

City of West Haven, CT
Board of Police Commissioners

2023 APR -6 PM 1:10 Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday, April 4th, 2023

Raymond C. Collins III
The regular meeting of the West Haven Board of Police Commissioners was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Raymond Collins III at West Haven Police Headquarters, 200 Sawmill Road. All those present, rose and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Attendance

Raymond Collins III, <i>Chairman</i>	Present
Paul E. Butler, <i>Vice-Chairman</i>	Present
John M. Carrano, <i>Commissioner</i>	Present
Christopher Suggs, <i>Commissioner</i>	Present
Deborah B. Wright, <i>Pension Board Chair and Commissioner</i>	Present
Joseph Perno, <i>Chief of Police</i>	Present
Carl Flemmig, <i>Deputy Chief</i>	Present

Agenda

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

1. Minutes

Commissioner Carrano MOVED to accept the previous meeting minutes from Tuesday, March 7th, 2023; SECONDED by Commissioner Butler. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Public Input

Prior to beginning public input, Chairman Collins explained that based on past practices during awards, promotions, or retirements, the public portion would be limited to items only on the agenda. He stated that any other comments could wait for the next meeting, or the commissioners could be contacted via email or in writing.

Captain Joseph Romano congratulated Sergeant D'Amato and Officer Riehl on their promotions. He commented that Lieutenant Kleinknecht's retirement comes after 20 years of service to the department and he wished him the best in his new position.

Chairman Collins asked three times if any person from the public wished to speak. There being none, he declared the public portion closed.

3. Communications

3.1 Traffic Mgt Report – February, 2023.

3.2 Attendance Report – February, 2023.

4. Report of the Chief – No Report

5. Report of the Deputy Chief

Deputy Chief Flemmig offered the following report:

“With tonight’s two departures and two anticipated hirings we will be staffed at 110 Officers. We are minus 6 Officers at POSTC, 2 Officers on FTO, 1 Sergeant and 5 Officers out on Injured/Light Duty, and 1 Officer at K9 School, which leaves us a total of 95 available Officers.

We have two offices graduating POSTC on April 5th, 2023. The Ceremony is at 1400 hours in Choate’s auditorium.

Tonight’s anticipated two new hires will start at POSTC on Thursday, April 6th, 2023.

We have two seats for Milford’s Academy starting on May 19th, 2023 and we have two applicants to possibly fill those seats.”

Commissioner Wright asked if the 95 total available officers include the 2 officers that are graduating tomorrow. Deputy Chief Flemmig answered that the 2 officers are not included in that count.

6. Report of the Committees – No Report

7. Old Business - None

8. New Business

8.1 Retirement – Lt. Scott Kleinknecht (effective April 7th, 2023).

Deputy Chief Flemmig offered the following remarks:

“Lieutenant Scott Kleinknecht began his law enforcement career with the West Haven Police Department on October 4, 2002 and was assigned as the Shift Commander on A Squad where he would oversee the daily operations of his shift and coordinate and direct those under his command to successfully reach departmental goals and accomplish assigned objectives.

Furthermore, he was an instrumental part in updating and establishing our current Use of Force curriculum and has served as a Use of Force instructor as well as being a key member of our new Use of Force review board. His guidance and presence in this capacity will be missed and the Department will find it difficult to fill the gap he leaves.

Lt. Kleinknecht was highly respected by the rank and file and throughout his career he consistently demonstrated a high level of professionalism and commitment to duty, which

always reflected positively upon our agency's mission and goals. His leadership, experience and knowledge was a great asset to our agency and we will not forget the positive impact he has had on us.

Scott, I want to express my deep appreciation to you for your support, leadership and dedicated service to the West Haven Police Department and the citizens of our community. I wish you and your family continued success and remind you to stay safe and vigilant as you oversee the well-being of your new community."

Commissioner Butler MOVED to accept Lt. Kleinknecht's retirement, effective April 7th, 2023; SECONDED by Commissioner Suggs. Motion carried unanimously.

8.2 Resignation – Ofc. Mathew Longobardi (effective April 17th, 2023).

Deputy Chief Flemmig offered the following remarks:

"I want to express my appreciation to Ofc. Mathew Longobardi for his three years of dedicated service to the West Haven Police Department and the citizens of our community. I wish him well and reminded him to stay safe and vigilant as he serves the citizens of his new community."

Commissioner Butler MOVED to accept Ofc. Longobardi's resignation, effective April 17th, 2023; SECONDED by Commissioner Wright. Motion carried unanimously.

8.3 Promotion – Sgt. Joseph D'Amato (effective April 10th, 2023).

Deputy Chief Flemmig offered the following remarks:

"Sergeant Joseph D'Amato has been a member of the West Haven Police Department for approximately 14 years. He is currently assigned as the Traffic Unit Sergeant where he has consistently gone above and beyond in his job duties, taking on additional responsibilities and delivering outstanding results. His commitment, perseverance and outstanding performance have made him a valuable asset to our agency.

Sergeant D'Amato is well liked by the rank and file and with his new role, he will be entrusted with new responsibilities that will challenge him and help him grow both professionally and personally. I am confident that he will rise to the occasion and continue to exceed expectations.

As a Shift Commander I am confident he will have a positive influence on those under his command and his hard work and dedication will be greatly appreciated by the Patrol Division Captain, Chief Perno, and I.

Joe your promotion is a testament to your unwavering commitment to excellence and it is well-deserved. I want to extend my heartfelt congratulations to you and Chief Perno and I look forward to working with you in your new capacity."

Chief Perno also congratulated Sergeant D'Amato and his family on the promotion, and expressed how he feels fortunate to have witnessed his journey through the police department. He emphasized the work Sergeant D'Amato has done in the Traffic Division and the enthusiasm he has. He expressed that he is looking forward to work alongside him.

Commissioner Butler MOVED to accept Sergeant D'Amato's promotion, effective April 10th, 2023; SECONDED by Commissioner Wright. Motion carried unanimously.

8.4 Promotion – Ofc. Joseph Riehl (effective April 10th, 2023).

Deputy Chief Flemmig offered the following remarks:

“Officer Joseph Riehl has been a member of the West Haven Police Department for approximately seven years. He has encountered many difficult situations and challenges, all of which he has handled with grace and resiliency. His attention to detail, ability to think on his feet, and unwavering commitment to the performance of his duties have immeasurable benefitted the people he serves and the citizens of our community.

He is a hard worker who takes pride in his job and often serves as a mentor to the junior officers working alongside him in Patrol, offering guidance and advice to assist them in the performance of their duties. He is well liked and respected by both the rank and file, and his demeanor paired with his experience and job knowledge will make him an excellent supervisor, who will get the best out of his subordinates.

Officer Riehl has been a member of the Street Crime Unit, Auto Theft Task Force, Shore Patrol and is currently assigned to the Patrol Division and is a member of our Department's Special Response Team. The experiences and job knowledge he obtained in these assignments will serve him well in this next phase of his career, as a Patrol Sergeant.

Joe your promotion is a testament to your unwavering commitment to duty, and it is well deserved. I want to congratulate you and your family on your promotion and Chief Perno and I look forward to working with you in your new capacity.”

Chief Perno also congratulated Officer Riehl on his promotion. He explained that Officer Riehl has a special gift that makes him a great police officer. Chief Perno expressed that he feels thrilled and honored that Riehl represents an officer of the City of West Haven. He remarked that the hard work and dedication that both Officer Riehl and Sergeant D'Amato express in their willingness to be in law enforcement is heartwarming and inspirational to him.

Commissioner Butler MOVED to accept Ofc. Joseph Riehl's promotion, effective April 10th, 2023; SECONDED by Commissioner Wright. Motion carried unanimously.

8.5 Action on Police Applicant Interviews (start date of April 5th, 2023).

Chairman Collins tabled Item 8.5 to Executive Session.

9. Pension Board – No Report

10. Commissioners Report – No Report

11. Executive Session

Commissioner Butler MOVED to enter Executive Session to discuss the following:

- 11.1 Street Crime Report – February 2023
- 11.2 Exit Interview Ofc. Mathew Longobardi
- 11.3 Police Applicant Interviews

Motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Carrano. Motion carried unanimously.

The Commissioners entered Executive Session at 7:27 PM.

12. Return to Regular Session/Adjournment

At 8:15 PM, the Commissioners returned to regular session and adjourned by a motion from Commissioner Butler; SECONDED by Commissioner Carrano. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Briana Hojo
Recording Clerk