

TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD

TOWN COUNCIL PUBIC HEARING

JANUARY 24, 2024 6:30 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE CHAMBERS

**Re: Ordinance Implementing the Recommendations
Of the Civilian Police Review Board**

DEBRA A. CHASSE, CSR #00055

APPEARANCES:

Town Council Members Present:

SHARI CANTOR, MAYOR

BEN WENOGRAD, DEPUTY MAYOR

CAROL BLANKS

TIFFANI MCGINNIS

ALBERTO CORTES

BARRY WALTERS

DEBRA POLUN

MARK ZYDANOWICZ

ALSO PRESENT:

RICK LEDWITH, TOWN MANAGER

LEON DAVIDOFF, TOWN CLERK/COUNCIL CLERK

DALLAS DODGE, CORPORATION COUNSEL

1 MAYOR CANTOR: We will start with
2 the 6:30 public hearing. I'm calling that to order.
3 This is an ordinance implementing the recommendations
4 of the Civilian Police Review Board. We'll begin with
5 roll call. Mr. Davidoff?

6 MR. DAVIDOFF: Good evening, Madam
7 Mayor. Counselor Blanks.

8 MS. BLANKS: Present.

9 MR. DAVIDOFF: Mayor Cantor.

10 MAYOR CANTOR: Here.

11 MR. DAVIDOFF: Counselor Cortes.

12 MR. CORTES: Here.

13 MR. DAVIDOFF: Counselor Fay is
14 absent. Counselor McGinnis.

15 MS. MCGINNIS: Here.

16 MR. DAVIDOFF: Counselor Polun.

17 MS. POLUN: Here.

18 MR. DAVIDOFF: Counselor Walters.

19 MR. WALTERS: Here.

20 MR. DAVIDOFF: Deputy Mayor
21 Wenograd.

22 MR. WENOGRAD: Here.

23 MR. DAVIDOFF: Counselor Zydanowicz.

24 MR. ZYDANOWICZ: Here.

25 MAYOR CANTOR: Thank you, Mr.

1 Davidoff. We will begin with a presentation from the
2 town manager, Mr. Ledwith.

3 MR. LEDWITH: Thank you, Madam
4 Mayor. For the record, Rick Ledwith, town manager.
5 The purpose of this public hearing is to implement
6 changes recommended by the Civilian Police Review Board
7 to Section 5-132 of the Town Code of Ordinances.

8 By way of background, the Town of
9 West Hartford Civilian Police Review Board was
10 established by the town council back in February of
11 2021. The purpose of the Civilian Police Review Board
12 is to promote public confidence in the professionalism
13 and accountability of the West Hartford Police
14 Department through the unbiased review and evaluation
15 of the investigation reports involving complaints
16 against the sworn personnel and civilian employees at
17 the West Hartford Police Department.

18 In accordance with this ordinance,
19 the Civilian Police Review Board submits the annual
20 report of the Public Safety Committee. The annual
21 report provides a summary of the disposition of all
22 complaints reviewed by the the Board over a fiscal
23 year, as well as any policy recommendations.

24 The Civilian Police Review Board
25 presented its second annual record to the Public Safety

1 Committee on June 7th of 2023. The annual report
2 consists of three recommendations with respect to the
3 Civilian Police Review Board processes, and two of
4 those recommendations being amendments to this
5 ordinance.

6 Under the current ordinance the
7 Civilian Police Review Board has the authority to
8 sustain or remand a completed police department
9 investigation. In the event that the Civilian Police
10 Review Board remands an investigation back to the
11 police chief, the Civilian Police Review Board shall
12 make findings as to thoroughness, completeness,
13 accuracy, and the objectivity of the investigation.

14 The Civilian Police Review Board
15 felt that making findings on the basis of thoroughness
16 and completeness were too similar in nature and, as
17 such, wanted to replace the term "completeness" with
18 "outcome", meaning that the Civilian Police Review
19 Board could find a completed investigation to be
20 thorough, accurate, and objective but still disagree
21 with the outcome of the investigation.

22 The other ordinance amendment deals
23 with what may happen after the Civilian Police Review
24 Board remands a case back to the police chief. To the
25 extent that the Civilian Police Review Board remands a

1 completed investigation to the police chief and the
2 police chief disagrees with its findings, the police
3 chief shall provide the Civilian Police Review Board
4 the basis for that disagreement.

5 That concludes the ordinance changes
6 set for your review tonight, Mayor, and town council,
7 and I'm happy to answer any questions that you have.
8 Madam Mayor?

9 MAYOR CANTOR: Thank you, Mr.
10 Ledwith. Miss Blanks.

11 MISS BLANKS: Thank you, Madam
12 Mayor. Thank you, Mr. Ledwith. It seems like so long
13 ago when we did this. However, first off, I do want to
14 send thanks and praise to the committee, as well as to
15 the chairwoman, Melinda Morales, and the rest of the
16 members of that committee who do work very hard and
17 diligent and take their roles seriously in terms of
18 working with the police chief.

19 We did discuss this in the
20 committee, and the members of the committee were in
21 agreement and felt this was appropriate and was
22 recommended to the council, so I wholeheartedly support
23 this, Madam Mayor, and would urge my council members to
24 do the same. And, again, all the praise to Chairwoman
25 Morales and her team.

1 MAYOR CANTOR: Thank you, Miss
2 Blanks. Are there any questions or comments from the
3 commissioners? I don't think we have anybody signed up
4 to speak. Mr. Clerk, have you had any -- received any
5 written comments?

6 MR. DAVIDOFF: No, Madam Mayor.

7 MAYOR CANTOR: Is there anybody in
8 the audience that wants to speak? Any further comments
9 before I close the public hearing? All right. Very
10 good.

11 I just would like to echo Miss
12 Blanks' comments and thank the Civilian Police Review
13 Board for their tremendous work, and I want to give a
14 shout out to our corporation counsel for helping us get
15 this up and going so quickly. We're the first in the
16 state to have a full Civilian Police Review Board, so
17 thank you very much.

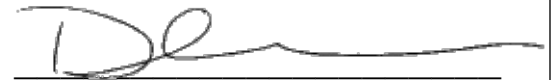
18 This hearing is closed and we will
19 begin the other hearing in about 8 minutes. Thank you.

20 (Whereupon, the hearing was
21 adjourned at 6:36 p.m.)
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C E R T I F I C A T E

**I, DEBRA A. CHASSE, Court Reporter and
Notary Public within and for the State of Connecticut,
duly commissioned and qualified, do hereby certify that
the foregoing 7 pages are a complete and accurate
computer-aided transcription of my original verbatim
notes taken of the Public Hearing held before the West
Hartford Town Council.**

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my
hand and affixed my notarial seal this 8th day of
February, 2024.**



**Debra A. Chasse, CSR
Notary Public
State of Connecticut**

**My Commission Expires:
June 30, 2026
CSR No. 00055**