the parking and Chief Viadero said he would come out and look at it.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Commissioner Sachs made the motion to adjourn at 7:49 pm. Vice-Chairman Budd seconded and motion was unanimously approved.

*Ted Swigart, Clerk*