

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF
THE HONORABLE BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS**

TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2024

Members of the public and media, please type in the following link into your web browser to access our YouTube channel where you may view the Bridgeport Board of Police Commissioners meeting:

<https://www.youtube.com/@bridgeportpolice9071/streams>

This meeting was called to order at **6:02 PM**

1. Roll Call of Commissioners: Cruz, Lyons, Farrow, Diaz, Roach

Also in attendance: Lieutenant Stacey Lyons, Lieutenant Adam Rozum, Sergeant Joel Carley, Councilmember Mary McBride-Lee, Councilmember Enida Martinez, Lyle Hassan, Dustin Halapin and John Ortiz.

- a. Pledge of Allegiance – none (no flag on Zoom)
- b. A moment of silence was observed for retired Detective Frank Williams who passed away on December 24, 2023, and retired Sergeant Lynn Holly who passed away on December 28, 2023
- c. On a motion by Commissioner Diaz and seconded by Commissioner Farrow the Board unanimously voted to approve item 1e.

Note: The order for this meeting was completed out of order due to time restrictions for some of those participating.

2. Reports:

- a. **Chief of Police** – Lieutenant Stacey Lyons addressed the Board on behalf of Chief Roderick Porter who could not attend the meeting. Lieutenant Lyons addressed the Board on Project Lifesaver, a bracelet program for people suffering from dementia or Alzheimer's disease. These bracelets can be registered with dispatch and have been promoted through the news and by Sergeant Campo. A potential issue is that it is a voluntary program to register for. Lieutenant Lyons stated that the Chief and the Mayor did meet to begin research into the redlight cameras and their benefits for the City. Lieutenant Lyons stated that the Chief implemented overtime restrictions on those completing administrative duties. Lieutenant Lyons stated that the Chief put into operation a new squad system for patrol, changing it from 8 squads to 4 squads. Chief Porter completed an outside study with the University of New Haven which stated this system will make a small difference in the overtime and ordering now but can potentially make a difference in the coming years. Chief Porter is looking into the future with this system hoping that it will eventually allow the department to be more proactive and implement walking posts. Commissioner Cruz asked for clarification on how the 4 squad system will limit overtime. Lieutenant Lyons explained that having four squads will allow

more officers on a daily basis than stretching the same number of officers over eight squads.

b. Union – None

c. Internal Affairs – Lieutenant Rozum addressed the Board to provide them with an overview of the Office of Internal Affairs’ annual report. Lieutenant Rozum explained that the purpose of the report is to compile data throughout the year and a statistical analysis to identify any patterns, trends, or solutions to prevent officer alleged misconduct. Lieutenant Rozum provided the following statistics for 2023: 269 investigations from Internal Affairs, 111 citizen complaints with a quarter of them being basic police misconduct complaints, for every 1,000 calls for service there was 1 citizen complaint of alleged misconduct, 21 Chief internal investigations initiated, 23 inquiries and 113 background investigations, 13 Barros disciplinary hearings, 5 second step hearings, 19 sustained complaints for all investigations, 380 investigations were closed out, 145 open investigations remaining, a 7.7% increase in in citizen complaints from 2022, a 23% increase in Chief internal investigations from 2022, overall investigations dropped 7% due to less background investigations from 2022. Lieutenant Rozum stated that one pattern found was from the Body Worm Camera policy. Lieutenant Rozum stated that in 2018 there were 11 members in Internal Affairs and currently there are 5, 3 investigative sergeants and one detective. Lieutenant Rozum stated that Internal Affairs investigators continue to be efficient and to train. Lieutenant Rozum stated that the future goals for Internal Affairs are to continue training and to bring in new investigators. Commissioner Cruz asked Lieutenant Rozum to explain the staffing issues in internal affairs. Lieutenant Rozum stated that there will be a promotional exam in 2024 to have more first line supervisors. Lieutenant Rozum clarified that the organizational chart in 2023 had 8 investigative sergeants for internal affairs and that the staffing study is still looking into determining staffing throughout the department. Commissioner Cruz requested Lieutenant Rozum to explain what the 23% increase in internal investigations meant. Lieutenant Rozum stated that it is an investigation that is generated by the Chief of Police and not from a citizen complaint.

d. Clerks Report –

i. Clarification on the tow business discussed in the Regular Board Meeting held on December 19, 2023, under item 3a as Ultimate Automotive 1780 Stratford Ave. A motion by Commissioner Cruz was made and seconded by Commissioner Diaz to add this information to the minutes of December 19, 2023.

3. New Business: A request by Commissioner Roach to go out of order on the agenda due to Councilmember’s needing to attend a Council meeting. There was no objection to this.

a. Councilmember Mary McBride-Lee addressed the Board to state that she was taken aback by another Councilmember’s comments and to show the Police Department and the City of Bridgeport that she and Lyle Hassan stand in solidarity with them. Councilmember McBride -Lee stated that when one is in a position to lead that one has

to be careful about what is said and done and need to show respect. Councilmember McBride-Lee stated that she and Hassan wrote a letter addressing how they felt about the situation. Councilmember McBride-Lee stated she wanted police officers around the state to stand in solidarity with police and states that action will be taken from the Council against the member who made the statement. Council McBride-Lee introduced Lyle Hassan to address the Board.

Hassan stated that what happened with Councilmember Maria Periera disturbed him, as people were coming together in solidarity to end the conflict with the Palestinian and Jewish people. Hassan stated that when Councilmember Periera used the description of thugs and terrorists it incited divisiveness. Hassan stated that Councilmember Pereira was disrespectful by calling Chief Porter a pig and officers' piglets. Hassan stated that he and Councilmember McBride-Lee feel that the behavior is uncalled for, and they are calling for solidarity between the Police Commissioners and Police Departments to come together with citizens and to stand with police officers to condemn this speech. Hasaan stated that they are also calling for Councilmember Periera to resign and if not for the Councilmembers to relieve her of her assignment because the hate speech and language that she had is very disturbing. Hassan stated that they are hoping that everyone can come together to show that they are not going to stand for any bigotry, racism, hatred, and undermining of the police department in the City of Bridgeport. Commissioner Diaz stated he appreciates the Councilmembers speaking to the Board to voice their concerns on this issue. Commissioner Diaz stated he is fond of the police Chief and police force and find it disparaging that someone would use their seat as a representative of the people to use their words to tear down instead of uplift. Commissioner Farrow thanked Councilmember Pastor Lee and Hassan and echoed Commissioner Diaz in support of the Police Department

- b. Councilmember Eneida Martinez addressed the Board about the speed of vehicles around Jettie Tisdale School and the cars that go through the stop sign at the corner of Wilmont and Alex Street. Councilmember Martinez expressed being upset about the process to place speed humps due to the number of kids in the area crossing the street. Councilmember Martinez stated she feels that this area is a school district and needs more than a stop sign. Councilmember Martinez stated that homeowners have come to her and feel that their kids are in danger. Councilmember Martinez urged the Board to look into this issue and not worry about the signatures needed due to the speed. Commissioner Roach stated that the Board did approve speed humps for Wilmont on the condition that the other requirements were met. Commissioner Roach stated that one of the requirements was that a certain percentage of residents in that area would sign a petition stating that they wanted the speed humps. Commissioner Roach stated that once the signature requirement is completed that the City engineers can move ahead. Commissioner Cruz asked about a previous petition that had signatures from church members and Commissioner Roach clarified that the petition must be signed by residents. Commissioner Roach stated that this was the only part of the process that is left to be completed.

- c. Councilmember Matthew McCarthy was unable to join the meeting but wanted to pass along his greetings as a City Council liaison to the Board of Police Commissioners.

On a motion by Commissioner Farrow and seconded by Commissioner Cruz, the Board continued with New Business to complete this part of the agenda.

- d. Dustin Halapin from Mid-Town Autobody addressed the Board about the Regular Board meeting on December 19, 2023. Halapin spoke of the requirements that his stepfather, who started the business, had to fulfil due to not having help to bend or skirt rules. Halapin listed the requirements and fees necessary and stated that he does not understand why the City would waive these rules especially due to a conflict of interest on the Board or Council. Halapin stated he would think that the City would want to be as transparent as possible and follow rules and he feels that someone is using their position of influence to help someone they know to gain advantage of the system. Halapin stated that his stepfather is extremely disappointed and urges the Board to make sure that rules and laws in place are followed and not broken or changed for any one person.
- e. John Ortiz from City Line Autobody addressed the Board on behalf of himself, Thorton Scott from Family Garage, and Alex Rivera from J.A.X.S Autobody. Ortiz stated that he was concerned about the regular board meeting from December 19, 2023. Ortiz stated that he and Rivera were both told that they could not get on the municipal tow list unless the laws were complied with. Ortiz stated that it is not fair to change laws and rules for a Councilperson's child's father, who she is representing as a voter in her district. Ortiz stated that ordinances are in place for reasons and that this person has garbage outside of his business. Ortiz urges the Board to drive by the locations to view the situations and that changing the rules is ruining the City. Ortiz stated he and Rivera are both Hispanic and worked hard to be where they are. Ortiz also stated that the tow company in question did not by Anthony's Autobody as stated, but only bought the land and urges the Board not to change law for people because a Councilwoman says they must. Commissioner Cruz assured Ortiz that the Board does not want to skip any requirements because of what was presented to them. Commissioner Roach stated that the approval of the Board was conditional based on all rules and regulations being met, including zoning and every other one on the list. Commissioner Roach stated that if there was an issue that the Board is not waiving anything and if the rules are not followed then it is what it is. Commissioner Roach also instructed Ortiz that if there are blight issues to reach out to the Health Department.
- f. Thorton Scott was unable to attend the meeting and had Ortiz speak on his behalf.
- g. Mike Nunes was unable to attend the meeting.

4. Old Business:

- a. On a motion by Commissioner Cruz and seconded by Commissioner Farrow the Board unanimously voted to not approve the recommendation of the Traffic Engineer and to approve the request for the handicap sign installation.

5. **Correspondence:** None
6. **Letter of Appreciation:** None
7. **Widows Pension:** On a motion by Commissioner Diaz and seconded by Commissioner Cruz, the Board unanimously voted to approve the widow's pensions.
8. **City Engineer's Recommendation:**
 - a. **Request of the City Engineers Office to approve the following traffic requests:**
 - I-II. On a motion by Commissioner Diaz and seconded by Commissioner Cruz, The Board voted combine items i and ii and approve both.
 - b. **Request of the city Engineers Office not to approve the following traffic requests:**
 - i. On a motion by commissioner Farrow and seconded by Commissioner Diaz, the Board unanimously voted to approve item 8bi.
 - ii. On a motion by Commissioner Diaz and seconded by Commissioner Cruz, the board unanimously voted to approve item 8bii.
 - iii. On a motion by Commissioner Diaz and seconded by Commissioner Farrow, the Board unanimously voted to approve item 8biii and to recommend a speed study.

Adjournment: On a motion by Commissioner Cruz and seconded by Commissioner Farrow, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at **7:01 PM**.

THE BOARD RECONVENES AS THE TRUSTEE OF THE POLICE RELIEF FUND

"PLAN A"

Roll call of Commissioners: Cruz, Diaz, Farrow, Lyons, Roach

1. On a motion by Commissioner Cruz and seconded by Commissioner Lyons the Board unanimously voted to approve the widow pension request for a regular widow's pension

Adjournment: On a motion by Commissioner Lyons and seconded by Commissioner Diaz the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at **7:02 PM**