Chrmn. Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**1. ROLL CALL**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Bill Bevan, Alberta Jagoe, John Mager, Sharon Marrone, David Rubenstein, Richard Smith

NOT PRESENT: Sam Bergami

ALSO PRESENT:Police Chief Mello; Deputy Chief Rojee; Capt. DelMonte, D. Candido, Secty.

A quorum was present to conduct the business of the meeting.

**2. CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENTS** - none

**3. CITIZEN COMMENTS** – available via social media

**4**. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

It was moved by Comm. Mager and seconded by Comm**.** Rubensteinto approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 13, 2022 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**5. Consideration of Chief on Matters of Administration**

1. Donation of business cards from Graphic Image – Chief Mello referred to last spring when the Department had a robust social media presence. He stated since that time we are trying to promote our social media accounts and therefore ordered business cards from Graphic Image who generously donated the cards. Chief Mello recommended acceptance of the donation of business cards from Graphic image.

It was moved by Comm. Bevan and seconded by Comm. Mager to accept the donation of business cards from Graphic Image as recommended by Chief Mello. Motion carried unanimously.

1. Chief’s General Comments – Chief Mello reported in recent months the department has lost four officers (1 retirement, 2 moved out of state, 1 left to go to another department).

Chrmn. Smith asked if it is still anticipated that 10 officers are expected to join the force when the next academy is complete.

Chief Mello explained they will graduate in spring but at that point we will have another 5-7 openings at which time he will advocate for one additional officer per shift. He added we will gear up for another academy perhaps by late spring. Further, he explained we have been focused on what we need to do to be an employer of choice and that may require looking at our compensation package.

Chief Mello added it has become evident many officers do not want to work beyond regular work week.

Chrmn. Smith asked how many openings are funded but will not be filled by December.

Chief Mello at this time we are at 116 and should be at 120. He stated 128 would be a good number but he felt that is not going to happen in this economy. He added this generation of workers has not intention of working 25 years in one location but will work 3-5 years and then move on to something else.

He further stated the first responsibility of government is to keep people safe, keep students educated and to provide necessary services to do so.

Chrmn. Smith suggested coming up with a long-term strategy taking into consideration pay equity, hours, generational gap, fall out from Covid.

Chief Mello noted another community had engaged a consulting firm to look at and address the critical deficiencies. He added it is our intent to try to address the long-term solution while keeping in mind the importance of support and respect and addressing the work/life balance. He stated he would support this Commission having conversation on such priorities.

Chrmn. Smith expressed concern that cutting police budgets might be a risk to public safety.

Chief Mello emphasized the fact that Milford provides so much training and that is why we are considered one of the top departments to be in.

Comm. Rubenstein referred to an excellent article he recently read reflecting much of the concerns addressed tonight. He added it is evident that college students do not want to be police officers but are looking at other areas of law enforcement.

Chrmn. Smith questioned if there would be opportunity for members of this commission to participate in further discussion and Chief Mello stated he would like to see someone from this body and someone from government, particularly someone with an apolitical standpoint.

Chrmn. Smith stated it was his understanding a survey was conducted of this agency to get a sense of what is on the mind of the staff at our Police Department and could this be shared with the Commission at a future meeting.

Chief Mello stated he would be happy to share this information and will speak with Chrmn. Smith regarding this following the meeting.

**6. Report on Planning and Zoning Requests**

1. It was moved by Comm. Rubenstein and seconded by Comm. Bevan to approve Traffic Dept. recommendation regarding Addendum – Residential Complex Addition to a Rehab of a Commercial Plaza (Lansdale Residential Community – 589 Bridgeport Avenue).

Comm. Mager stated after reading the report he understood the addendum does nothing to change the site lines which is what our focus/intent is and therefore he supports it.

Motion carried unanimously.

1. It was moved by Comm. Mager and seconded by Comm. Rubenstein to approve the recommendation Traffic Dept. recommendation regarding Big Y Gas Station – Addendum – Traffic Study Impact. Motion carried unanimously.

**7. ACCEPTANCE OF REPORTS**

It was moved by Comm. Mager and seconded by Comm. Rubenstein to approve the following

reports:

a. Special Investigations Unit Report

b. Detective Bureau Report

c. Crime Prevention Unit Report

d. Traffic Division and Licensing Unit Report

Motion carried unanimously.

**8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS** - none

**9. NEW BUSINESS**

a. Crosswalk recommendation – Seaview Ave/ 1st Ave – It was moved by Comm. Mager and seconded by Comm. Rubenstein to approve Traffic Dept. recommendation to install crosswalk at Seaview Ave/ First Avenue.

Chrmn. Smith questioned where the crosswalk would lead to and Capt. DelMonte stated it would lead to the street side of residential property.

Comm. Bevan questioned the unwritten rule to not install crosswalks unless it goes sidewalk to sidewalk and Capt. DelMonte stated that would be favorable.

Chief Mello added there are exceptions but rarely would that happen.

Motion carried unanimously.

b. Restricted parking recommendation – Dayton St/Naugatuck Ave – It was moved by Comm. Bevan and seconded by Comm. Mager to approve Traffic Dept recommendation regarding restricted parking – Dayton St/Naugatuck Ave. Motion carried unanimously.

c. Crosswalk Request – Woodruff/Colony Rd – It was moved by Comm. Rubenstein and seconded by Comm. Bevan to approve Traffic Dept. recommendation regarding the crosswalk request – Woodruff/Colony Rd. Motion carried unanimously.

**10. COMMENDATIONS** – Chief Mello explained items a. b, c, d shall be moved to the next meeting agenda

a. Letter in File – Off. Paul Mazzara, Off. Joanna Salati

b. Letter of Recognition – Off. David Bodnar, Off. Paige Bodnar – case 3964-21

c. Meritorious Service Medal – Off. Kevin Hilliard – case #3661-21

d. Unit Citation – Off. John Ballard, Sgt. John Binkowski, Off. Steven Carney and

Dispatcher Natalia Rivera – case #2232-22

**11. EXECUTIVE SESSION** – **Consideration of Report of Chief of Police on matters concerning the Appointment, Employment, Performance, Evaluation, Health, or Dismissal of Department**

**Employees - none**

Being no further business to discuss, it was moved by Comm. Mager and seconded by Comm. Marrone to adjourn at 7:32 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Recorded by Diane Candido

Submitted to City Clerk: September 13, 2022