



# 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

JANUARY 30, 2024 AT 7:00 PM

471 NORTH HIGH STREET  
EAST HAVEN, CT

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Chairman Dominic Balletto (presiding), Vice Chairman Joseph DiSilvestro, Commissioner Paul Carbo, Commissioner Dianne Romans

**ALSO PRESENT:** Chief Edward Lennon, Clerk Marsha Maldonado, Alberta Vitale, Town Councilpersons, Citizens

Chairman Balletto called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Moment of Silence
3. Roll Call - Clerk Maldonado; four (4) present - quorum obtained
4. Announcement(s)
5. Consider and act upon the approval of the Monthly Meeting minutes of December 19, 2023  
Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to accept and approve the Monthly Meeting minutes of December 19, 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 (January 2024)  
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
8. Public Comment (02:10)
  - a. Alberta Vitale, Registrar of Voters (7 Park Place) - Ms. Vitale had sent an email to the Police Commission, the Administration, and various others requesting a panic button be installed at her desk. She is here to request that her request be seriously considered and to present her reasons. Her office, located outside of the Finance Department [in the lower level of Town Hall], has a panic button that she cannot reach as it is installed at the clerk's

desk (who works part-time, 20 hours a week) but she cannot get to the clerk's desk if someone enters the office (she presented photos of the office configuration to the Board). She further noted that the Department of Homeland Security Threat Assessment indicates that during the 2024 election cycle, election infrastructure, processes and personnel were under threat (she distributed excerpts of the Assessment to the Board), and therefore she feels her request is reasonable and she hopes it would be given consideration. Her final point was that she was not part of the ALICE training - she was told that an email invitation was sent (she presented the email to the Board); she indicating that her department was not listed in the email - her clerk just happened to be in the building the day of the training (the building was shut down therefore she participated in the training) but Ms. Vitale maintains that she was not invited to the ALICE training.

Chairman Balletto will take everything under consideration.

b. Several Members of Town Council (06:36):

Susan Stacey (82 Forbes Place), District 4 - Councilwoman Stacey and her fellow Council people have decided that they would like to talk with the Board regarding "the traffic, the speeding, the accidents that are occurring in Town. It's just been like, well you know, it's been nuts because you know, you get the reports but it just seems that it's just getting worse and worse. Every day with the speeding on my street which is Forbes Place which we all know, I mean, thank god that disco stop sign is there - it's stopped it a little bit but it's everywhere. It's North High Street, it's the speeding and vandalism of the cars, and it's just been going on and on and on. And a lot of people have been chit-chatting on Facebook, on the pages and it was just like we all decided at once that it was just time to come and talk to you folks about the safety of our residents and if there were any plans as far as speed bumps or what can we do to stop the speeding, what can we do to stop the vandalism, what can we do to help you guys do more?"

Karen Martin (15 Oak Grove Road), District 2 - "Yes, same thing. We're all here from the Town Council because when I was out knocking on doors during campaign season, I can't tell you how many people asked me the exact same things: What is going on, and why are people not being stopped going through the stop signs, why are people speeding? And you know, we've brought up and have talked before about the narrow streets down in Momauguin, people are parking on both sides of the street - god forbid you needed to get emergency vehicles through, you guys tell me that you can get them through but and then god forbid a kid goes darting out in between the cars especially with the speeding going on and nobody stopping at the stop signs. I can tell you myself, as I was walking around, people don't stop at those stop signs and there's no enforcement - where is the enforcement? It just seems to be lacking. What can we do to make it better? Again, I've been coming here for years talking to you about this and it's the same thing, it never gets any better. So that's why we're all here, we were all hearing the same thing while out knocking from people in every neighborhood."

Ann Pennington (18 Joshua Trail), District 1 - "Like she said, Jeff and I are District One, and I live off Laurel Street. Between those three stop signs and the fourth going onto Bradley and Laurel, the one on View Terrace, I was coming out of the Irish Club the other

day and there was no traffic coming my way so let me stop and sit here for a while, and like six out of ten cars coming to us, there was no stopping at that stop sign. At that Bradley intersection, we spoke with a gentleman in depth about wanting to do something at that corner. And, I still don't understand why other, like you go down Front Street or you go down Woodward Avenue, or Long Wharf and they have the bumps. Certain sections, I mean, it's crazy in the morning when I leave to go to work, I mean I got stopped one morning - Officer Trinh, years ago, and it was a newer stop sign and I live there, and I'm thinking that blinking light on the bottom of View Terrace might attract people because you have no ... is there a sign on that side saying like an "oncoming stop" or "stop ahead" coming from Bradley and four corners? It's such a crazy area there and people use that as a cut-through. That's the majority of everything that we heard was people not stopping at stop signs and speeding. I mean, if we could be of assistance somehow. Yeah, it's frustrating, especially with little kids and now that ..."

K. Martin: It is. And the crosswalk at Wilkenda.

S. Stacey: And the crosswalks, right.

Unknown: And what streets are the kids have to walk, are the walkers?

S. Stacey: Well apparently, a couple of weeks ago with the big snow storm that we had, I was enlightened that the kids in my neighborhood some of them are walkers so that means that they need to walk over the North High Street bridge to go to the Academy and the middle school, and I don't even ride my bike over that way - it's just crazy - the entrance and the exits off the highway, people don't stop so are they going to stop for these little kids? I know that we have someone at the entrance to the middle school for crosswalking but no one on the bridge and that's dangerous, you know. It's just crazy.

And, I just want to say also that there's two of our Town Council people that are not here tonight, they have other meetings that they're attending - it's Lou Pacelli and Marianne Cesare - and they also feel the same way that we do that we need to have more safety here going on and also Lou talked about our police cars that are sometimes parked on the side of the street - they must be doing their work or whatever they're doing, I don't know - it looks like they could be out somewhere else instead of sitting in the Our Lady of Pompeii parking lot - I'm just sharing Lou's sentiments because I have no problem with that if they're sitting there doing their paperwork, then that's what they need to do, their cars are their offices. So, we just need to ...

Guy Bimonte (53 Eddon Drive), District 5 (14:55) - While walking for the election, the main concern in his area is Florence Street - it's a very narrow street with parking on both sides. Several years ago, a little girl was hit there and passed away. The residents would like to make that road into a one-way street. He is inquiring what the procedure would be for such a request. Chairman Balletto advised Councilman Bimonte that he should submit the request in writing to the Board and the Traffic & Public Safety Committee would review; Commissioner Carbo suggested a petition signed by the residents on the street attached to the request would be helpful.

K. Martin: Would that work as well for speed bumps? A petition?

Beth Capotorto (73 Elm Street), District 1 - Wondering about state roads - how does that work? As far as policing on Hemingway, are they allowed to give tickets? Vice Chairman DiSilvestro explained that signs, lights, and things of that nature, speed bumps on a state road, those requests need to go to the state; enforcement and violations fall under the purview of the Police Department.

A. Pennington: So, then what is it then the issue with the speed bumps?

Chairman Balletto: We'll get there.

Stacy Gravino: I just wanted to ask concerning the request of Alberta Vitale, who would make that final determination?

Chairman Balletto: We believe it doesn't fall under our purview. I think we will discuss it and then we will have to refer it back to the management and the control of the building is under the Mayor's Office or staff. I have to that find out.

Gentleman: What's the panic button connected to? Is it connected here to the police station? Any idea where it's connected to? Chief Lennon, "No, it's a monitoring company."

Chairman Balletto (20:19): Speed bumps clearly cost and the problem with allocating for speed bumps falls back on all of you on the Town Council; we don't have the money clearly in the budget for speed bumps or even to discuss speed bumps at the price. Same thing with some of the lights - the lights are outrageously expensive; we continuously try to repair and get parts/replacements for the lights that we have as opposed to getting new lights. The state obviously has a lot more money to do their lights on the state roads. Clearly on our budget, we are very tight, we do not have the allocation or the money to do it. That would have to go back to the Council for a discussion about where the money will come from - the money is not in the budget. We certainly don't have it here at the police department. We don't live high as you can see from this building - we appreciate what we have but most of it goes to labor and staff, and putting people on the street.

Two is, I've had the same issue with people around town, and the Chief and I have discussed this several months ago - yes, they are doing their reports, they have to do them on-shift so that we don't pay overtime trying to keep it under control, so yes they do them on location. The reason they would be at Our Lady of Pompeii is that is a perfect spot to deter people from doing things they shouldn't be doing on Route 80.

Part of it does fall under enforcement but one of the biggest issues is people in town, it's us - no one stops at stop signs, people just don't pay attention. He goes on to cite several observations from his office on High Street. We are much safer here than in some of the surrounding towns.

Chief Lennon (23:51): Nationally, traffic crashes and traffic fatalities are the highest they have ever been. A quick look at the data, we have 50+ miles of roadway in this town - even though it's a small town, there are a lot of roadways. Today, the Traffic Unit was at Hemingway and Dodge for most of the morning into the afternoon. Last year we did 2,100+ motor vehicle stops (just because you don't see us on the South end of Town doesn't mean we aren't in the North end of Town, and vice versa). In 2022, we were almost exactly the same at 2,200 stops, and we average in the 2,000-2,300 range with the exception of the

Covid-19 year. Unfortunately, problems shift from one side of Town to the other and we cannot be in every place at the exact same time. Contrary to people saying that the cops aren't there - they are, they're just in different spots at different times. We get complaints constantly and the Board has dealt with Laurel Street a lot - we go out there to do enforcement and then we'll move the officer to another location, and complaints will begin all over again. We do have officers in these locations frequently. In regard to peoples' driving behavior, it's inexplicable and it's a major issue - we all see it every day.

Chairman Balletto (25:33): Part of the issue is the nature of the Town; we've seen other stuff creeping around and into town. Frontage Road is a nightmare with robberies escaping onto the highway, there are issues on Route 80, problems on Laurel Street - it's other stuff that our officers are defending and it's a lot different than it used to be. With the bodies we have, we are spread very thin. The Chief works very hard trying to address some of these issues and we will keep doing it. We see your issues, we recognize it, we all live in the same town.

Unknown: Is there anything that the public can do?

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro (27:07): To that point, the only thing that you [guys] could do is seek an increase in the budget. We have a police force that is appropriate for the size town that we have. So, if we're on Laurel, we can't have somebody over on Coe. The speeding - the Chief does his speeding studies, and people will say they're doing 60 MPH on Laurel Street, and they're within 5-7 miles of the actual posted speed limit; you'll get that one person every so often that makes it look like everybody's drag racing, but the actual data doesn't show that. But you [guys] don't see that like we do because we get the numbers because we get the complaints, and we follow through with that. And, we've gone over this as long as I've been appointed here, it's the money part of it - if we can put enforcement here and enforcement there, we need a bigger department so that means taxes go up because we have other people that we have to pay for and then all of the training, and everything that falls under that. Not just saying that it is only a money thing but that's what the biggest thing is. If you can get an increase for the budget, I think we tend to hire the best and the brightest so if we can hire more to do that, then that's great but it's a "robbing Peter to pay Paul" type thing because we're enforcing here but we can't enforce there - like the Chief said, it's a cyclical thing. So, if you can increase it, then maybe we have more manpower. It's not a punting type of answer - we're trying to do it in the areas that we can when we can. We cannot self-police everybody else, unless somebody runs through a stop sign and they get t-boned because they're in the wrong, that might wake them up. At this point in time, we're doing everything we can with what we have - like I said, we have the best and brightest but there's only so much they can do with the manpower that we have.

Chairman Balletto (29:52): We take things very seriously. Like Wilkenda, we've all looked it, we've all gone down there. Without spending serious money on lights, brightness and letting people know they have to stop there, someone's going to get hit and killed just by the way the traffic goes up and down that street because people do not stop and will not stop. In good conscience, we cannot approve a crosswalk and risk someone's safety. We recently declined a request for a crosswalk before the North High Street bridge at the intersection of Sidney and High, there is no doubt that if we put a crosswalk there

someone would cross lanes to bypass traffic and hit someone in the crosswalk. There are certain areas that it is just not safe to have a crosswalk.

Then there are speed bumps - everyone is obsessed with speed bumps. The problem with speed bumps is that nobody stops - they slow down, then speed up to the next one, and the next one. So, they really don't make sense in some regard, some places say they do work, some say they don't. The speed circles have had major accidents - cars have been totaled because people hit them at full speed because they don't see them and go right through the middle. The holograms don't really work either. We feel your pain, we see it every day, we've discussed it, it's aggravating - it's a sign of the times and changes in the Town, and it's only going to get tougher for us.

K. Martin: How about cameras on stop lights? Not necessarily on the stop signs.

Chairman Balletto: We also talked about that. The prices are ridiculous unless we could get a federal grant which is now hard to come by. The harder part is monitoring them, and the cost is exorbitant. Commissioner Carbo also noted that the cost of bringing someone to court, and our staff would also have to go to court over traffic tickets which is crazy, but we understand that we have to do something.

K. Martin: Just one last question for the Chief, the blinking stop light on the corner of Bradford and Coe, what do you think? Has that improved the stopping or do you think now that people are used to it, they don't care anymore?

Chief Lennon: I think people finally got used to it. Plus, it's a four-way intersection too and everyone knows it's only on one side of it. I think people coming from out of town do [observe the stop]. Most of the vehicles we stop over there are people who live in that neighborhood, so they know it's there, they know what the story is with it.

K. Martin: So, you don't think it would be an advantage to have one on View Terrace?

A. Pennington: Something. Even if it's signage prior to getting there; coming from Bradley around the curve and then there's the stop sign.

Chairman Balletto asked for the request in writing for the committee to review.

A. Pennington: Question though. Can traffic control be anyone other than a police officer?

Chief Lennon: In regards to issuing a ticket, no, other than parking tickets.

Chairman Balletto, again, asked that all requests be submitted in writing to Clerk Maldonado who will distribute accordingly.

Unknown (36:52): You're doing a great job. The men and woman in the streets. Thank you for all you do. It does not go unnoticed.

## 9. Correspondence Received/Sent

### a. Frank Bzdyra (157 Short Beach Road), dated January 18, 2024

Request for the Traffic & Public Safety Committee to take action to review the area (Route 142 at the intersection of Stone Pillar Road and the entrance of Farm River State Park) for

the installation of a pedestrian crosswalk for public safety and then make such a recommendation to the Connecticut Department of Transportation for the installment.

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to defer to the Traffic & Public Safety Committee for review; seconded by Commissioner Romans. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

- b. Alphonse D'Auria - via EHPD website email dated January 30, 2024

Request for "NO PARKING NEAR CORNER" sign on Tyler Street Extension. Chairman Balletto deferred to the Traffic & Public Safety Committee for review. So moved.

- c. Via email dated January 26, 2024 - Traffic plan for 71 South Shore Drive, East Haven, CT will be addressed under New Business, 12.a.

#### 10. Department Updates (Chief Lennon)

- a. Personnel Matters/Injured Employees

- i. Two (2) police officer vacancies. Interviewing one (1) candidate tonight [*one (1) candidate was previously interviewed by the Board*].

- ii. One (1) officer on light duty.

- b. Overtime

Higher due to proactive enforcement and a rash of light duty assignments.

- c. Awards & Commendations

- d. Noteworthy News

The K9 Pasta Dinner Fundraiser hosted by the Old Stone Church raised approximately \$2,500.

#### 11. Old Business

#### 12. New Business

- a. Review and consider traffic plan for 71 South Shore Drive, East Haven, CT

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to acknowledge receipt of request and table to next month's meeting; seconded by Commissioner Romans. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

- b. Discussion and approval of revised policies 105.12 (Uniforms and Appearance), 302.10 (Weapons and Weapon Storage), 404.9 (Use of Force), 414.8 (Motorized Pursuits), 439.3 (Juvenile Review Board)

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to approve revised policy 105.12 (Uniforms and Appearance) effective February 15, 2024; 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 302.10 (Weapons and Weapon Storage) effective February 15, 2024; 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 404.9 (Use of Force) effective February 15, 2024; 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 414.8 (Motorized Pursuits) effective February 15, 2024; 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 439.3 (Juvenile Review Board) effective February 15, 2024; seconded by Commissioner Romans. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

c. 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 and Chief Lennon present; seconded by Commissioner Romans. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously. Executive session commenced at 7:46 PM.

Candidate Jayden Salgado went into executive session at 7:59 PM and exited at 8:09 PM.

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to conclude executive session; seconded by Commissioner Romans. Public session resumed at 8:16 PM.

Before proceeding, Chairman Balletto informed Clerk Maldonado that the decision regarding the matter brought before the Board by Ms. Vitale (Public Comment, 8.a.) is to send a letter to the appropriate person in the Mayor's Office notifying them that we were made aware of the issues, and we are referring it to who we believe is the appropriate authority to handle it.

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to hire Jayden Salgado as a probationary Grade C Police Officer recruit of the East Haven Police Department with a start date of April 1, 2024. This offer is contingent that Jayden Salgado meet all Connecticut police officer hiring requirements as set forth in Connecticut General Statutes 7-294d and the regulations of the Connecticut Police Officer Standards and Training Council (CT POST), to include the successful completion of a physical fitness test, medical exam, and drug screening.

Lastly, if the April 5, 2024 start date of the Police Academy is changed, then the Chief of Police is authorized to change the hire/start date of April 1, 2024 to be within two (2) weeks of the new start date of the Police Academy; seconded by Commissioner Romans. All in favor. No one opposed or abstained. Motion carried unanimously.

Congratulations and welcome aboard.

13. Adjournment

Vice Chairman DiSilvestro made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Commissioner Romans.  
All in favor. Chairman Balletto adjourned the meeting at 8:19 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marsha M. Maldonado

Clerk to the Honorable Board of Police Commissioners