

# WOODBIDGE BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS WOODBIDGE TRAFFIC AUTHORITY

## POLICE COMMISSION

### MINUTES

**October 16, 2023**

The Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Police Commissioners/Traffic Authority took place in the Training Room at the Police Department on Monday, October 16, 2023, at 6:15 p.m.

- Chairman Berke called the regular meeting to order at 6:16 p.m.

#### Commissioners Present-

Chairman Robert Berke  
Commissioner Andrew Esposito, Jr.  
Commissioner Deborah Desir  
Commissioner Mica Cardozo  
Commissioner Henry Kopel

#### Police Administration Present-

Chief Frank P. Cappiello  
Deputy Chief Ronald E. Smith, Jr.  
Administrative Assistant Janice Innocenzi

#### APPROVAL of MINUTES:

- B.O.P.C. Regular Meeting – September 18, 2023

*The Board voted (Kopel/Desir) to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Police Commissioners/Woodbridge Traffic Authority held September 18, 2023.*

*Those in Favor: Desir, Berke, Kopel*

*Abstained: Esposito*

*Motion carries.*

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION / ACTION, AS APPROPRIATE:

- Discuss Personnel Matters regarding:
  - Conduct Certified Officer Candidate Interview
  - Hiring

*The Board voted unanimously (Desir/Esposito) to move into Executive Session at 6:17 p.m. to discuss personnel matters to conduct a Certified Officer Candidate interview and discuss hiring. (Commission members, Chief, Deputy Chief, and Administrative Assistant were invited to stay, all others excused.)*

- Commissioner Cardozo joined the Executive Session at 6:23 p.m.
- The Board moved out of Executive Session at 6:34 p.m.
- There were no motions made, no votes taken during Executive Session.

#### ACTION TAKEN ON MATTERS DISCUSSED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION:

*The Board voted (Kopel/Esposito) to extend a conditional offer of employment to Tyren Robinson. The offer to Mr. Robinson includes a Grade B salary, including five vacation days; after completion of one year of service, his pay will move up to Grade A and after completion of one year of service, he will receive ten vacation days. The conditional offer of employment is subject to him passing both a physical and a psychological exam.*

*Those in Favor: Desir, Berke, Esposito, Kopel*

*Recused: Cardozo*

*Motion carries.*

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

- There were no Public Comments.

**REVIEW of REPORTS:**

- **Financial Report:** Currently we are just over three months into the new fiscal year, and we are at 27.7% of our budget used thus far. All of our reflected expenditures at this point directly correlate to our staffing reductions and multiple vacancies we have had to cover throughout the summer, and are currently covering, coupled with new fiscal year start-up contractual related stipends and mandatory operational requirements. As I mentioned last month, the Police Overtime line continues to be significantly impacted, and as of last week was already at 48.2%, but that directly correlates with our diminished staffing levels.

*The Board voted unanimously (Esposito/Desir) to accept the Financial Report.*

- **Activity Report:** Chief Cappiello reported the following -

Criminal Activity Report (September):

- Assault: 1 (A fight between coworkers at a local business.)
- Burglaries: 1 (Forcible residential burglary.)
- Family Disputes: 3
- Fraud Cases: 7 (Check frauds, identity thefts, online scams)
- Fights in Progress: 3
- Gunshots Heard: 2
- Larcenies from Motor Vehicles: 3
- Medical Emergencies: 80
- Mental Health Issues: 5
- Stolen Vehicles: 2

ISU – (Investigative Services Unit):

- New Case Investigations: 11
- Public Fingerprinting Requests: 14
- Background Investigations: 1 (Certified Officer Applicant)
- Pistol Permit Applications Processed & Background Checks Completed: 1

Motor Vehicle Activity Report (Patrol Division):

Deputy Chief Ronald Smith reported the following –

- September: 27 - Accidents  
60 - Motor Vehicle Stops  
324 – Speed Enforcement Assignments  
311 – Deterrent Traffic Patrols

The Speed Trailer was located on North Pease Road and Fairgrounds, North Pease Road and Center Road, and Johnson Road between Ansonia Road and Rimmon Road.

*The Board voted unanimously (Cardozo/Desir) to accept the Activity Report.*

**REPORT of the CHIEF of POLICE**

- **Dispatch Renovation Project (Update):** At their meeting on October 11, the Board of Selectmen officially awarded the construction bid and approved the funding necessary for the renovation of our Dispatch Center. Later this week, it will be brought before the Board of Finance for final approval and following that, we should be on our way to getting the project started.

- **Radio Replacement Project:** As was proposed and funded as a Capital Budget Project for this current fiscal year, I worked with the Finance Director to move forward with the planned replacement of the Department's Motorola hand-held portable radios and in-car mobile radios. The radios have reached their 8-10 year average life expectancy and are no longer supported by Motorola warranty, consequently, making any repairs, when possible, quite prolonged and costly. Our current radios do not have the capability of communicating on all available radio frequencies, which prohibits us from being interoperable with many of the surrounding area police departments. This is a critical necessity, especially at times of crisis and mutual aid scenarios. At their September 13<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Board of Selectmen approved us to move forward with the project. The new radios have since been ordered and once they arrive and are installed, they will not only enhance officer safety and efficiency, but will provide us with "all band" radio frequencies to enable our interoperability among law enforcement and other first responders throughout the region.
- **Highway Safety Grants:** I was informed by the Connecticut Department of Transportation that we were once again selected to participate in, and receive funding for, two Highway Safety Grants, those being the "Distracted Driving High Visibility Enforcement Grant" and the "Click it or Ticket Enforcement Grant." Both grants are 100% fully reimbursable, with no match to be paid by the town. We have several Officers and Sergeants who have expressed interest in participating in the enforcement details. I discussed it with the Finance Director, who gave his approval for both. The Department of Transportation has been provided with our Statement of Interest, and we are waiting for the allocated funding amount. The "Click it or Ticket" enforcement is held in two waves, November-December 2023 and May-June 2024. The "Distracted Driving High Visibility Grant" is scheduled for October 2023, if the funding is awarded in time, with the second phase of that program scheduled for April 2024.

*The Board voted unanimously (Kopel/Desir) to accept the Report of the Chief of Police.*

**PERSONNEL MATTERS:**

- **Extended Absence (Updates):** Currently we have only one employee still out on an extended Workers' Comp related injury since March; a return to work date is yet to be determined.
- **Hiring Status:** Our two Certified Officer Candidates who were offered positions at last month's meeting, have both successfully completed their remaining psychological and medical examination requirements. Officer Testa will be starting his employment with us on October 30, 2023 and Officer Samartino will be starting on November 27, 2023. We have their medical recertification training classes in place and set to begin in December. We hope to have them as part of our minimum staffing levels in January. With tonight's conditional hiring of Mr. Robinson, we have one remaining vacancy to fill.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

*The Board voted unanimously (Kopel/Esposito) to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Police Commissioners at 6:55 p.m. and move directly into the Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Traffic Authority.*

Respectfully submitted:  
Janice Innocenzi, Administrative Assistant

# WOODBRIIDGE BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS WOODBRIIDGE TRAFFIC AUTHORITY

## TRAFFIC AUTHORITY

### MINUTES

**October 16, 2023**

The Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Police Commissioners/Traffic Authority took place in the Training Room at the Police Department on Monday, October 16, 2023, at 6:15 p.m.

#### Commissioners Present-

Chairman Robert Berke  
Commissioner Andrew Esposito, Jr.  
Commissioner Deborah Desir  
Commissioner Mica Cardozo  
Commissioner Henry Kopel

#### Police Administration Present-

Chief Frank P. Cappiello  
Deputy Chief Ronald E. Smith, Jr.  
Administrative Assistant Janice Innocenzi

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- There were no Public Comments.

#### TRAFFIC MATTERS:

- Speeding – Johnson Road / Manville Road: We recently heard from a resident, who on behalf of himself and some of his neighbors, requested that the speed limit on the stretch of Johnson Road between Rimmon and Ansonia Road be lowered from 35 mph to 30 mph. In the recent past and prior to his request, to address concerns expressed by the residents, we have conducted numerous traffic enforcement details in that area, along with the deployment of the Speed Awareness Monitoring Trailer. In response to this most recent request, we conducted three separate traffic speed studies to get a representative sample as to what speed most vehicles are traveling in this area. The Office of the State Traffic Administration (OSTA) sets regulatory speed limits on both local and state roads. In doing this, they take into consideration various road engineering and environmental factors such as road type and surface (curves, hills), location and type of access points (churches, schools, intersections, entrances), existing traffic control devices (signs, control signals), accident history, traffic volume and sight distances. They also utilize a speed analysis to determine the 85<sup>th</sup> Percentile speed, which indicates the speed under which 85% of drivers are traveling at or below. They claim that experience has shown that a posted speed limit near this value is a safe and reasonable speed, barring any road engineering or environmental factors. They also report that studies have shown that just lowering the posted speed limit does not slow people down or change their behavior.

In response to this most recent request for a reduction in the posted speed limit, the three separate traffic speed studies were done to get a representative sample as to what speed most vehicles are traveling at in this area. These speed analysis studies resulted in the following:

June 20, 2023 – June 26, 2023: 85<sup>th</sup> Percentile Speed was 39 mph

July 31, 2023 – August 8, 2023: 85<sup>th</sup> Percentile Speed was 37 mph

Sept. 14, 2023 – Sept. 21, 2023: 85<sup>th</sup> Percentile Speed was 39 mph

The average 85<sup>th</sup> Percentile Speed was 38.33 mph, which indicated that 85% of the vehicles on this portion of Johnson Road were traveling at or below 38.33 mph, which is only 3.33 mph over the posted 35 mph speed limit.

I consulted with our traffic fundamentals representative at UConn's Connecticut Training and Technical Assistance Center to share our findings and get their input. They informed me that the standard industry threshold used nationwide to warrant any speed calming efforts or to consider a change in the posted speed

limit is a minimum of six miles over the 85<sup>th</sup> Percentile, and even with that, it is usually dependent on contributing factors. In this location, the average 85<sup>th</sup> Percentile speed was only 3.33 mph over the posted speed limit. Additionally, there is no significant accident history on that stretch; there were two accidents between 2020 and 2021. Based on this information, the speed data and accident history analysis falls short of supporting a reduction of the current OSTA approved speed limit of 35 mph to 30 mph. I am sure this is most likely not the decision the Johnson Road residents would like to hear, but the data speaks for itself, and it is important that we abide by a standard policy perspective in addressing this and future requests. With that being said, we will continue to take speed enforcement measures on Johnson Road, as we do throughout the entire town, on a regular basis.

- **Intersection of Rte. 313 / Johnson Road:** For years we have been experiencing numerous traffic accidents at the intersection of Rimmon Road and Johnson Road. In doing some research, I found that there have been several traffic studies conducted by the Connecticut Department of Transportation going back as far back as 1993 through 2016. Over the years, as it involves a state highway, the Connecticut Department of Transportation has performed multiple enhancements to the intersection including new signage, updating the overhead flashing beacon control lighting, physically widening the intersection, and most recently they installed a Vehicle Activated Warning System with a remote camera at the intersection. It was the first one of its kind to be installed in Connecticut. Following their last traffic study, the Department of Transportation advised us that the intersection did not meet their standards to be re-engineered into a 4-way stop type intersection because it did not meet the traffic volume, it did not meet their crash frequency and type standard (five motor vehicle accidents of the same type during a one-year period). The main hindrance they found was there was not ample sightline when traveling east on Rimmon Road coming up the hill going toward New Haven. Coupled with their enhancements, we have deployed both our Speed Awareness Monitoring Trailer and performed numerous traffic and radar enforcement details in the area. Despite all of that, the accidents, many of which have been serious, continue to occur at the intersection. For this calendar year alone, there have been 7 crashes at this intersection, 5 of which involved injuries.

Based on that information and with the Board's approval, I plan to formally request on behalf of the Woodbridge Traffic Authority, that the State Traffic Commission conduct another traffic study and revisit their previous studies which indicated safety concerns, in anticipation that they will identify and implement any needed additional traffic controls to increase safety at this location.

***The Board voted unanimously (Cardozo/Desir) to authorize the Chief to request the State Traffic Commission conduct another traffic study and revisit their previous studies of this intersection to increase traffic safety at this location.***

**ADJOURNMENT:**

***The Board voted unanimously (Esposito/Cardozo) to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Traffic Authority at 7:06 pm.***

Respectfully submitted:  
Janice Innocenzi, Administrative Assistant

# WOODBIDGE BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS

## MOTIONS

October 16, 2023

### APPROVAL of MINUTES:

- B.O.P.C. Regular Meeting – September 18, 2023

*The Board voted (Kopel/Desir) to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Police Commissioners/Woodbridge Traffic Authority held September 18, 2023.*

*Those in Favor: Desir, Berke, Kopel*

*Abstained: Esposito*

*Motion carries.*

### EXECUTIVE SESSION / ACTION, AS APPROPRIATE:

- Discuss Personnel Matters regarding:
  - Conduct Certified Officer Candidate Interview
  - Hiring

*The Board voted unanimously (Desir/Esposito) to move into Executive Session at 6:17 p.m. to discuss personnel matters to conduct a Certified Officer Candidate interview and discuss hiring. (Commission members, Chief, Deputy Chief, and Administrative Assistant were invited to stay, all others excused.)*

- Commissioner Cardozo joined the Executive Session at 6:23 p.m.
- The Board moved out of Executive Session at 6:34 p.m.
- There were no motions made, no votes taken during Executive Session.

### ACTION TAKEN ON MATTERS DISCUSSED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION:

*The Board voted (Kopel/Esposito) to extend a conditional offer of employment to Tyren Robinson. The offer to Mr. Robinson includes a Grade B salary, including five vacation days; after completion of one year of service, his pay will move up to Grade A and after completion of one year of service, he will receive ten vacation days. The conditional offer of employment is subject to him passing both a physical and a psychological exam.*

*Those in Favor: Desir, Berke, Esposito, Kopel*

*Recused: Cardozo*

*Motion carries.*

### PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- There were no Public Comments.

### REVIEW of REPORTS:

- FINANCIAL REPORT:

*The Board voted unanimously (Esposito/Desir) to accept the Financial Report.*

- Activity Report:

*The Board voted unanimously (Cardozo/Desir) to accept the Activity Report.*

### REPORT of the CHIEF of POLICE

*The Board voted unanimously (Kopel/Desir) to accept the Report of the Chief of Police.*

**PERSONNEL MATTERS:**

- There were no motions made, no votes taken, during the discussion of Personnel Matters.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

*The Board voted unanimously (Kopel/Esposito) to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Police Commissioners at 6:55 p.m. and move directly into the Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Traffic Authority.*

Respectfully submitted:

Janice Innocenzi, Administrative Assistant

# WOODBRIIDGE TRAFFIC AUTHORITY

## MOTIONS

October 16, 2023

### PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- There were no Public Comments.

### TRAFFIC MATTERS:

- Intersection of Rte. 313 / Johnson Road:

*The Board voted unanimously (Cardozo/Desir) to authorize the Chief to request the State Traffic Commission conduct another traffic study and revisit their previous studies of this intersection to increase traffic safety at this location.*

### ADJOURNMENT:

*The Board voted unanimously (Esposito/Cardozo) to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Traffic Authority at 7:06 pm.*

Respectfully submitted:

Janice Innocenzi, Administrative Assistant