

City of West Haven, CT
Board of Police Commissioners
 Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday, August 3, 2021

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Patricia O'Sullivan
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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>	Absent
Deborah B. Wright, <i>Pension Board Chair and Commissioner</i>	Present
Joseph Perno, <i>Chief of Police</i>	Present
Carl Flemming, <i>Deputy Chief</i>	Present

Agenda

Commissioner Wright introduced item 9.1 to the pension portion of the agenda that formalized the approval for Master Patrol Officer Costanzo's disability. She also introduced item 9.2 to the agenda regarding a report from David Moran. Commissioner Carrano MOVED to add the items to the agenda; SECONDED by Commissioner Butler. Motion carried unanimously.

Chief Perno MOVED to accept the agenda as amended; SECONDED by Commissioner Carrano. Motion carried unanimously.

1. Minutes for Approval

Commissioner Butler MOVED to accept the minutes as presented; SECONDED by Commissioner Wright. Motion passed with an abstention from Commissioner Carrano.

Before continuing, Chairman Collins thanked Commissioner Sweeney on his years of dedicated service to the department. He also welcomed Commissioner Carrano to the board and commented on how his skills and experience will be a great asset to the department.

2. Public Input

Prior to beginning the public portion, 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.

Walter Casey extended his congratulations towards Commissioner Carrano on his appointment to the board and commented on how his good law enforcement background would help him be successful in his position. He recognized Commissioner Sweeney for all his contributions to the department and recalled the times him and Commissioner Sweeney spent together. He also wished luck to Officer Robert Crowther following his retirement from the department.

Killian Gruber from 114 Morse Avenue addressed the board regarding WestFest. He explained that he is the chair of the Mayor's Advisory Commission, and at the event, they would like to host a 50/50 raffle. He requested that the \$75 fee be waived because of the value that the raffle brings to the city.

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

The following monthly reports:

- 3.1 Letter of Appreciation – Ofc. David Rivera
- 3.2 Letter of Appreciation – Ofc. Ahmed Arnold
- 3.3 Animal Control Report – June 2021
- 3.4 Attendance Report – June 2021
- 3.5 Investigative Services Report – June 2021
- 3.6 Support Services Report – June 2021
- 3.7 Traffic Division Report – June 2021
- 3.8 Training Division Report – June 2021
- 3.9 K/9 Report Sgt. S. Bloom/K9 Ike – June 2021

4. Report of the Chief

Chief Perno stated that he has the contracts for the building camera and body cameras. He thanked Attorney Lee Tiernan for his help in obtaining them.

5. Report of the Deputy Chief – No Report
6. Report of the Committees – No Report
7. Old Business – None

8. New Business

8.1 Life Saving Awards – Sgt. Jeremy Meurice, Ofc. Jeffrey Nielsen, Ofc. Brandon Butler, MPO Louis Matteo, Ofc. Jeffrey Knuth, Ofc. Christina Parillo, Sgt. Jonathan Healey, Ofc. Joseph Riehl

Deputy Flemming presented the awards and offered the following remarks:

Sgt. Jonathan Healey

“While patrolling the boardwalk Sgt. Jonathan Healey observed a male run and jump into the water, then disappear from sight. Sgt. Healey went down to the shoreline and observed the male floating face down in the water. Sgt. Healey immediately entered the water and dragged the male to shore. Realizing the male was not breathing and had no pulse, Sgt. Healey performed CPR until the male began breathing again on his own. The male was then transported to the hospital and recovered fully.

Sgt. Jonathan Healey, in recognition of your alertness and quick action in this emergency situation, we are proud to present you with this Life Saving Award. Your initiative and dedication in the preservation of a human life is an inspiration to your brother and sister officers, as well as the citizens of our community.”

Ofc. Joseph Riehl

“While on patrol Ofc. Joseph Riehl came across a serious motor vehicle accident which left a vehicle with significant damage and smoking heavily from a fire. Upon exiting his vehicle Ofc. Riehl realized the smoking vehicle was occupied with an unresponsive operator. Ofc. Riehl attempted to open the vehicle door but was unable to do so, due to the extensive damage. He then reached in through the door window, cut the seatbelt and then pulled the unconscious operator out of the vehicle and dragged him to safety. As a result of his actions Ofc. Riehl had to be treated at the hospital for smoke inhalation.”

“Ofc. Joseph Riehl, in recognition of your determination and courage in the face of significant danger we are proud to present you with this Life Saving Award. Your quick response and dedication in the preservation of a human life is an inspiration to your brother and sister officers, as well as the citizens of our community.”

Ofc. Jeffrey Knuth and Ofc. Christina Parillo

“Ofc. Jeffrey Knuth and Christina Parillo were dispatched to a complaint of a distressed swimmer in the water by the Veteran’s Memorial. Upon his arrival Ofc. Knuth quickly observed the distressed male swimmer approximately 100 yards from shore, struggling to keep his head above water. Ofc. Knuth entered the water and swam to the male and assisted in keeping him afloat, to prevent him from drowning. Ofc. Knuth then began pulling the male towards the safety of shore while keeping the male’s head above water. Ofc. Parillo upon her arrival immediately

entered the water and aided Ofc. Knuth in rescuing the distressed swimmer. Together they were able to safely get the male to shore.

Ofc. Jeffrey Knuth and Christina Parillo, in recognition of your courage and determination in the face of significant danger we are proud to present you with this Life Saving Award. Your initiative and dedication in the preservation of a human life is an inspiration to your brother and sister officers, as well as the citizens of our community.”

Sgt. Jeremy Meurice, Ofc. Jeffrey Nielsen, and Ofc. Brandon Butler

“Sgt. Jeremy Meurice, Ofc. Jeffrey Nielson and Ofc. Brandon Butler were dispatched to the area of 105 Knox St on several 911 calls of a disturbance with loud yelling. Upon their arrival they located an apartment where they could hear a female inside screaming and glass breaking. With no answer at the door and the potential for violence occurring inside, they forced entry into the apartment. Once inside they located a female victim on the floor who had been severely beaten, she was bleeding profusely, and there was blunt force trauma to her head and face that resulted in her eyes swelling shut. Ofc. Butler immediately evacuated the female from the apartment for her safety and to get her medical aid, while Sgt. Meurice and Nielson searched the apartment for other victims and the assailant. As they entered the dining room area they located an unconscious male victim laying in a pool of blood with severe lacerations and extreme blunt force trauma to his face and head. Standing over the male was the assailant and after a brief standoff they were able to take him into custody and get the male victim medical attention. Both victims were transported to the hospital with life threatening injuries but they would eventually recover. The assailant was arrested without incident and charged with Attempted Murder.

Sgt. Jeremy Meurice, Ofc. Jeffrey Nielson and Ofc. Brandon Butler, in recognition of your quick response, and courageous actions during a dangerous situation we are proud to present you all with this Life Saving Award. Your initiative and dedication in the apprehension of a violent assailant and the preservation of two lives is an inspiration to your brother and sister officers, as well as the citizens of our community.”

Ofc. Louis Matteo

“While working in the Police Department Cell Block, Ofc. Louis Matteo was in the process of booking a male prisoner who was located in the holding cell. During the interview process the male prisoner laid down on the bench and became unresponsive. Ofc. Matteo walked over to the male and realized he had stopped breathing and had no pulse. Ofc. Matteo called for medical assistance and began CPR. Shortly after the male began breathing again and regained consciousness. He was then treated by the West Haven Fire Rescue and transported to the hospital.

Ofc. Louis Matteo, in recognition of your attention to detail and decisive action by providing medical attention to someone suffering a serious medical emergency, which resulted in the preservation of a human life, we are proud to present you with this Life Saving Award. Your initiative and dedication are an inspiration to your brother and sister officers, as well as the citizens of our community.”

Chief Perno added that they had wanted to present the Life Saving Awards a long time ago, but as a result of the pandemic and other events, it had been delayed. He explained that it was a long time coming. He also stated how proud he was to have Ofc. Nielson back from deployment to the U.S. Army.

Commissioner Wright MOVED for a 5-minute recess; SECONDED by Deputy Chief Flemming. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting resumed at 7:34 PM.

8.2 Resignation – Officer Robert Crowther

Deputy Chief Flemming stated that it would be effective July 5th.

Chief Perno MOVED to accept the resignation; SECONDED by Commissioner Carrano. Motion carried unanimously.

8.3 Resignation – Officer Jay Kaufman

Deputy Chief Flemming stated that it would be effective August 10th.

Deputy Chief Flemming also offered the following remarks about Officer Robert Crowther and Officer Jay Kaufman:

“I would like to thank both Officers Robert Crowther and Jay Kaufman for their service to the West Haven Police Department and the citizens of our community. Ofc. Crowther came to us after serving over 25 years with the New Haven Police Department and 14 years with the Woodbridge PD. Ofc. Kaufman came to us after serving 25 years with the Branford PD. Both were highly respected Field Training Officers who shared their knowledge and 64 years of combined police experience with our new officers. They were liked and respected by the rank and file and their commitment to our agency and community will be missed.

Congratulations Gentlemen on your well-earned retirement, we wish you and your families happiness as you begin this next chapter in your lives.”

Commissioner Butler MOVED to accept the resignation; SECONDED by Commissioner Wright. Motion carried unanimously.

8.4 WestFest – September 18 & 19, 2021

Commissioner Wright MOVED to accept the proposal for WestFest and waive the fee for the 50/50 raffle brought up during public input; SECONDED by Commissioner Carrano. Motion carried unanimously.

8.5 Block Party – Hawthorne St/Connecticut Avenue 8/28/2021

Chief Perno MOVED to accept the details of the Block Party; SECONDED by Commissioner Wright. Motion carried unanimously.

9. Pension Board

9.1 Formalizing the approval of MPO Costanzo's disability

Chief Perno MOVED to formalize the approval of MPO Costanzo's disability from last month; SECONDED by Commissioner Carrano. Motion carried unanimously.

9.2 Report from David Moran

David Moran from the Raymond James financial service firm gave an update on the funds for the fiscal year. He also congratulated Commissioner Butler on his new term and Commissioner Carrano on his appointment to the board.

Commissioner Wright mentioned that she and Mr. Moran at least once a year meet to go through the allocations and diversifications of everything going on so that she is comfortable with the information he is presenting and the decisions that he makes. She also thanked Mr. Moran and his staff for their prudence regarding the fund and for notifying and including the board about everything that goes on with any updates.

10. Commissioners Report

Commissioner Wright offered her commendations towards Officer Rivera and Officer Arnold, and she extended her appreciation towards those on the agenda and the recipients of the Life Saving Awards.

11. Executive Session

Chief Perno MOVED to enter Executive Session to discuss the following monthly reports:

- 11.1 Street Crime Report -- May 2021
- 11.2 Street Crime Report -- June 2021
- 11.3 Special Victims & Firearms Report -- June 2021

Motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Wright. Motion carried unanimously.

12. Return to Regular Session/Adjournment

At 8:00 PM the Commissioners returned to regular session and adjourned by a motion from Chief Perno; SECONDED by Commissioner Wright. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Briana Hojo, Recording Clerk