The regular meeting of the West Haven Board of Police Commissioners was called to order at 7 p.m. by Chairman Raymond Collins, III at Police Headquarters, 200 Saw Mill Road. All those present rose and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Attendance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Raymond Collins, III, Chairman</td>
<td>present</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paul E. Butler, Vice-Chairman</td>
<td>present</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keith Sweeney</td>
<td>present</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peter BonTempo, Secretary</td>
<td>absent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deborah B. Wright, Pension Board</td>
<td>present</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joseph Perno, Chief of Police</td>
<td>present</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carl Flemmig, Interim Deputy Chief</td>
<td>present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee Tiernan, Corporation Counsel</td>
<td>absent</td>
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**Agenda**

Commissioner Sweeney MOVED to amend the agenda to take item 11.1 under Executive Session; SECONDED by Commissioner Butler. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Commissioner Sweeney MOVED to accept the agenda as amended; SECONDED by Commissioner Butler. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED unanimously.

1. **Minutes for Approval**

Commissioner Sweeney MOVED to accept the minutes of December 17, 2019; SECONDED by Commissioner Wright. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED unanimously.

2. **Public Session**

Chairman Collins asked if any member of the public wished to speak.

Detective Sean Faughnan, President, Local 895

Detective Faughnan extended his congratulations to the three potential recruits and the one sworn officer coming to West Haven PD.

He thanked and congratulated Animal Control Officer Janice Melin on the occasion of her retirement after more than 20 years of service. ACO Melin thanked Detective Faughnan for his kind words and noted that it has been her pleasure working with the West Haven Police Department.

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He also thanked and wished the best of luck to Officer Rheanna Behuniak on her departure from the ranks of the West Haven Police Department to pursue a career with the State Department of Developmental Services.

He wondered if the City came together and provided higher wages and a pension, would the Department lose fewer young, intelligent police officers.

Chairman Collins asked three times if any other person wished to speak. Being none, he declared the public session closed.

3. Communications

The Commissioners reviewed the following monthly reports:

3.1 Training Division – November 2019
3.2 Animal Control – December 2019
3.3 K-9 – November 2019
3.4 K-9 – December 2019

4. Report of the Deputy Chief

Deputy Chief Flemmig reported, with tonight’s resignation, the department is at 116 officers. One is in Field Training, 11 are in the Police Academy, one is out injured, one is on administrative leave, and one is on military leave. That leaves a total of 100 officers available.

Of the officers attending the academy, seven will graduate at 11 a.m. January 23 at the Palace Theatre in Waterbury.

ERS Director Jen Amendola recently hired two new dispatchers who began their training yesterday.

5. Report of the Chief

Chief Perno reported, in regard to our cameras, he has been in discussion with the City. They removed some from a conference center, but they do not appear to be compatible with the department’s needs. Those cameras will be used elsewhere in the City.

With the seven recruits graduating and after their 10 weeks of Field Training, the Command Staff has discussed reintroducing officers and establishing West Haven PD’s presence in task forces. They are looking at ATF, FBI and other task forces. The Chief and Deputy Chief have been working with the Finance Department daily and will have the first Department Head budget meeting tomorrow with the City to receive instructions for submitting the 2020-21 fiscal year budget.

7. Old Business

7.1 81 Hillcrest Avenue – Ordinance Violation

Commissioner Sweeney inspected the premises and spoke with the Blight Officer. The property is found to be in compliance.

Commissioner Sweeney MOVED to waive the fine; SECONDED by Commissioner Butler. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED unanimously.

7.2 108 Stevens Street – Ordinance Violation

Commissioner Sweeney noted that after today’s inspection, the property is still not in compliance. He MOVED that the Commission impose a fine of $100 per day until the property is found to be in compliance, starting tomorrow. SECONDED by Commissioner Butler.

Commissioner Sweeney asked that a registered letter is sent to the property owner, and that the Blight Officer is copied on this letter and all future correspondence of this nature in order to improve communications.

A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED unanimously.

8. New Business

8.1 Service-connected disability retirement of ACO Janice Melin

Commissioner Sweeney MOVED to approve the service-connected disability retirement of Animal Control Officer Janice Melin; SECONDED by Commissioner Wright.

Chief Perno stated, Janice started with the West Haven Police Department Animal Control in March of 1999. From the start of her career, the animals in West Haven were in excellent care. Her love for animals was seen by all on a daily basis. She will be missed beyond her belief by both the human and animal populations in West Haven. We wish her nothing but the best in her retirement, and health and happiness. Congratulations. [Applause].

Commissioner Wright formally thanked and congratulated and thanked Ms. Melin. She recounted that there had been some interesting four-legged friends that they had come in contact with. She wished Ms. Melin well.

Commissioner Collins noted that he has also dealt with Janice personally and had adopted a dog from the pound. He credited Ms. Melin with being compassionate, and thanked her for her service.

A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED unanimously.
8.2 Resignation of Officer Rheanna Behuniak

Commissioner Sweeney MOVED to accept the resignation of Officer Rheanna Behuniak, effective January 16, 2020; SECONDED by Commissioner Butler.

Chief Perno stated, this is pretty sad for us. Officer Behuniak started in 2015. Her presence with the Police Department was immediately felt. She took over our social media site, she currently is a School Resource Officer for our elementary schools, where I’ve received nothing but rave reviews about her caring and interaction with the kids. She’s taking that passion and interest in children to her new career with the Department of Developmental Services. She will always, as I’ve said in the past, have a place here at the West Haven Police Department and we wish her nothing but the best in her new venture. Congratulations. [Applause]

A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED unanimously.

8.3 Action on 11.1 – Interview of Candidates

To be taken up after the Executive Session.

9. Pension Board

9.1 Service-connected disability retirement of ACO Janice Melin

Commissioner Wright noted that the retirement package for ACO Janice Melin is complete and correct.

Commissioner Sweeney MOVED to approve the service-connected disability retirement package of Animal Control Officer Janice Melin; SECONDED by Commissioner Butler. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Commissioner Wright noted that a continuation of last month’s pension discussion will take place at the next meeting on January 21st.

10. Commissioners’ Reports – no reports

11.1 Executive Session – Interview of Candidates

At approximately 7:15 p.m., Commissioner Sweeney MOVED to enter Executive Session to conduct candidate interviews. Command Staff were invited to remain. SECONDED by Commissioner Butler. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED unanimously.

At approximately 8:15 p.m. Commissioner Wright MOVED to return to Regular Session; SECONDED by Commissioner Butler. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED unanimously.

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8.3 Action on Executive Session item – Interview of Candidates

Commissioner Sweeney MOVED to hire, effective January 10, 2020, the following Probationary Grade D Patrol Officers:

Lars Vallin
Makiem Miller
Michael Hoey

SECONDED by Commissioner Butler. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED unanimously.

11 Adjournment

At 8:20 p.m., Commissioner Sweeney MOVED to adjourn; SECONDED by Commissioner Wright. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]
Patricia M. Bruder
Secretary