

Board Meeting Minutes For New Paltz Police Commissioner's Meeting

I. Meeting Details

Chairperson: Cindy Sanchez
Secretary: Haley Nechamkin

Date: April 11, 2023
Time:

Location: New Paltz Community Center
Street Address: 3 Veterans Drive
City: New Paltz
State: NY Zip: 12561

II. Roll Call

Present:
Cindy Sanchez- Chair
Chief Robert Lucchesi
Karrie Rahaman-Bunce
Steve Ford

Absent:
Tara Fitzpatrick
Janice Butcher

III. Call to Order

Announcements:

- April 13th, Assisting New Paltz Safe Coalition (for Alcohol Awareness and General Assault Awareness), Water Street Market, 3pm
- April 19th, Conversation with an Officer, Water Street Market, 10am
- Commissioner's Undoing Racism Workshops are April 17th, 18th, and 19th, 10am-4pm
- Softball/Baseball Parade starting at the Middle School on 4/15 at 9am; Main St. will be closed temporarily

Approval of Agenda: C. Sanchez requests a Motion to take the agenda out of order due to interview

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:

IV. Community Comments

- Maggie Devitt representing Tom Jeliffe (who was not present and asked her to read a statement) From UAct Police Reform and Criminal Justice Reform Committee (UAct Ulster Activists)- “the agenda for the April 11th meeting includes an item to develop a process for reviewing the recommendations of the New Paltz Police Reform and reinvention collaborative. I’m going to suggest several ways in which that process can be most helpful to you and the New Paltz community in defining the police reform and reinvention issues that we still face and how to possibly best address them. Number one, please don’t consider the recommendations as they were published two years ago too narrowly. Each one of the recommendations was an effort to address an aspect of policing they consider problematic: biasing traffic stops, misuse of force, insufficient emphasis on de-escalation, lack of transparency in discipline, strained relations with the community, and more. The need now is to consider not only whether the original recommendation should be supported or not, but also whether there are other approaches that may be more effective in light of what has been learned since. Number two, we ask that you publish a schedule or calendar for the Commission Meetings in which particular recommendations will be covered. This will let people plan their attendance and prepare input for your discussions. Please limit the number of recommendations covered in each session to allow plenty of time for discussion. Number three, we encourage you to make an extra effort to distribute this calendar widely and reissue it as the process goes forward. For example, you could use the Town and Village’s blast email systems and possible piggy-back on the Police Department’s Facebook page. This could also be published in newspapers such as Hudson Valley One. We would also distribute it as widely as we can to individuals and groups we communicate with. Number four, the opportunities to address the issue of police reform and reinvention comprehensively and in connection with others does not come around often. We therefore also ask that you use a flexible discussion style format in which there is room for give and take and public participants can hear your perspectives and understandings as well as expressing their own. Thank you.”
- Edgar Rodriguez(sent as an email on April 10th)- “Dear New Paltz Police Commissioners, members of the New Paltz Coalition for Community Safety and Well-Being have been meeting for almost three years, in response to Executive Order 203 to reform and reinvent the police departments in New York state. We understand that at your meeting of today, 4/11, you will make plans to reveal in public the NP CTRR (the New Paltz Committee for Police Reinvention Report) which is important for the community, however our group also urges you to read and discuss our tax report and graphic representation of the concepts underlined for a vision for the community’s safety and well-being. I’m sending you two documents that were created by our group in

parallel with the development of the New Paltz Committee for Police Reinvention/Reimagination which I'll call the E0203 Committee. Their 203 report was adopted by the New Paltz Town Board in April 2021. The E0203 report was an order that the governor gave after George Floyd was killed, to examine over 500 police departments in New York state. We were one of them who participated in the process. While the report was being created, our group members provided input to the local 203 Committee, and developed our own Community Safety Vision. The first attachment that we provide is called Booker Three, Imagining Community Safety and Well-being: A Framework for New Paltz in 2021 and Beyond. It provides our detailed report recommendations for accomplishing our vision of what the reforms should have looked like. The second document is a brief graphical representation of the concepts underlying our vision for community safety and well-being. While there are many points of overlap between our report and the E0203 report, there are also large differences and we urge the members of the Police Commission to review both in equal depth and so direct your path of the Police Oversight and Reform Reinvention with a comprehensive view of available perspectives and options. In the first two documents we juxtaposed our vision to that of the town's E0203 report. In the third attachment, we provide a copy of the E0203 document. Our reports on the New Paltz Town Board were a community-wide effort and also prepared in consultation with many groups and individual people. Our work really started in September 2018 with the New Paltz police officer attack on police echoes that was recently settled with the offending police officer in federal court. We would like to work with our Police Commission to avoid similar abuses from occurring again in New Paltz. We have started introductory discussions with commissioners Tara Fitzpatrick and Janice Butcher. We would like to still have individual discussions with the three remaining members and with all five members together in a workshop meeting. A workshop meeting technically allows for the public to have extended discussions in public with the Commission. Please let us know your thoughts."

V. Old Business

No old business to review

VI. New Business

- Chief Lucchesi- funds from seized assets to purchase a new patrol vehicle; replacing two cars a year like was done prior to Covid; this was proposed to the Town Board and approved
- Discussion regarding the VWC Grant and costs associated with the program moving forward (\$10,000 grant for buying/replacing more cameras)- Six new cameras will be purchased, which will be good for two years at least
- February Monthly Report:

- The juvenile policy and extreme protection order- all issued to members of staff after meeting
- Training Report- February 17th through the 20th conducted reality-based training in the New Paltz Police Department at the police department. All members attended and passed.
- February 27th to March 3rd, Sergeant James began attending the basic course for supervisor school
- March Monthly Report:
 - Moved personnel last month with recombinaisons.
 - Five incidents that resulted in the use of defensive action. Four will be reviewed today:
 - March 4th, 2023: Three events in action reports that were filed. All three documented physical compliance techniques. A mental health event that occurred during a snowstorm this evening. Subject involved is a 19-year-old female, approx. 5'5" tall, 130 pounds. Officers responded to a welfare check that someone was out in the street and possibly suffering from a panic attack or mental health crisis. Individual threatened self-harm. Officers got the individual into their vehicle and out of the snow.
 - March 5th, 2023: Four reports, all documenting physical compliance. Stems from a fight that occurred in the middle of Main St. at approx. 3:30am on this day. Two separate defendants- the first is a 22-year-old male approx. 5'9" tall, 200 pounds. There were no charges filed against this individual. The second individual involved is a 23-year-old male approx. 5'11" tall and 220 pounds. Only one individual was charged in this case.
 - March 12th, 2023: 3:40 in the morning; two individuals involved- the first is a 19-year-old female approx. 5'3" tall and 118 pounds. The second is a 19-year-old female 5'3" tall. One of the individuals is charged with disorderly conduct and the other was charged with harassment, disorderly conduct, and resisting arrest. One individual swung at an officer.
 - March 26th, 2023: one incident report- 24-year-old male approx. 5'10" tall. Charged with resisting arrest and criminal mischief. Officers attempted to de-escalate the situation at 68 Main St. Altercation took place inside a restaurant; the officer tried to remove one of the individuals involved. Officer and individual were pushed to the ground by the entrance to restaurant.
 - A member is out of service currently- sustained an injury during an arrest
 - Detective Report: investigating a theft, fraudulent transaction over \$9,000. Investigation is ongoing but it appears there may be a suspect. Might be linked to

thefts in other areas. One was highly intoxicated and unable to stand; while waiting for the Rescue Squad, these two individuals got into a confrontation.

- Three commendations- for Officer Vespie, Officer Milton, and Dispatcher O'Reilly

VII. Other Items

No additional items at this time

VIII. Move to Executive Session

IX. Return From Executive Session

8:17pm

- No action was taken
- Next on the agenda: A quicker framework for how to address the reimaging and policing of New Paltz
- Addressed recommendations made during “Community Comments” - how do we incorporate/regulate intake of recommendations and responses to them
- Bunce- Motion to allow public comment after two recommendations, Ford seconds

X. Adjournment

9:18pm

Ford motions to adjourn

Minutes Submitted by: Haley Nechamkin

Approved by: