

**VIRTUAL PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
FEBRUARY 2, 2022, 6:30 P.M.
MINUTES**

1. Call to Order

- A. Chairwoman Carol Anderson-Blanks called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Attendees – Mayor Shari Cantor, Councilors Carol Anderson-Blanks, Alberto Cortes, Adrienne Billings-Smith, Mary Fay, Town Manager Matthew Hart, Director of Human Resources Rick Ledwith, Police Chief Vernon Riddick, Asst. Police Chief Robert Riccobon, Fire Chief Greg Priest, Asst. Fire Chief Hugh O’Callaghan and Fire Marshal Robert Grimaldi.

2. Business Items

3. Communications

4. Staff Reports

- A. Fire Department – Chief Priest submitted a written report. Specific to the COVID-19 earlier in the month, they were hit significantly with high incidences of COVID and there was some staff out. None of them were reported to administration as serious illnesses, everyone is recovering and the workforce has stabilized. The test kit and mask distribution efforts are going strong, coming out of the Emergency Management Office. Chief Priest had two personnel announcements; a member’s promotion to the Deputy Fire Marshal and Captain Neal Sinatro coming into the Senior Command staff. Chief Priest recognized CERT, which is comprised of volunteers. They are going out in the current weather conditions to hand out masks to residents.
- B. Police Department – Chief Riddick reported mask mandates have been reinstated. There have been approximately eight calls for service this year with one warning issued. Chief Riddick reminded everyone that restricted parking began on February 1. Regarding hiring and retention, there are 12 vacancies; two officers are in field training, six officers are in various police academies. The next academy is in April in Milford. POST will have an academy in June and September. As far as recruitment, officers will be at POST tomorrow talking to the Criminal Justice majors encouraging them to choose this profession with the goal of their applying to West Hartford. Regarding body cameras, they were received a few weeks ago and are now in place. Axon finished training 104 of the 120 members; 16 personnel will be certified as trainers so the remainder of those who have not been trained can be trained in-house. In the next couple of weeks, the in-car systems will hopefully be installed. There were 142 motor vehicle accidents and 213 motor vehicle stops in January 2021. This year there have been 198 motor vehicle accidents and 206 car stops. Regarding the social worker, 21 cases were referred to the police liaison. In 2018, 172 pistol permits were issued; in 2019,

183 were issued; and in 2020, 235 were issued, for a total of 590 permits. For calendar year 2021, 586 permits were issued.

The first official meeting of the CPRB (Citizen's Police Review Board) was held last week. They reviewed three internal affairs complaints and agreed with the findings of the police department. Chief Priest went over some recent police activities including the recovery of money, heroin and fentanyl from a motor vehicle accident and the apprehension of an individual with an outstanding warrant including assault 3rd, 2 counts of kidnapping and breach of peace. An anonymous tip was received regarding the individual's location and in conjunction with the Wethersfield Police Department, the individual was arrested. The individual was also found to be in possession of a firearm and drugs. In addition, a narcotic's officer working as part of a task force with the Hartford Police Department and the West Hartford Community Support Unit located a shooting suspect in Hartford near Prospect and Elizabeth Park and the suspect was taken into custody, a loaded rifle was recovered.

5. Future Agenda Items

- A. Councilor Cortes requested the resolution presented by Councilor Fay a couple months ago supporting any legislation be on the next agenda.

6. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

/axb