

**TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD
PUBLIC SAFETY STANDING COMMITTEE VIRTUAL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 7, 2022, 6:00 P.M.
MINUTES**

1. Call to Order

Call to Order – Meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m., by Chair Carol Blanks.

Present: Councilor Carol Blanks, Chair; Councilor Alberto Cortes; Rick Ledwith, Town Manager; Police Chief Vernon Riddick; Asst. Police Chief Lawrence Terra; Asst. Police Chief Robert Riccobon; Fire Chief Greg Priest; Asst. Fire Chief Hugh O’Callaghan; Fire Marshal Robert Grimaldi; Robert McCue, Deputy Director of Emergency Management; Shari Cantor, Mayor.

2. Business Items

Approval of June 1, 2022 Minutes – The Minutes were approved.

3. Communications

Rick Ledwith, Town Manager, discussed two resolutions that will be presented at the upcoming Finance and Administration and Town Council meetings.

- A. One is an appropriation for five new police vehicles. The FY 2022 police vehicle order was originally expected to be delayed by 40 weeks, but due to material and parts shortages the order now has been cancelled by Ford. CNRE balance funds of \$28,498 will cover the cost difference to re-order the vehicles as 2023 models. It will be spring before these cars will arrive. Police Chief Vernon Riddick said the department is already short vehicles, and Public Works mechanics have been keeping them running.
- B. The second resolution involves an appropriation of funds to relocate a police communications antenna. Rick Ledwith, Town Manager, explained that the town leases antenna space on the Hartford Insurance Group building roof for \$1 including electricity. This antenna covers approximately 30% of the police department’s communications. It must be relocated due to the roof being replaced. The cost is \$101,000 to share the expense of relocating the antenna during construction work and moving it back to the Hartford Insurance Group building when the roof work is done.

4. Staff Reports

- A. Fire Department Update – Fire Chief Greg Priest summarized his report. A new facilities assessment RFP has gone out in collaboration with the police department to upgrade and repair facilities. The department is focusing on community outreach efforts as the demand has increased again post-pandemic. Asst. Fire Chief Hugh O’Callaghan discussed the

Cardiac Arrest Registry Enhanced Survival (CARES) data from 2021, which shows West Hartford to have a higher cardiac arrest survival rate than the state of Connecticut or the country.

- B. Police Department Update – Police Chief Vernon Riddick gave an update on the department’s activities. Asst. Police Chief Lawrence Terra discussed the State Accreditation process. To gain Tier 1 accreditation, they must meet 120 liability standards. After achieving that, they move to Tier 2, which concerns professional standards, and then to Tier 3, which is general management. They have until 2026 to achieve all three tiers. Councilor Alberto Cortes asked about the status of the camera program. Chief Riddick said the 13 LPR cameras have aided in identifying and apprehending many suspects. The camera plan is moving forward as planned.

5. Future Agenda Items

No future agenda items were identified.

6. Adjournment

Chair Carol Blanks adjourned the meeting at 6:56 p.m.

/jaw