

WOODBIDGE BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS

REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES

February 8, 2021

Via ZOOM Platform (Governor Ned Lamont's Executive Order 7B)

Live Streamed – WGATV, Channel 79

YouTube link: <https://youtu.be/Mg6XvM1tIMc>

The Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Police Commissioners/Woodbridge Traffic Authority took place Monday, February 8, 2021 at 6:15 p.m., via ZOOM platform.

- *Chairman Berke called the meeting to order at 6:17 p.m.*

Commissioners and Liaisons Present-

Commissioner Deborah Fried

Commissioner Andrew Esposito, Jr.

Commissioner Stephen Falcigno

Chairman Robert Berke

Joseph Crisco, Board of Selectmen Liaison

Paul Kuriakose, Board of Finance Liaison

Police Administration Present-

Chief Frank Cappiello

Administrative Assistant Janice Innocenzi

APPROVAL of MINUTES:

- B.O.P.C. Special Meeting – January 11, 2021:

The Board voted unanimously (Fried/Esposito) to approve the minutes from the Special Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Police Commissioners/Woodbridge Traffic Authority held on January 11, 2021.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- There were no Public Comments.

REVIEW of REPORTS:

- Financial Report: Chief Cappiello reported that after completing the first seven months of the budget for FY21, we remain on track at 63%.

The Board voted unanimously (Falcigno/Fried) to accept the Financial Report.

- **Criminal Activity Report (January):**

- Burglaries: 1 – A residential garage was broken into and an ATV was stolen.
- Fraud Cases: 6 – Complaints involved forged checks and suspicious calls inquiring about personal information/telephone scams.

- Larcenies: 2 – Power equipment was stolen from a local business. ISU identified a suspect, all stolen items were located, recovered from a pawnshop in New Haven and an arrest was made. In the second incident, items were taken from a residential construction site.
- Larcenies from Motor Vehicles: 6 – All were from unlocked vehicles.
- Missing Persons: 2 – Runaways from a local foster home. We are working with surrounding jurisdictions to locate them.
- Stolen Motor Vehicles: 2
- ISU Activity (January):
 - ISU worked closely with New Haven Police and other surrounding agencies, and as a result, all of our stolen vehicles have been recovered, arrests were made associated with some of those stolen vehicles and for several larcenies/attempted larcenies from vehicles that occurred throughout town at the beginning of January.
 - 9 new cases
 - 19 Fingerprints Processed / 10 Pistol Permit Applications Processed
 - Criminal Arrests:
 - A 34-year-old town resident was arrested for Disorderly Conduct following a road rage incident and altercation that occurred on Racebrook Road.
 - An arrest warrant was served on the operator of a motor vehicle involved in an accident on Amity Road in July. During that incident, two individuals fled from the vehicle. They were located after a search of the area, found to be in possession of PCP, and transported to the hospital for evaluation.
 - A 26-year-old Prospect resident was arrested for DUI, Interfering with Police, and other related motor vehicle charges. The suspect fled the scene of an accident in Orange and our officers observed him operating his vehicle on Ansonia Road. He was found to be intoxicated and scuffled with officers at the scene while being taken into custody.
 - A 46-year-old female was arrested for Disorderly Conduct in connection with a dispute that occurred at a residence in town.
 - A 40-year-old Cheshire resident was arrested for Criminal Violation of Court Issued Protective and Restraining Orders following a dispute at a residence in town.
 - An arrest warrant was served on a juvenile from New Haven in connection with theft from a vehicle, which occurred earlier last month.
- **Motor Vehicle Activity**: Traffic enforcement remains consistent with what was reported last month and has remained consistent throughout the pandemic. We had 19 motor vehicle accidents in January. Patrol performed over 400 traffic radar assignments and over 400 deterrent traffic post assignments. Two DUI arrests were made and there were three Evading Responsibility traffic accidents.

The Board voted unanimously (Fried/Esposito) to accept the Activity Report.

REPORT of the CHIEF of POLICE

- **COVID Update**: As of today, the total number of COVID-19 positive cases in Town is 396, as reported by QVHD. All Police Department employees were given the opportunity to receive the COVID vaccine and many have done so. Over the past few weeks, those who elected to participate received their second doses, the remainder have theirs scheduled in the near future. A few suffered adverse effects, but nothing substantial, and the effects did not last more than 24-36 hours. We are fortunate to have had the opportunity to get the vaccine, and the side effects are surely better than the alternative. The Town recently hosted a COVID vaccination clinic on January 29, 2021 at the Center Gym for residents aged 75 and above. The clinic was conducted in collaboration with Woodbridge Human Services and our local health department, QVHD. They have a tentative date of February 26, 2021 set to host a follow-up clinic to administer the second doses. On February 14, 2021, there will be another COVID testing opportunity at the Center Gymnasium.

The Board voted unanimously (Falcigno/Fried) to accept the Report of the Chief of Police.

PERSONNEL MATTERS:

- **Deputy Chief Job Posting:** The Deputy Chief retired effective January 23, 2021 and the application process and search for his replacement recently started. A copy of the job posting is currently being advertised on the Town website, the CT Police Chiefs Association website, and the CT Police Officers and Standards Council website. The deadline to submit applications is 4:00 p.m. on March 1, 2021.

Chief Cappiello said that in a smaller agency like ours, it is not often that opportunities for advancement arise. We have talented people here and there is significant value to utilizing personnel that already know the community and Department operation, and because of that, I feel strongly that we look to promote from within our current ranks. By filling the position from within, it creates upward movement from the lowest patrolman all the way up and through our supervisors. Moving forward with the process, depending on the applications we receive and the Board's feelings, if for some reason we decide to hire from the outside, I want to recommend that we do some restructuring from within if we can find the financial means to do so. That would reinforce the chain of command and accountability, and give management more flexibility with job assignments. More importantly, it would give our personnel some diversity in their duties and responsibilities, they would be given the opportunity to grow both personally and professionally, and to be groomed for various positions as opportunities arise in the future. In the last several years, the Lieutenant position was eliminated, and we stopped all participation in special assignments. Promotional and advancement opportunities to learn different skills have been limited, so this would be a good opportunity for us to improve on that.

- **Part-Time Temporary Mechanic:** Our mechanic recently underwent a major surgical procedure and will be recuperating over the next several weeks. During his absence, we will be utilizing a temporary, substitute mechanic, on a part-time basis. We have used his services in the past when our mechanic has been unavailable. Both the Finance Director and Public Works Director are on board with the plan and he has been given access and use of the facilities and equipment at the Town's Public Works garage.

BUDGET:

- **Operating Budget – Joint Board Presentation (Update):** Chief Cappiello presented the FY22 Operating Budget to the joint Boards of Selectmen and Finance on January 28, 2021. The next step in the process will be a review and recommendations made by the Board of Selection later this month, and the Board of Finance will continue to meet and ultimately make their final budget recommendations.

Last week, the Finance Director and First Selectman advised all Department Heads that the overall Town budget, as currently proposed by all departments, is higher than what the Boards are looking for. They advised that the Town is faced with minimal growth in the Grand List and revenues, along with associated impacts of the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic. Because of that, increases in the Town budget are not being offset and if it stays where it is, will ultimately result in a raise in taxes. For those reasons, they will be reaching out to various Department Heads to discuss possible ways to further reduce the overall budget.

Chief Cappiello said he believes we were very responsible in preparing our budget. The majority of our budget reflects contractual obligations and the remaining numbers are realistic and represent what we need to pay the bills and maintain efficient Operations. As we move forward in the process, I look forward to working with the Boards of Selectmen and Finance to modify and assist in any way to address the current concerns being expressed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION / ACTION TAKEN, AS APPROPRIATE

The Board voted unanimously (Fried/Falcigno) to move into Executive Session to discuss the draft Dispatch Consultant report. (Liaisons and media were excused, all others invited to stay.)

- Commissioner Desir joined the Executive Session at 7:05 p.m.
- Commissioner Fried left the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

- The Board moved out of Executive Session at 7:20 p.m.
- There were no motions made, no votes taken.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Board voted unanimously (Esposito/Falcigno) to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Police Commissioners at 7:20 p.m. and move directly into the Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Traffic Authority.

Respectfully submitted:
Janice Innocenzi, Administrative Assistant

WOODBIDGE TRAFFIC AUTHORITY

REGULAR MEETING

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- *Chairman Berke called the Traffic Authority portion of the meeting to order at 7:20 p.m.*

Commissioners and Liaisons Present-

Commissioner Deborah Desir

Commissioner Andrew Esposito, Jr.

Commissioner Stephen Falcigno

Chairman Robert Berke

Joseph Crisco, Board of Selectmen Liaison

Paul Kuriakose, Board of Finance Liaison

Police Administration Present-

Chief Frank Cappiello

Administrative Assistant Janice Innocenzi

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- There were no Public Comments.

TRAFFIC MATTERS:

- DOT – Paving Projects: Chief Cappiello reported that the Town has been notified of some upcoming road resurfacing work that the DOT plans to conduct during the upcoming 2021 construction season.

They plan to repave/resurface:

- Amity Road from the intersection of Center Road to the New Haven town line.
- Lucy Street – the entire length from Rte. 63 to Rte. 69.
- Rimmon Road (Rte. 313) from the intersection of Rte. 114 to the Seymour town line. As part of this project, they plan to install centerline rumble strips. The centerline rumble strips are a series of milled grooves installed in the pavement at the center line of the road, which produce sound and vibration intended to alert drivers who have been distracted or impeded by the weather conditions, that they have unintentionally crossed the centerline and leaving the lane. There is no cost to the Town. Chief Cappiello discussed the DOT's plan with Public Works Director Warren Connors and they both agree that the rumble strips are a proven and effective safety countermeasure that reduces accidents.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Board voted unanimously (Falcigno/Esposito) to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Traffic Authority at 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:
Janice Innocenzi, Administrative Assistant

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REVIEW of REPORTS

- Financial Report:

The Board voted unanimously (Falcigno/Fried) to accept the Financial Report.

- Activity Report:

The Board voted unanimously (Fried/Esposito) to accept the Activity Report.

REPORT of the CHIEF of POLICE

The Board voted unanimously (Falcigno/Fried) to accept the Report of the Chief of Police.

PERSONNEL MATTERS

- There were no motions made, no votes taken.

BUDGET

- There were no motions made, no votes taken.

EXECUTIVE SESSION / ACTION TAKEN, AS APPROPRIATE

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Janice Innocenzi, Administrative Assistant

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Janice Innocenzi, Administrative Assistant