

CITY OF WEST HAVEN, CT
BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS
Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday, June 16, 2020

The regular meeting of the West Haven Board of Police Commissioners was called to order at 7 p.m. by Chairman Raymond Collins, III at Police Headquarters, 200 Saw Mill Road. All those present rose and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Attendance

Raymond Collins, III, Chairman	present
Paul E. Butler, Vice-Chairman	present
Keith Sweeney	present
Christopher Suggs	present
Deborah B. Wright, Pension Board	present
Joseph Perno, Chief of Police	present
Carl Flemmig, Interim Deputy Chief	present
Lee Tiernan, Corporation Counsel	absent

Agenda

Commissioner Sweeney MOVED to accept the agenda as presented; SECONDED by Commissioner Butler. Motion carried unanimously.

1. Minutes for Approval

Commissioner Wright MOVED to accept the minutes of June 2, 2020; SECONDED by Commissioner Sweeney. Motion carried with Commissioner Suggs abstaining.

2. Public Session

Chairman Collins welcomed the new Commissioner, Chris Suggs. He recognized and thanked Commissioner BonTempo for his service and lively debates.

Chairman Collins asked if any member of the public wished to speak.

Sean Faughnan, President, Local 895

Detective Faughnan thanked Commissioner Bon Tempo for his time spent and dedication to the West Haven Police Department. He stated, we learned from him and he helped out many officers.

He continued by congratulating newly-appointed Commissioner Chris Suggs and welcomed him to West Haven Police Department. As President of the Union and on behalf of the Executive Board, he stated, we look forward to working with you, Mr. Suggs, as well as the other Police Commissioners. We look forward to a continued nice working relationship where we can talk in public and as well on a personal level to try to get things taken care of.

I know you're new to the Police Department. I think this is one of the best police departments that I can speak of in the State. The brotherhood and sisterhood of the officers that work here is tremendous. I can't think of any other place I'd rather work – a third generation in law enforcement, my father has worked at three different agencies throughout Connecticut, so I've had the opportunity to see a lot of different things. I think you're going to be proud of this police department. Your input will be greatly appreciated, and I think you're going to appreciate what we have here also. Hopefully, we can keep moving forward and have a lot of positive that comes out of that.

Detective Faughnan thanked Dave Moran for his work in regard to the pension. He asked the Commissioners to reach out to the City in order to get some clarity on the 457 Deferred Compensation Plan. Mr. Moran has helped those who asked questions on it but on his own time – perhaps the City could hire him in that advisory role as well. He noted that Beth Sabo has been made aware of it. All of the officers Dave has helped are very grateful as there is no interpersonal connection with the company that administers that plan.

He welcomed the Commissioners back from hiatus, and noted that there are some good cases to talk about, and some recognition that some of the officers should get for saving a husband and wife's life on Knox Street back in March.

3. Communications

The Commissioners reviewed the following monthly reports (Items 3.1 through 3.6):

April, 2020

Investigative Services
Traffic Management

May, 2020

Animal Control
K-9 – Sgt. Bloom/Ike
Investigative Services
Attendance

4. Report of the Chief

Chief Perno stated, I would like to address and publicly commend the Command Staff regarding the protest which occurred two Saturdays ago – Captains Flavin and D'Amato, along with Deputy Chief Flemmig, Lieutenants Zitnay, Urrata, Romano, Kleinknecht and Hancock, and the Patrol Sergeants that were instrumental in keeping the peace at this protest. All performed admirably under a very, very stressful incident.

Prior to that, we had initially obtained some equipment which the vendor then told us is not available. Officer Marchitto took it upon himself to contact a police department that he has trained with, the Virginia Beach Police Department, for a donation. We received 82 helmets and 33 shields from that department. I would like to publicly thank them; we'll be sending them our thanks also.

Last night the five-year plan went before the City Council. They will be using LOCIP funding to fix our camera system in the Police Department building. We will meet with a consultant on Friday.

The plumbing problem in the cellblock area is being addressed by the City. They will obtain a vendor that is familiar with the system that we currently have to repair it and make it work in all of the cells. Right now, only 6 of the 16 cells are operational.

In response to a question by Commissioner Sweeney, Chief Perno explained that the department has not received any of the five cars that were ordered in FY20, the department is still at the mercy of Ford Motor Company. The sixth vehicle, a prisoner van, is the only vehicle received. There are no new vehicles in the FY21 budget.

Commissioner Sweeney expressed his frustration on the age/mileage of the cars that are currently in the fleet. He asked if there is a timeframe on the cars, cameras, and cellblock plumbing.

Chief Perno replied that he'll have a better feel for the cameras on Friday. A vendor search for the plumbing was just approved by the City Council on Monday.

Commissioner Wright commended the entire department for keeping the peace during the recent protest. She observed pictures of some of the line staff as they intermingled with some of the protestors, especially some of the children, taking the time to talk to the kids and explain some things to them. She encountered someone that shared that they were excited that the officers took the time to explain to their child what was going on and how the relationship with the police is actually a good relationship.

5. **Report of the Deputy Chief** – no report
6. **Report of the Committees** – no reports
7. **Old Business** - none presented
8. **New Business** – none presented
9. **Pension Board**
 - 9.1 Dave Moran

Mr. Moran reported the ups and downs of the pension plan as he worked from home during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was tumultuous, but we were in a defensive position. The pension has accumulated a decent amount of cash; and the market, which is still being driven by the top 10 names, has bounced back very well.

Last June the balance was at approximately \$120 million. Since then, we've taken out net \$5.275 million. As of today, we're back to \$120 million plus approximately \$500,000. It doesn't seem like much, but when you see what was going on in March, we preserved principal and we participated on the rebound by adding cash and we still have a lot of cash.

He and the Commissioners discussed what happened and the strategy going forward. Commissioner Wright thanked Mr. Moran for all of his time and efforts.

10. Commissioners Reports – no reports

Commissioner Sweeney, on behalf of the Johnson and Sweeney families, thanked the Chief and the Traffic Division for the sendoff they gave his cousin. He also is happy to see the light up at Kelsey, Main and Wagner; hopefully that will alleviate some of the problems with traffic and accidents. People will finally be able to take that left-hand turn toward downtown.

Commissioner Butler thanked and commended the entire department for the great job they did at the June 6 protest. It was a tough day. He thanked Officer Marchitto for reaching out to another agency and obtaining the donation of equipment.

Chief Perno described how the equipment was obtained. The Commissioners discussed the donation, and how excited and grateful all the officers were to have that equipment that could potentially keep them from harm.

Commissioner Collins thanked every single officer that participated that day - from the moment of lineup to the end of the night, the professionalism everyone showed the entire day. It was like a well-oiled machine and came off without a hitch.

Chief Perno added, I give all the credit to the Command staff. Lieutenant Kleinknecht was very instrumental in instructing and getting rules of engagement understood by the officers, especially the very young officers that haven't been on the street for more than 6-8 months. The Lieutenants kept them in line and their heads where they were supposed to be. It was very gratifying. We had a contingency at City Hall for the protest on the green, and another group of officers here. He stated that he could not be more proud of the Command Staff and all of the officers.

11. Executive Session

At 7:31 p.m., Commissioner Sweeney MOVED to enter Executive Session to discuss the Street Crime Report for April, 2020 and the Special Victims & Firearms Report for May, 2020; SECONDED by Commissioner Butler. Motion carried unanimously.

12. Return to Regular Session/Adjournment

At 7:32 p.m. the Commissioners returned to regular session and adjourned on a motion by Commissioner Wright; SECONDED by Commissioner Butler. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Trish Bruder

Patricia M. Bruder
Secretary