

**TOWN OF WINDSOR
HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
FEBRUARY 22, 2021
VIRTUAL MEETING**

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Councilor Nuchette Black-Burke called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. with Councilor James Dobler and Councilor James Govoni present. Assistant Town Manager, Scott Colby; Police Chief, Don Melanson; Director of Health Services, Dr. Mike Pepe; and Director of Human Resources, Amelia Bliss

2. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

3. DISCUSSION OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION TRAINING

Ms. Bliss stated after evaluating the responses to the town's Request for Proposal and interviewing several respondents, a staff committee selected the Racial Equity Group, based in Irving Texas, to conduct the training. The scope of work and timeline have been finalized and the consultant agreement is being reviewed by the parties. It is anticipated the agreement will be signed within the week. The objectives of the training are in line with the Town Council's resolution of enhancing diversity and ensuring antiracism principles throughout the organization. The training content will include:

- Allies for Equity and Inclusion – All full-time and part-time staff (approximately 222 employees)
- Making DEI Standard Operating Procedure – All supervisory staff (48 employees)
- Leading With an Equity Mindset – Town Council, Town Manager, and Assistant Town Manager

Councilor Govoni asked if we would be including the boards and commissions.

Ms. Bliss stated that the RFP did not include boards and commissions but this is something to look at moving into the future. Councilor Dobler and Councilor Black-Burke agreed that boards and commissions should have an opportunity to participate in DEI training.

Councilor Dobler asked if we are committed to this consultant for the long term. Ms. Bliss stated they would be conducting the work that was specified in the scope. This would allow for us to determine if we would potentially utilize them again.

Councilor Black-Burke would like DEI to be an ongoing item for employees.

Councilor Govoni thought there should be a line item in the budget for DEI.

4. DISCUSSION OF VACCINE ROLL OUT / MASK PROTOCOL

Public Awareness

Assistant Town Manager Colby stated the Health Department and the Town of Windsor in general has provided public education and awareness via many avenues. By using multiple social media platforms and accounts, the Town has provided access to public service videos and reminders covering such topics as how to make your own mask, proper mask wearing, social distancing as well as proper hand washing. Several videos included interviews with Health Department staff answering questions about COVID-19. The Health Department reached out to various businesses and all food establishments to keep them up to date with what the 'Reopen CT' sector rules allowed.

Vaccination Clinics

Dr. Pepe stated that currently the State of CT is in Phase-1b of its vaccination roll-out with individuals who are 65+ being eligible at this time. It is anticipated that they will open up Phase-1b to frontline essential workers and individuals with an underlying medical conditions in the coming weeks.

The Health Department began holding vaccination clinics on December 28, 2020. As of Wednesday, February 18th, a total of 16 COVID-19 vaccination clinics have been held. 9 clinics have been held in Windsor and 7 clinics have been held in South Windsor.

Connecticut in total has administered 462,617 first doses of vaccine, 3,563 are Windsor residents (*as of 2/17/2021*). This represents 12.4% of our estimated population.

To date our Health Department have administered:

1,335 COVID-19 Vaccines first doses administered (*as of 2/18/2021*)

559 COVID-19 Vaccines second doses administered (*as of 2/18/2021*)

Of those vaccines administered, 321 have been Windsor residents.

COVID-19 Vaccination Scheduling Assistance

Staff has developed resources for seniors wishing to sign up for vaccinations that do not have computer access, require help through the scheduling process, or are homebound.

- Public Library – Library staff have been assisting individuals who do not have computer access and wish to schedule a COVID vaccination appointment.
- Senior Center – The Senior Center and Recreation Department have implemented "call center" services for seniors that do not have computer access or need assistance in scheduling their appointment as well.
- Dial-A-Ride Transportation Services is also providing rides specifically to COVID-19 testing and vaccination appointments Monday – Friday from 9: 00 a.m. – 3:00 pm. This round trip service is free for Windsor residents 60 and older and individuals with disabilities.

- Social Services – prior to the ‘call center’ Social Services staff assisted the health department and senior center with any incoming calls from residents needing assistance. Ten residents were assisted with making an appointment and transportation needs. Social Services has contacted individuals on their At-Risk Registry and to date has identified three individuals requiring an at-home appointment offered by the Windsor Health Department.

Face Mask Protocol

The Health Department has the responsibility of enforcement for establishments that they license and inspect. The Police Department has responsibility of enforcement on all other issues. Our approach has been to inform and re-educate individuals. We have had success with this approach and received compliance.

Councilor Govoni spoke of his experience registering through the VAMS.

Councilor Dobler asked if you are able to register together if you are married. Dr. Pepe stated that you need to register individually and that an email address can only be used once.

Councilor Black-Burke asked if there was a FAQ about the vaccine. Assistant Town Manager Colby stated that there is a FAQ on the website with updates on along with links to healthcare providers offering the vaccine.

5. UPDATE REGARDING CAR THEFTS / BREAK INS

Chief Melanson stated that during the first half of FY 21, our police department has responded to 139 incidents of vehicles being entered into during the night time hours. Along with these car burglaries, there have also been 66 motor vehicles stolen during this period. This number of stolen vehicles represents vehicles stolen from Windsor as well as stolen vehicles recovered from Windsor. As a comparison, in the first half of FY 20, there were 126 thefts from vehicles and 28 vehicles stolen. Almost exclusively these vehicles were all unlocked. Nearly every vehicle stolen had the keys in the vehicle when stolen and were taken in areas where other car burglaries had just occurred or had been left unattended while running. Most vehicles stolen were recovered within a few weeks in Hartford.

Every police department in the region is experiencing the same increase in thefts and face the same issues. On most occasions where officers were able to make arrests, the suspects are under the age of 18 and are considered juveniles.

Our police department is working diligently to combat this issue. We continually push out the message that *“If You Like It, Lock It”*. Other social media outreach such as *“#9pm Routine”* are used nationally to remind residents to lock your vehicles. Staff has created a total of 15 posts across town social media platforms between January 1, 2021 and February 17, 2021, which have been seen by 3,042 individuals and have been shared or liked by 218 individuals.

The police department will continue to combat this epidemic through proactive patrols and public awareness.

Councilor Dobler asked if a car is locked do the individuals typically move on. He also asked if they are breaking windows to enter the vehicles. Chief Melanson stated that most of the time they move on if a vehicle is locked. It is rare, but sometimes they break the window.

Councilor Govoni stated that he feels this is a regional issue and that we should come together for a regional approach.

Councilor Black-Burke expressed her concerns. She asked if it was possible to partner with the Chamber of Commerce to have them share informational materials at the local restaurants and stores.

6. QUARTERLY TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

Chief Melanson stated the police department continues to monitor traffic stop data to identify if any potential patterns of racial profiling or bias from police officers occur.

Below are a few statistics from overall traffic stop information for the first half of FY 21:

- A total of 3,214 traffic stops were made in the first half of FY 21. This is 55% lower than the 7,297 stops made during the same period in FY 20.
- A total of 1,091 traffic stops were made in the 1st quarter of FY 21. This is 72.4% lower than the 3,956 stops made during the same period in FY 20.
- A total of 2,123 traffic stops were made in the 2nd quarter of FY 21. This is 95% higher than the 1,091 stops made during the first quarter in FY 21.
- Windsor residents accounted for 34.2% of the traffic stops made in the first half of FY 21, which is consistent with the previous fiscal year.

As reported in the past, speeding is one of the most common complaints or calls for service the police department receives. All officers are expected to conduct traffic enforcement activities in addition to responding to a wide range of calls for service throughout their shift.

Staff has continued to use social media to promote awareness about reducing speeds. This spring additional public awareness efforts will be deployed as will the several sets of Digital Speed Display signs.

Councilor Dobler asked if the speeding violations on Poquonock Avenue were Windsor residents. Chief Melanson stated that most of these individuals were from outside of town.

Councilor Black-Burke made comments on the racial profiling traffic stop report.

7. DISCUSSION OF SNOW REMOVAL FROM SIDEWALKS

Assistant Town Manager Colby stated the Police Department has the primary responsibility for enforcement of the ordinance. Other town departments are asked to inform the police department of apparent violations. Between December 1, 2020 and February 18th there have been 22 un-shoveled sidewalk complaints addressed by the police department. For the December 2019 through March 2020 period, 20 complaints were handled.

Residents are able to pick up sand from various barrel locations throughout town to assist with covering any ice to make walkways safe and convenient for pedestrians. The locations are:

- Sharshon Park
- L.P. Wilson Community Center
- Mechanic Street Commuter Parking Lot
- Oliver Ellsworth School
- Public Works Complex
- Poquonock Fire House
- Rainbow Fire House

The Department of Public Works is responsible for clearing approximately 17.4 miles of sidewalk and 25 bus shelters. In addition they also plow and treat approximately 153 miles of town-owned roadways.

Councilor Govoni expressed his concern for safety of pedestrians on the sidewalks. He stated that the town should look at the process and recommend if improvements can be made in regards to enforcement of the ordinance.

8. UPDATE ON ILLEGAL TRUCKING ON PIERSON LANE

Assistant Town Manager Colby stated that in the fall of 2020, staff was made aware, through various resident complaints, of a possible trucking operation operating out of 85 Pierson Lane.

Once staff was aware of the matter, the Zoning Enforcement Officer issued orders to the property owner to comply with the zoning regulations. There was not compliance on the a part of the owner or tenant, therefore the town attorney filed action with the court system requesting a court order to eliminate the alleged zoning violations within the industrial zone.

Unfortunately due to significant back logs within the state court system, a hearing on the matter was delayed several months. A preliminary court hearing was held in January. The town attorney urged the matter be fully heard and resolved by the court as soon as possible, but again with the court docket being backlogged the next hearing was set for March 30, 2021.

9. STAFF REPORTS

Assistant Town Manager Colby provided an update that starting later this week, Windsor Police Department officers will begin wearing body worn cameras in efforts to increase transparency and accountability in policing. A committee comprised of 3 sergeants and 6 officers from the Patrol Division will start wearing the BWC's for a two week start-up period with the goal of all officers wearing body worn cameras starting March 8th. The body worn cameras work in conjunction with the department's mobile video recording systems to provide audio-visual documentation of officer encounters with the public. The Police Department has adopted the Connecticut Police Officer Standards and Training Council

(POST-C) Model Policy on the Use of Body Worn and Dashboard Cameras. This model policy is identified as best practice and meets requirements established in Public Act 20-1 “An Act Concerning Police Accountability”. With the implementation of our body worn camera program, our police department is compliant with this public act. All Connecticut police departments are required to meet this standard effective July 1, 2022.

It was also mentioned that the Windsor Police Department is planning to host a two part Community Policing Forum on Wednesday April 7th from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturday April 10th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The goal of the forum is to foster a better understanding of police work, increase communication and engage our community while we discuss and demonstrate the department’s overall philosophy and approach on policing. The format of the event will include classroom presentations, question and answer segments, and demonstrations. Stay tuned for sign up opportunities in the coming weeks.

10. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) November 9, 2020

MOVED by Councilor Dobler, seconded by Councilor Govoni to approve the unapproved minutes of the November 9, 2020 meeting as presented.

Motion Passed 3-0-0

11. ADJOURMENT

MOVED by Councilor Dobler, seconded by Councilor Govoni, to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 p.m.

Motion Passed 3-0-0

Respectfully submitted by,

Scott Colby
Assistant Town Manager