

**REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
MARCH 8, 2011
BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT**

PRESENT: Commissioners Richard Epstein, Chairman; Theodore Brooks;
Richard Buckholz; Cathy Graves; and Evelise Ribeiro (6:04 p.m.)

Assistant Chief Tobin Hensgen: Department of Police Services
Captain Denise Blanchard: Department of Police Services
Captain Patrick Redding: Department of Police Services

Michael Wolak: Corporation Counsel

OPEN SESSION

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m., Richard Epstein, Chairman, presiding.

DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Discussion and Approval of Regular Session Minutes of February 8, 2011

- ** **Commissioner Brooks moved approval of the minutes of February 8, 2011**
- ** **Commissioner Graves seconded**
- Voting for: Commissioners Brooks, Buckholz, Epstein and Graves**
- ** **Motion passed (4-0-0)**

CHIEF'S REPORT

Assistant Chief Tobin Hensgen

Assistant Chief Hensgen stated that the Department was preparing for the St. Patrick's Day Parade that weekend. The Department would place about two hundred and fifty posters throughout the city emphasizing enforcement of the law banning open containers of alcohol on the streets and sidewalks.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS REPORT

(Pending matters in Executive Session)

RETIREMENTS

John Magoveny, age annuity, eff. 2/7/11
Michelle Clark, age annuity, eff. 3/5/11
Robin Higgins, age annuity, eff. 3/5/11

EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE REPORT

There was no Efficiency Committee Report.

CIVILIAN REVIEW BOARD LIAISON REPORT

There was no Civilian Review Board Liaison Report.

OTHER BUSINESS

* Officer Jason McConnell has retired due to his inability to obtain certification, POST regulations, eff. 3/8/11

* **Patrol Operations Report**
Captain Patrick Redding

Captain Patrick Redding stated that he took over Patrol about six weeks ago. He found that the Patrol Division was running very well. The Patrol Division has great success on a day-to-day operation. There are approximately a hundred to a hundred and twenty-five officers coming around the clock. There are twenty sergeants that work the three shifts. In the course of this past week, a .45 Magnum was recovered in addition to an outstanding robbery arrest at Popeyes and an arrest that led to West Haven. Captain Redding indicated that he's very blessed with very strong shift supervisors and proactive sergeants. However, there are not enough sergeants. Captain Redding expressed his hope for the sergeant's and lieutenant's tests in order to backfill some of the Patrol Division's supervisors.

Captain Redding stated that it was tough losing sixteen young, enthusiastic officers who loved being in New Haven. The impact on Patrol has been the loss of the opportunity to shift bodies to different shifts that Patrol may need. There are about twenty-three officers now to move around to different shifts who are not able to bid yet. Overall, Patrol's manpower is still very good. Some officers were brought to B Squad, C Squad and D Squad. At this point the Patrol Division will put out a bid coming up this March going through May as it takes about two and half months, three months for a bid to work through the process. The numbers will then be like it was six months ago bid. There are going to be sixty C Squad officers, seventy-plus B Squad officers, and sixty-plus officers working days. There are going to be twenty-one supervisors. Captain Redding stated that is the number he would like to see creep up to sergeants.

Overall, from twelve months ago we are at a number we had and Patrol is still running very well. Patrol is a vibrant part of what the Department does every single day. Patrol is in very good shape.

In order to curtail overtime, Captain Redding, stated that he reduced the number of people that could authorize overtime. Instead of fifteen to twenty people authorizing it, he is the only one that can authorize it. So the Patrol Division has gone from an average of about a hundred and twenty to anywhere from sixty-five to seventy thousand a week. Patrol was ready to have a full force at the St. Patrick's Day Parade and ready to handle the big crowd. There are going to be well over a hundred officers which would inevitably generate a lot of overtime. The St. Patrick's Day Committee would absorb

quite a bit of the expense but not all. The clear message is that it is not carte blanche overtime.

Captain Redding addressed Commissioner Epstein's inquiry regarding absenteeism by stating that Lieutenant Daddio had collected information before he took over Patrol. He is having the shift supervisors identify the worst habitual people. He further stated that because he is new to the Patrol Division he would like to give everyone an opportunity to start afresh. However, if anyone had booked off a series in the last six months, their direct supervisors will speak to them reiterating the Department's policy, get it in writing and put it in their files. Shift supervisors are now mandated to monitor this. He further stated that if the pattern of behavior continues, a discussion would ensue with him, the shift supervisor and the person. Those with very bad booking-off records for the last two, three years will be addressed by their shift supervisor. If the pattern of behavior continues, the person would be referred to the Chief.

Commissioner Epstein commented on the issue of Community Policing. Captain Redding stated that Community Policing is alive and well in New Haven because the power base are the ten district managers who are dedicated to deal with hands-on issues by the local politicians. They keep track of crime on a day-to-day basis. They are able to furnish him and the administration with information and make requests.

(Mayor John DeStefano, Jr., swore in Commissioner Evelise Ribeiro at 6:13 p.m.)

Captain Redding further stated the Division's continuing efforts to ensure that officers still have that ability to communicate with their community members in the proper way. The frontline supervisors are continually working with officers. He said that his Division work so well with other agencies. The Patrol Division is working closely with Internal Affairs to address any red flags.

Commissioner Ribeiro inquired about morale at the Patrol Division in light of the loss of sixteen officers to which Captain Redding responded by saying that police work has not been affected but there is some angst. People are concerned about what the new contract is going to be which puts undue pressure on people. Morale is nothing to be concerned about but should be turned around by things like promotions to assure the officers that the career path they have chosen still has opportunities.

Commissioner Epstein inquired about training regarding a citizen's right to use electronic devices to video record. Assistant Chief Hensgen stated there was a recent General Order that was disseminated which has to do with the First and Fourth Amendments. Citizens have an absolute right to use cell phones to video record or photograph as long the act does not interfere with police work or safety. There was training at the Academy for the in-service people for the most recent class. It will be presented during line-ups to reinforce it. Captain Redding added that the Department will start a pilot program with an in-car camera cruiser.

Assistant Chief Hensgen further stated that the Department did a tremendous job in arresting suspected serial rapist, Mr. Aaron Thomas. He also expressed the diligent efforts on the part of the Department to stop Mr. Thomas from committing suicide and getting him medical care.

Corporation Counsel Michael Wolak clarified the Board of Police Commissioners' function related to General Orders.

APPROVAL TO AMEND THE AGENDA TO ADD APPROVAL OF GENERAL ORDER 311

Approval to amend the agenda to add the approval of General Order 311, Citizen's Right to Video

- ** Commissioner Brooks moved to amend the agenda to add the approval of General Order 311**
- ** Commissioner Graves seconded**
- Voting for: Commissioners Brooks, Buckholz, Epstein, Graves and Ribeiro**
- ** Motion passed (5-0-0)**

APPROVAL OF GENERAL ORDER 311

Approval of General Order 311, Citizen's Right to Video, retroactively effective 2/1/11

- ** Commissioner Ribeiro moved to approve General Order 311, Citizen's Right to Video**
- ** Commissioner Buckholz seconded**
- Voting for: Commissioners Brooks, Buckholz, Epstein, Graves and Ribeiro**
- ** Motion passed (5-0-0)**

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Ribeiro stated that the Department continues to be over budget on overtime as indicated in Captain Redding's report. It is over budget at a hundred and sixteen percent. From December 19th through December 26th, there was a downward trend for overtime for the week. There was a spike in January, January 23rd, due to the snow. The Department has to monitor this for the next few months.

OTHER BUSINESS

Alderman Gerald M. Antunes expressed the fact that the Department is supposed to be in phase of community-based policing which is a labor-intensive project. Therefore, he further expressed, the community is better off with the additional officers to do that function as opposed to additional chiefs; that the Department can be reorganized and restructured in a way that it can operate effectively with fewer assistant chiefs and more line staff. The Department will be more

effective and useful to the community. Time is of the essence because if the laid-off officers take jobs in other locales, some of those locales will require them to sign contracts. If that does happen, then the Department cannot get them back. And eventually the City of New Haven will have to come up with fifty thousand dollars or so per person to recruit, hire and train them. Also, there is an eighteen-month window to do this process and come out with an officer with no experience. The minimal experience the sixteen laid-off officers had of a year to a year and a half would be a lot more useful to the community as experienced officers as opposed to recruits who have to ride with other officers for a period of time.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

**** Commissioner Graves moved to enter Executive Session**
**** Commissioner Buckholz seconded**
Voting for: Commissioners: Brooks, Buckholz, Epstein, Graves and Ribeiro
**** Motion passed (5-0-0)**

The Board entered Executive Session at 6:37 p.m.

**** Commissioner Buckholz moved to exit Executive session.**
**** Commissioner Graves seconded**
Voting for: Commissioners: Brooks, Buckholz, Epstein, Graves and Ribeiro
**** Motion passed (5-0-0)**

The Board exited Executive Session at 7:35 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be Tuesday, April 12, 2011 at 6:00 p.m.

The Board adjourned the Regular Session Meeting at 7:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sotonye Otunba-Payne