



EAST HAVEN DEPARTMENT OF POLICE SERVICES

471 NORTH HIGH STREET • EAST HAVEN, CONNECTICUT 06512

Mayor Joseph A. Carfora

Honorable Board of
Police Commissioners

HONORABLE BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS
MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 26, 2023 AT 7:00 PM
471 NORTH HIGH STREET
EAST HAVEN, CT

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairman Dominic Balletto (presiding/via telephone), Vice Chairman Joseph DiSilvestro, Commissioner Paul Carbo, Commissioner Dianne Romans, Commissioner Barbara Barbuio

ALSO PRESENT: Chief Edward Lennon, Deputy Chief Patrick Tracy, Michael Luzzi, Esq., Clerk Marsha Maldonado, Michelle Benivegna

Chairman Balletto called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Moment of Silence
3. Roll Call – Clerk Maldonado; all present – quorum obtained

For the record, this is a full, in-person meeting and Chairman Balletto is calling in to the meeting which is permissible pursuant to §163b of the Governor's legislation allowing Boards/Commissions to actively participate in meetings via electronic means. To be clear, this is not a virtual meeting.

4. Announcement(s)
5. Consider and act upon the approval of the Special Meeting minutes of June 13, 2023 and July 10, 2023
Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to accept and approve the Special Meeting minutes of June 13, 2023 and July 10, 2023, as received; seconded by Commissioner Romans. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.
6. Consider and act upon the approval of the Monthly Reports (June, July, August and September 2023)
Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to accept and approve the monthly reports as received; seconded by Commissioner Romans. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.
7. Consider and act upon Committee Reports & Recommendations
Traffic & Public Safety Committee will be addressed under Correspondence Received and Old Business as appropriate.
8. Public Comment

9. Correspondence Received/Sent

- a. Randy Vegas (10 Charnes Drive), received via email from Kelly Smith (Mayor's Office), dated April 10, 2023 – Mr. Vegas is very upset about the amount of dump trucks using Charnes Drive as a cut-through despite posted NO THRU TRUCKS signage.

We have been working on this issue since the spring of 2023 to determine if this was previously approved by CTDOT – initially, it appears as though it has not; we would need to draft a formal request to CTDOT.

Deputy Chief Tracy recommends deferment to the Traffic & Public Safety Committee (T&PS Committee) to allow us proper time to make a final recommendation.

Chairman Balletto deferred to the T&PS Committee. So moved.

- b. Jane Bigler (Burr Street/Gerrish Avenue), received via email dated June 17, 2023 – Request for speed bumps on Gerrish Avenue from Overbrook School to Tyler Street as it is often used as a raceway for motorcycles, cars, dirt bikes, ATVs. Neighbors would also encourage more patrolling with the general increase in crime, shootings, and stabbings.

DC Tracy recommends deferment to the T&PS Committee to allow time to conduct a speed study in that area to make a proper determination.

Chairman Balletto deferred to T&PS Committee. So moved.

- c. Elizabeth Rivard (Laura Lane/Charter Oak), received via email from Jordan Voght, CT DOT, dated July 19, 2023 – Request for increased traffic enforcement, specifically addressing a one-way section of Charter Oak Avenue, and/or signs/speed signs, etc. She and neighbors are upset about drivers on Laura Lane and Charter Oak Avenue speeding well over the speed limit and ignoring traffic laws.

DC Tracy advised the Board that the Traffic Unit supervisor spoke with Ms. Rivard and the unit has been deployed to the area on several occasions to conduct traffic enforcement; there have been approximately 20 more motor vehicle traffic stops since this correspondence. Our Traffic Maintenance conducted a separate assessment and installed an additional DO NOT ENTER sign on the end of the Charter Oak Avenue one-way section. Between our enforcement and the additional signage, this should improve. Recommendation: No further action needs to be taken at this time.

- d. Jamie Torello Jones (659 Bradley Street), received via email dated August 8, 2023 – Request for traffic enforcement, stop signs and speed bumps on Bradley and Laurel streets.

DC Tracy commented that there is an extensive history of speeding complaints stemming from Bradley and Laurel Streets – this is a highly-monitored area; as a result, we have conducted numerous speed studies. In 2019, we conducted a traffic study very close to this residence and found that the 85th percentile average speed is 16 MPH which is below the posted 25 MPH speed limit. Looking at the statistics in the last year, 8% of all traffic enforcement in Town has been on Bradley and Laurel streets – we have dedicated considerable resources toward this area and will continue to monitor it. We can conduct another speed study to see if there have been any changes to this data. Recommendation: No further action needs to be taken at this time.

- e. John Lanno (76 Crest Avenue), received via U.S. mail postmarked August 11, 2023 – Request for temporary electronic speed limit sign to conduct data assessment and install two (2) speed bumps between 54 Crest Avenue and 86 Crest Avenue. There is also an overgrowth of plant life obstructing the speed limit signs.

Clerk Maldonado notified Public Works about the vegetation overgrowth.

Deputy Chief Tracy stated that we are currently conducting a speed study; therefore, he recommends deferment to the T&PS Committee to present the results at the next meeting.

Chairman Balletto deferred to T&PS Committee. So moved.

- f. Lorena Venegas (73 George Street), received via email dated September 2, 2023 – Request for a review of the corner of Wilkenda and Coe Avenue for safety and traffic calming. She states that making a left or right turn from Wilkenda onto Coe Avenue is higher risk than other intersections in the same area.

As a reminder, this issue has come before the Board several times dating back to the fall of 2021.

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro moves to address this under Old Business.

Chairman Balletto also mentioned that Town Councilperson Karen Martin approached him to reconsider this request and take another look at this area.

- g. Michelle Benivegna, Director of Administration & Management and Director of Economic Development (Mayor's Office), received via email September 8, 2023 – New Business, 12.a.
- h. Maria Melendez (154 Strong Street), received via email dated September 20, 2023 – Request for speed bumps and repair of the sidewalk in front of her residence.

Clerk Maldonado notified Public Works about the sidewalk for their review.

DC Tracy surveyed the area between 100 and 200 Strong Street for any accident history – there were two (2) speed-related incidents within the last three (3) years (no serious injury/fatality): one (1) destruction to a mailbox and one (1) stolen vehicle crash on a resident's lawn. Further, we had previously conducted a speed study on the other end of Strong Street which determined the 85th percentile average speed was 15.89 MPH which is well below the posted 25 MPH speed limit. Recommendation: No further action needs to be taken at this time.

- i. Aimee Lambert (Jardin Drive), received via email dated September 21, 2023 – Regarding one-way section of Thompson Street where it goes in a circle around an island. Within the last month, Ms. Lambert was nearly hit head-on twice between Thompson Street and Bennett Road by a wrong-way driver. When approaching Bennett Road, the hill obstructs the view. The intersection of Thompson Street and Cortina Road is also dangerous for pedestrians.

DC Tracy commented that at some point in time, the roadway was repaved on Thompson Street south of where there is an island between Bennett/Cortina/Thompson, and the yellow dividing line was carried far up the road in the direction of the roadway which is steering drivers in the wrong direction. Traffic Maintenance has already installed some additional ONE-WAY signs and will also look into covering a portion of the yellow line to direct motorists in the proper direction. Recommendation: Defer to T&PS for an update at the next meeting.

Chairman Balletto deferred to T&PS Committee. So moved.

- j. State of Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) – **State Project No. 0173-055**, dated August 28, 2023 – Town Notification: The CTDOT has initiated a project to evaluate and recalculate yellow and red change intervals for existing municipally owned traffic control signals, provide new timing tables, and have a state contractor implement any changes at no cost to the municipality. A total of 619 District 3 signals are included in the project as a result of locations submitted for inclusion by District 3 municipalities.
 - k. State of Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) – **State Project No. 0171-0520**, dated August 30, 2023 – Project Authorization Letter: On April 23, 2014, the CTDOT and the Town of East Haven entered into a Master Municipal Agreement for a construction project to install horizontal alignment warning signs at curves on locally owned and maintained roads. The new warning signs will have yellow retro-reflective sheeting and yellow retro-reflective strips installed on the sign posts of all signs installed along the length of the curve. Upon completion of the construction project, the Municipality shall assume full responsibility for all maintenance, repairs, and replacement of the signs and other applicable items constructed within the project limits.
 - l. Mayor Joseph Carfora, dated September 26, 2023 – New Business, 12.f.
10. Department Updates (Chief Lennon)
- a. Personnel Matters/Injured Employees
 - i. One (1) sworn personnel on light duty.
 - ii. Three (3) police officer and one (1) Records Attendant vacancies – New Business, 12.d. and 12.e.
 - b. Overtime

Consistent for this time of year as we come out of the summer months. We have also conducted extra proactive patrols to combat some crime issues in the center of Town over the last several months. Overtime should begin trending downward as we move into the colder months.
 - c. Awards & Commendations

Officer Joseph DiNatale received the MADD Award for Enforcement of Alcohol and Drugged Driving at the Annual MADD Law Enforcement Recognition Luncheon held on September 15, 2023 at Mohegan Sun.
 - d. Noteworthy News
 - i. For the second consecutive year, EHPD has won the annual **Battle of Badges Charity Softball Game** against the EHPD to keep the trophy at police headquarters for another year.
 - ii. EHPD has successfully acquired our 4-year national CALEA reaccreditation.

At the request of Chairman Balletto, Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to table Old Business to address New Business, 12.a.; seconded by Commissioner Romans. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

New Business, 12.a. Michelle Benivegna, Director of Administration & Management and Director of Economic Development – Discussion pertaining to parking signs by the Lobster Shack

Ms. Benivegna is making a request on behalf of the Lobster Shack located at 3 Cosey Beach Avenue to change out three (3) permit parking only signs to 2-hour parking signs directly outside of the restaurant. The Lobster

Shack has expressed a hardship due to the shortage of street parking as patrons are hesitant about parking in the permit-only spots and therefore leave rather than park. Since the Sandpiper has the benefit of utilizing the Town parking lot across from their establishment, it would only be fair to extend an accommodation to the Lobster Shack who have put great effort into expanding their business year-round.

Chief Lennon has surveyed the area and does not foresee any issues with granting this request. We could easily switch out the signs.

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to approve changing the three (3) permit parking only to 2-hour parking signs [between specific hours]; seconded by Commissioners Romans and Barbuito. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to proceed with Old Business; seconded by Commissioner Romans. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

II. Old Business

a. Lorena Venegas (73 George Street) – as noted above:

- i. Wilkenda/Coe – Vice Chairman DiSilvestro reminded the Board that this request has been addressed before pursuant to the Greenway Trail. Upon receipt of this current correspondence, he drove the area, taking left and right turns out of every street on that side of the road, and did not experience any difficulty.

Chief Lennon, referencing traffic statistics, shared that in a 10-year period there have been ten (10) crashes from 10 Coe Avenue to 129 Coe Avenue – none were serious injury crashes or involved pedestrians; one (1) was a DUI so that can be removed from the data. He does not feel that the data supports the addition of another crosswalk which could create a hazard to pedestrians as there are already sufficient crosswalks in that area; Vice Chairman DiSilvestro agrees. Lastly, the Greenway Trail project was recently completed which required the sidewalk to be reconfigured for ADA compliance.

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro does not believe there is anything further for the Board to consider; Commissioners Roman and Barbuito agree. Therefore, he moves to take no action; seconded by Commissioner Romans. Chairman Balletto would prefer to vote it up or down. Attorney Luzzi thought the motion was fine as is and stated that in fundamental fairness to the Board, it has been evaluated and that should be reflected in the motion. Further, based on the information provided by the Chief who has evaluated the situation, the Board has acted and is comfortable with the action previously taken so vote the matter down. After persistent debate over the wording of the motion, Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a final motion to vote the request down; seconded by Commissioner Romans. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

From the Special Meeting of June 13, 2023:

- ii. The left turn signal at the traffic light located on the corner of Dodge and Hemingway Avenue – DC Tracy reports that the intersection has been evaluated and we are in agreeance that the left turn arrow is only up for a very brief period of time – only a couple of cars can get through; therefore, he thinks it is appropriate that the CTDOT evaluate this further and adjust the timing as they see fit. Recommendation: Draft a letter to the CTDOT as previously stated.

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to draft a letter to CTDOT requesting a review of this intersection based on the request; seconded by Commissioner Barbuito. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

- b. Councilwoman Samantha Parlato – Request for a traffic signal at the intersection of Thompson Avenue and Tyler Street.

DC Tracy reviewed the motor vehicle accident history at this Town-owned 4-way intersection controlled by stop signs and a flashing red light in all directions. The request is for a full traffic signal. The UCONN repository and in-house data for the last three (3) years showed four (4) accidents in the intersection – none were fatalities. Any costs to adjust or upgrade the signal would be on the Town. The latest traffic signal technology monitors the traffic versus an in-ground loop system, so they are very costly. Based on the statistics, it does not seem like it would be an appropriate investment to change to a full traffic signal as most intersections in Town do not even have the flashing red signal. Recommendation: No further action to be taken.

Chief Lennon also reminded the Board of a previous request close to this intersection, whereby a crosswalk was installed at 200 Tyler Street.

Based upon the DC's report, the statistics, and the fact that there is an existing 4-way flashing red light, Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to take no action; seconded by Commissioners Romans and Carbo. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

- c. Carmelo Lazu (Joan Court) – Request for speed bump or “Children at Play” signage to address speeding.

DC Tracy updated the Board that the Traffic Unit Supervisor spoke with the resident and the unit was deployed to this area on ten (10) separate occasions with no violations. The second request for “Children at Play” sign does not require BOPC approval and can easily be installed.

- d. State Representative Joseph Zullo on behalf of Courtney Magnotti (82 Kimberly Avenue) – Request for barriers in front of her property to prevent damage from motor vehicle accidents.

DC Tracy spoke with the Superintendent of Public Works, Charlie Coyle, who confirmed that the barriers in place at the intersection of Kimberly Avenue/High Street were installed by CTDOT. Recommendation: Draft a letter to CTDOT on behalf of the resident to evaluate the situation.

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to draft a letter to CTDOT for evaluation; seconded by Commissioner Romans. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

12. New Business

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to reorder New Business by starting with 12.f.; seconded by Commissioner Romans. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

- f. Consideration of proposed amended Employment Agreement between Deputy Chief Patrick Tracy and the Town of East Haven

On behalf of Mayor Carfora, Attorney Luzzi summarized Mayor Carfora's letter [attached herewith] who speaks very highly of the leadership of this department and recommends the reappointment. He respectfully requests the Board accept the amended employment agreement and grant the extension.

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to approve the Employment Agreement as provided for the extension of Deputy Chief Tracy; seconded by Commissioners Romans, Barbuito and Carbo. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Balletto congratulated the Deputy Chief noting his great service to the Department and East Haven.

- b. Discussion and approval of revised policies 105.11 (Uniforms and Appearance), 208.5 (Internal Affairs and Complaint Intake), 214.3 (Brady Disclosures), 409.7 (Motor Vehicle Stops), 412.5 (Arrests), 444.3 (Evidence Collection & Preservation), 502.6 (Securing Arrestees in Station)

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to approve revised policy 105.11 (Uniforms and Appearance) effective October 15, 2023; seconded by Commissioner Roman. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to approve revised policy 208.5 (Internal Affairs and Complaint Intake) effective October 15, 2023; seconded by Commissioner Romans. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to approve revised policy 214.3 (Brady Disclosures) effective October 15, 2023; seconded by Commissioner Barbuito. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to approve revised policy 409.7 (Motor Vehicle Stops) effective October 15, 2023; seconded by Commissioner Barbuito. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to approve revised policy 412.5 (Arrests) effective October 15, 2023; seconded by Commissioner Barbuito. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to approve revised policy 444.3 (Evidence Collection & Preservation) effective October 15, 2023; seconded by Commissioners Romans and Barbuito. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to approve revised policy 502.6 (Securing Arrestees in Station) effective October 15, 2023; seconded by Commissioners Romans and Barbuito. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

- c. Discussion and approval of updated School Resource Officer (SRO) Program Memorandum of Agreement between East Haven Police Department (EHPD) and East Haven Public Schools (EHPS)

Chief Lennon explained that the state legislature passed Public Act 23167 which included verbiage to define the role of school resource officers. As an agency, we already have a policy, however, pursuant to the state statute it must now be in the MOA upon passage. On the advice of Attorney Luzzi, along with the Superintendent's office, we decided that the most effective action would be to put the draft before each respective Board so that when policy changes are made it does not affect the MOA. The EHBOE has already approved the MOA and upon BOPC approval, we will fully execute the agreement.

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to approve the updated Memorandum of Agreement effective upon full execution; seconded by Commissioner Barbuito. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

- d. Interview and consideration of candidate for hiring Police Officer – Grade C (Executive Session)

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to conduct the candidate interview in executive session with the Board, Chief Lennon, and Deputy Chief Tracy present; seconded by Commissioner Romans. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously. Executive session commenced at 8:03 PM.

Candidate Chris Cameron went into executive session at 8:05 PM and exited at 8:15 PM.

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to conclude executive session; seconded by Commission Romans. Public session resumed at 8:19 PM.

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to offer the position of Grade C Police Officer to Chris Cameron pending successfully completing the minimum hiring requirements of the CT POST regulations, including the successful passing of a medical examination, drug screening, and a physical fitness test with an effective hire date of January 2, 2024; seconded by Commissioners Romans and Barbuio. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

e. Interview and consideration of candidates for hiring the Records Clerk vacancy (Executive Session)

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to conduct the candidate interviews in executive session with the Board, Chief Lennon, and Deputy Chief Tracy present; seconded by Commissioner Barbuio. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously. Executive session commenced at 8:21 PM.

Candidate Elizabeth Christian went into executive session at 8:25 PM and exited at 8:32 PM.

Candidate Steven Dingle went into executive session at 8:33 PM and exited at 8:40 PM.

Candidate Noelle Talmon went into executive session at 8:44 PM and exited at 8:52 PM.

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to conclude executive session; seconded by Commission Romans. Public session resumed at 8:58 PM.

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro thanked all the candidates for interviewing; having only one (1) position available, he made a motion to offer the position of Records Attendant to Elizabeth Christian with a start date of October 2, 2023, or a date to be determined between Chief Lennon and Ms. Christian; seconded by Commissioner Romans. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

13. Adjournment

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Commissioner Carbo. All in favor. Chairman Balletto adjourned the meeting at 8:59 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marsha M. Maldonado
Clerk to the Honorable Board of Police Commissioners

Attachment – Letter from Mayor Joseph A. Carfora



Town of
EAST HAVEN
CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
Joseph A. Carfora
Mayor

September 26, 2023

Dear Members of the East Haven Board of Police Commissioners,

I am writing to you with the utmost enthusiasm and confidence to wholeheartedly endorse the re-appointment of Assistant Chief Pat Tracy. Deputy Chief Tracy's impeccable record of service to our community is well-documented.

During the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, Deputy Chief Tracy, alongside Chief Lennon, demonstrated remarkable leadership. Their collective efforts were nothing short of exemplary, as they navigated our department through uncharted waters with poise and dedication. Their ability to adapt swiftly to changing circumstances and ensure the safety of our community members and officers alike was commendable.

Deputy Chief Tracy's influence on the direction of the East Haven Police Department cannot be overstated. His commitment to fostering a culture of professionalism, accountability, and community engagement within the force has had a profound and lasting impact. Under the leadership of our Chiefs, we have witnessed significant progress in our efforts to build trust and strengthen relationships between our officers and the residents they serve.

Furthermore, Deputy Chief Tracy's contributory role in implementing the ALICE training program is a testament to a forward-thinking approach to public safety. This critical training equips our officers with the necessary tools to respond effectively to active threats, ensuring the safety of our employees and our community members. Together our Chiefs have been dedicated to enhancing officer training and providing them with cutting-edge resources.

Along with Chief Lennon, Deputy Chief Tracy has played a pivotal role in the expansion of our police force. Their dedication to the recruitment and hiring of more officers reflects a proactive approach to bolstering our department's capabilities. Furthermore, they have both advocated for the allocation of resources to equip our public safety personnel with state-of-the-art equipment. This commitment, along with all members of our department, ensures the well-being of our officers and their ability to serve our community safely.

Pat Tracy has demonstrated leadership, a commitment to public safety, and ability to navigate complex challenges make him worthy of re-appointment. I have the utmost confidence that he will continue to serve our community and this board with honor, integrity, and dedication.

I kindly request the East Haven Board of Police Commissioners to consider my strong recommendation for Deputy Chief Pat Tracy's re-appointment.

Thank you,

Joseph Carfora