

**BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS**  
**City of West Haven**  
**200 Saw Mill Road**  
**West Haven, CT 06516**

- 1. Minutes of August 7, 2018**
- 2. Public Input**
- 3. Communications**
  - 3.1 Animal Control Division - Month of July, 2018.**
  - 3.2 Animal Control Division – Month of August, 2018.**
  - 3.3 Attendance Report – Month of July, 2018.**
  - 3.4 Investigative Services –Month of July, 2018.**
  - 3.5 K-9 Activity Report(Sgt. Bloom) – Month of July, 2018.**
  - 3.6 K-9 Activity Report (Ofc. Standish)– Month of July, 2018.**
  - 3.7 K-9 Activity Report (Ofc. Standish)-Month of August, 2018.**
  - 3.8 Training Division Report – Month of July, 2018.**
  - 3.9 Traffic Report – Month of July, 2018.**
- 4. Report of the Chief**
  - 4.1 Chiefs Report – August, 2018.**
- 5. Old Business**
  - 5.1 Ordinance Hearing –Casper Amodio - 246 Brown Street-Blight Tabled from August 7, 2018.**
- 6. New Business**
  - 6.1 Request for Retirement - Sgt. David Tammaro**
  - 6.2 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Autumn on the Sound Race – October 7, 2018.**
- 7. Pension Board**
- 8. Report of the Committees**
- 9. Executive Session**
  - 9.1 Street Crime Report – Month of July, 2018.**

**CITY OF WEST HAVEN, CT**  
**BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS**  
*Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday, August 7, 2018*

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**

<b>Raymond Collins, III, Chairman</b>	Present
<b>Paul E. Butler, Vice-Chairman</b>	Present
<b>Keith Sweeney</b>	Present
<b>Peter BonTempo, Secretary</b>	Present
<b>Deborah B. Wright, Pension Board</b>	Present
<b>John Karajanis, Chief of Police</b>	Present
<b>Joseph Perno, Assistant Chief of Police</b>	Present
<b>Lee Tiernan, Corporation Counsel</b>	Present

RECEIVED  
 TOWN AND CITY CLERK  
 OF WEST HAVEN

2018 AUG -8 PM 2:27

**ADD ONS**

Commissioner Sweeney MOVED to approve the following amendments to the agenda:

- On items 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, and 6.6 there should be no fines listed on the agenda as the Board has not taken up these items or discussed fines relative to these items.
- Item 6.3 should be removed from the agenda as the packets referenced 11 Scott Street and the agenda references 223 First Ave.
- Item 6.5 should be removed from the agenda. This item was addressed at the last meeting; the fine was upheld.
- The Executive Session should be removed from the agenda.

SECONDED by Commissioner Butler. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Commissioner Sweeney MOVED to accept the agenda as amended; SECONDED by Commissioner Butler. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED unanimously.

**1. MINUTES**

Commissioner Wright MOVED to accept the minutes of July 17, 2018; SECONDED by Commissioner Butler. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED unanimously.

**2. PUBLIC SESSION**

Commissioner Collins asked three times if any member of the public wished to address the Commission. Being none, he closed the public session at 7:06 p.m.

**3. COMMUNICATIONS**

**3.1 Support Services Report – July 2018**

There were no questions or comments.

**4. REPORT OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE**

The Commissioners requested that the Chief provide his reports in their packets instead of in their e-mails.

Chief Karajanis reads his report aloud as follows:

- July 19 – met with City representatives regarding preparation for contract negotiations.
- July 20 – met with HR and Corporation Counsel regarding a personnel matter.
- July 23 – directed communications from an attorney to HR regarding a question on benefits.
- July 26 – met with Corporation Counsel regarding FOI.
- July 31 – attended training seminar at UNH.
- July 31 – turned over video recording to Corporation Counsel.
- August 1 – attended Department Head meeting regarding MUNIS.
- August 1 – spoke with HR regarding a personnel matter.
- August 1 – received phone message from POSTC Accreditation.
- August 1 – met with Corporation Counsel.
- August 1 – contacted and spoke with individual from POSTC Accreditation.

A final note for clarification regarding information released based upon the FOI request. I turned over all documents in question to Corporation Counsel. Those documents were reviewed and any information determined subject to release were determined by Corporation Counsel and released by same. I released no documents and under direction of Corporation Counsel made no statements.

Commissioner BonTempo asked if there was HIPAA information released. Chief Karajanis had no information on that – he merely wanted to clarify what the process was.

Commissioner Sweeney noted that the department lost personnel due to the City layoffs. He asked the Chief to assign someone to complete the injury and lost time reports.

#### **4.1 REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF OF POLICE**

Deputy Chief Perno reviewed his report regarding the incident at the Records Window on July 19. His suggested corrective measures include:

- 1) That any time a civilian employee feels threatened, harassed or uncomfortable with a person or situation they are to excuse themselves from the person or remove themselves from the situation and alert an Officer.
- 2) That the City adopt a policy stating that any payment (taxes, permits, fines, etc.) in coins be limited to a ten dollars (\$10.00) maximum.

This policy will alleviate this from occurring again and causing another social media event that would bring negativity to the City.

After discussion on the report and recommendations of the Deputy Chief, Corporation Counsel agreed to talk to Webster Bank so that in the future someone that comes in with coins can be directed to the bank first for conversion of same. We could then say we have a different procedure and we have the cooperation of Webster Bank.

#### **5. OLD BUSINESS**

##### **5.1 Ordinance hearing – Kehinde Ayodele, 192 Center Street – Blight Litigation Executive Session (tabled from 7/17/18 BOPC meeting)**

The Commissioners had been waiting on registration information for four vehicles. Mr. Avodele brought the registration for only one of the cars – the car in question that he is now having junked. Corporation Counsel recommended that the Commission enforce the fine as Mr. Avodele did not produce the documentation the Board that he specifically requested at the last meeting.

More discussion ensued between Mr. Avodele and the Commissioners.

Corporation Counsel asked if all the debris in the back yard and on the deck has been taken care of. Mr. Avodele replied that the dumpster has been removed and the debris on the deck has been removed.

Commissioner Collins asked Mr. Avodele if he has proof that the rest of the cars are registered. He replied yes, and that he would make copies and drop them off at Police Headquarters tomorrow. Commissioner Sweeney noted that he asked Mr. Avodele to do that at the last meeting.

Commissioner Sweeney **MOVED** to uphold the fine; and further,

**MOVED** that provided Mr. Avodele produces all of the registrations to all of the vehicles with the exception of the one road-worthy unregistered vehicle (which is to be deemed roadworthy by another inspection), the Commission will consider waiving the fine.

**SECONDED** by Commissioner Wright. A voice vote was taken and the **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Commissioner Collins directed Mr. Avodele to drop the copies off on Thursday, August 9th to the Records Office to his attention.

**5.2 Ordinance Hearing – Edward Leavitt, 72 Dawson Ave. – Blight  
Litigation Executive Session**

Corporation Counsel reported that on August 1<sup>st</sup> 72 Dawson has new ownership. He will be in touch with the new owner to be sure the property is in compliance of the blight ordinance.

Commissioner Sweeney **MOVED** to waive the fine on 72 Dawson; **SECONDED** by Commissioner Butler. A voice vote was taken and the **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

**6.1 Block Party – Hawthorne Street – September 8, 2018  
(Rain date September 9, 2018)**

Commissioner Wright **MOVED** to accept; **SECONDED** by Commissioner Butler. A voice vote was taken and the **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

**6.2 Ordinance Hearing – Krystin Douthit, 6 Cordon Circle  
Blight fine \$100**

Corporation Counsel noted that the items in question have been corrected and in order. One section of fence remains missing; that's the only problem. Officer Jefferson added she explained to the complainant that the owners of 6 Cordon Circle could take the entire fence down; that they don't need to replace that missing section. They have cleaned up the mess around it. She feels they have maintained the lawn, cleaned up

the broken pieces. Corporation Counsel recommended waiving the fine and noted that there are fences throughout the City with missing sections.

Commissioner Sweeney MOVED to waive the fine; SECONDED by Commissioner BonTempo. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED unanimously.

**6.3 – removed from the agenda.**

**6.4 Ordinance Hearing – Issifou Mansour, 69 Day Street  
\$100 fine – Group 111-AA Litter from vehicle**

Due to the date on the ticket and the case number not corresponding, and the lack of a Police report, Commissioner Sweeney MOVED to waive the ticket; SECONDED by Commissioner BonTempo. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED unanimously.

**6.5 – removed from the agenda.**

Officer Jefferson noted that the resident is here tonight.

Commissioner Sweeney noted that this was taken off by motion earlier because it was not included on the amended agenda that was posted at City Hall.

**6.6 Ordinance Hearing – Casper Amodio, 246 Brown Street  
Blight fine \$100**

Mr. Amodio explained to the Commission how the yard became to be in disarray. Today it is clean.

Commissioner Sweeney commended Mr. Amodio for doing a tremendous job in bringing the property to about 95 percent of compliance. He noted there are still some issues that need to be addressed.

Officer Jefferson will meet with Mr. Amodio and the Building Department to determine what needs to be cleared further.

Commissioner Sweeney MOVED TO TABLE this item to the meeting of September 4, 2018; SECONDED by Commissioner BonTempo. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED unanimously.

**7. PENSION BOARD**

No report.

## 8. REPORT OF THE COMMITTEES – PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Commission Sweeney asked about the status of any open investigations.

Corporation Counsel replied that the individual conducting the latest IA will have at least a draft any day. The Commissioners will have the IA report by the next meeting.

## 9. COMMISSIONERS REPORT

In regard to the July 3 West Haven fireworks night, Commissioner BonTempo noted that a friend of his and several citizens commended the department for doing a good job keeping control of that situation that could have turned into something awful. He is proud of the job the Officers did, and he thanked in particular Deputy Chief Perno, Captain Dimeola and Sergeants Kleinknecht and Pliszka. He would like to come up with a new plan for fireworks night next year.

Chief Karajanis noted that numerous people called him and stopped him on the street commending the department for the job they did that night.

Commissioner Bontempo spoke in response to comments made on the West Haven page on Facebook talking about a recent article and television report about one of our Officers. He stated, the five Commissioners on this board love this town and would not put anybody at risk, nor would we put the town at risk. We feel we did our due diligence relative to that. I posted something on this "West Haven the way it is" page for the sake of transparency. I invited everyone to come including a couple of pseudonym guys named Bob Bova and some other guy. I notice they are not here. They are trying to damage the reputation of the Police Department. Personally, I don't care. We support you; we're going to do our due diligence when it comes to any type of investigations coming in front of us, and we're going to do what we feel is the right thing to do for our community because we are representatives of that community. I want you to tell your people, and I want to let the citizenry know that we'll do what we need to do. We felt we did the right thing and I stand by my decision. I wouldn't change a word of what I thought, what I felt, what I read, led me and indicated me to make that decision. I'm happy with it and I'm good with it. Commissioners Sweeney and Collins concurred.

Commissioner Sweeney would like to see the officers get a unit citation in their file. The Commissioners discussed the subject of awards relative to the Police budget.

Commissioner BonTempo MOVED to reinstitute a Commendation Committee staffed by Union personnel to award/reward personnel for doing commendable work within the community; SECONDED by Commissioners Butler and Wright. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Commissioner Collins read the following statement for the record:

I want to address the news article that was on last week. What started out as an anonymous letter sent by, my guess, a disgruntled current or former employee, falsely put this department under scrutiny with its half-truths. First to address the earlier event regarding the firing of the weapon, to begin with, there is no Police report, incident report or even a witness to the event. The Officer, through his own remorse, reported it himself. Did he make a serious mistake stemming from inexperience and bad judgment? Absolutely. But this Officer had the integrity to step forward and admit his fault to something that no one would ever have found out about. Did we take it seriously? Absolutely. We as a Commission launched a full investigation. We interviewed coworkers as well as supervisors, and all came back with the same response: Yes, it was wrong. Yes, he made a serious mistake. But all believed he would learn from it and become an excellent Officer. He underwent a fitness-for-duty exam by a trained, outside professional, who also came up with same answer. He was then suspended for 30 days, an extra year added to his probation, and he was retrained in various skills, which brings us to the second incident.

What the news left out, the arrestee in this incident, that he was a known suspect with 17 arrests and currently had felony warrants for him for domestic violence. He was found intoxicated, causing a scene in the middle of the day on Campbell Avenue, right in front by City Hall. He was taken into custody and when he was brought back to the station, refused to get out of the car, screamed at the two Officers to shoot him, and screamed, "I have AIDS," and spit in the Officer's face. As the Officer was walking him to the lockup, the suspect again yelled that he had AIDS, and at that point leaned forward to try to bite the Officer's arm. The Officer pulled back, and the suspect went down, at which point he started banging his own head into the floor. Three separate independent experts on Police training and self-defense all agreed that this was not a leg sweep or any other illegal maneuver. A three-month investigation ensued, again with multiple interviews of fellow Officers and supervisors, and the same message was consistent: "If I'm going through a door, I want him with me." Or a quote from a supervisor, "I wish I had a whole squad like him." He was cleared in Internal Affairs Investigation on all these charges.

Here are some facts to the same people on social media who claim crime is rampant in our City. This officer in the last two years has handled 2,924 calls; 914 motor vehicle stops; with 113 tickets written, and 53 stops resulting in criminal arrests, total criminal arrests are 90 including both misdemeanor and felony, including drug, weapon and assaults. This Officer received several positive performance notices for his proactive tactics and with all these arrests and stops, not one civilian complaint could I find.

As a Board, we take every accusation and incident extremely seriously, and we painstakingly investigate, investigate, investigate, and never rush to judgment, either positive or negative. I urge the public to do the same and not rush to judgment over a three-minute news clip that tells ¼ of the story, at best. As a Board, we've supported this Officer in the past, we support him now, as well as the rest of our Officers today.



Corporation Counsel stated, once the Board makes a decision, you get support from the other side as well. We back the Officer and we support him, and most of what you've read was provided to both media outlets. It was just omitted.

**10. EXECUTIVE SESSION – removed from agenda.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

At approximately 7:45 p.m., Commissioner Sweeney MOVED to adjourn;  
SECONDED by Commissioner Butler. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION  
PASSED unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Patricia M. Bruder  
Temporary Secretary