

MINUTES OF THE POLICE COMMISSION MEETING

**Thursday, May 8, 2025 at 7:00p.m.
Town Hall Annex
66 Prospect Street**

Anyone requiring special accommodations due to disability is asked to contact Headquarters at 203-438-6531 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

Commissioners Present: Sharon Dornfeld, Chairperson
Issy Caporale, Secretary
Marcie Coffin
John Frey
Ralph Money

Also Present: Chief Jeff Kreitz

These minutes are an overview of the meeting; not a verbatim text.

The meeting was called to order at 7:02pm by Chairperson Dornfeld.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairperson Dornfeld requested a motion to accept the minutes of the April 10, 2025 Police Commission Meeting. Commissioner Money made a motion and Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion.

All in Favor

Minutes of April 10, 2025 Police Commission Meeting accepted as written.

Chairperson Dornfeld requested a motion to accept the minutes of the May 6, 2025 Police Commission Special Meeting. Commissioner Money made a motion and Commissioner Coffin seconded the motion.

All in Favor

Minutes of May 6, 2025 Police Commission Special Meeting accepted as written.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Tom McManus, Tree Committee, stated 16 new established trees have been planted on Main Street. His concern is there is damage to one of the trees caused by a car accident. He stated he received a copy of the accident report but he would like Steve Lavatori, Tree Warden, notified if a tree is damaged. Chief Kreitz stated Records would inform Steve when necessary.

Christopher Rees, from 4 Mountain View Avenue, presented to the Police Commission stating his concerns of traffic at 43 Danbury Road Development, formerly Red Rooster. He stated that Danbury Road in this area is over capacity at peak hours, that there is extensive queuing, and that he and his neighbors have concerns for the proposed right turn only, as well as vehicle and pedestrian safety. Mr. Rees has a PowerPoint presentation which included a video in front of Red Rooster showing Danbury Road congestion at the site. Some of those in attendance who stated their concerns were Renee Whitworth from 17 Mountain View Avenue, Mary Pieriandri from 3 Hillsdale Avenue, Barbara Baughman from 5 Mountain View Avenue and Nicola Tizi from Mountain View Avenue. In summary, all were concerned that Danbury Road is over capacity at peak hours, right turn only and lack of sidewalks. All were concerned that this project would increase vehicle and pedestrian traffic in the area creating a safety issue.

3. COMMISSION CORRESPONDENCE**A. Voicemail**

Commissioner Caporale stated she received two voicemail for the month of April, which she addressed.

B. Written Correspondence

The Highway Use Permit was signed by Chairperson Dornfeld-

- 4th of July Fireworks Display 07/04/25 1700-2230
Rain Date 07/05/25

4. OLD BUSINESS**A. Review of P&Z Plans – 43 Danbury Road****Presentation by Pete Olsen and Joe Belskus**

Peter Olsen, along with Joe Belskus, re-presented their plans for 43 Danbury Road, formerly Red Rooster, to the Police Commission their plans for 20 residential apartments. A study was presented by Joe Belskus who stated Danbury Road is not dangerous, a crash history from 2021-2024, and that the proposed would not generate a lot of traffic.

The Board of Police Commissioners comment on the proposed project:

Comments:

The objective data provided by the Applicant in its April 22, 2025 addendum to the Applicant's traffic study does not provide a safety basis for the Traffic Authority to object to the proposed plan.

Nevertheless, the Police Commission acting as Traffic Authority has the following comments:

By observation, the stone wall on the south side of the existing driveway (toward the Mobil station) impairs the line of sight to the south and should be removed or relocated.

The "right turn only" requirement should be reinforced with a forced turn island similar to the one installed opposite Roberts Lane in the driveway serving Webster Bank and Bobo's café.

There are four existing curb cuts west side of Danbury Road between Roberts Lane and Mountain View Avenue – a distance of just 331.3 feet. Members of the public report a perceived sense of heightened danger when traveling along that portion of the roadway due to the number of vehicles turning into and out of the commercial properties on Danbury Road and the proximity of the Mobil Station and Holly Nails driveways with each other and to the traffic light serving the T-intersection with Grove Street. Page 10 of the April 22, 2025 addendum to the Applicant's traffic study notes the recommendation dating to 2005 "that consolidation of driveways be considered," but proposes that such consideration should take place "when adjacent property is redevelopment (sic)" but concludes that "[t]he existing driveway is not suitable [*missing language*] accommodating redevelopment at this time" without explanation. The Traffic Authority would encourage the *current* consideration of this option.

While individual projects which increase traffic density may not separately constitute a safety hazard, the Traffic Authority remains concerned about the cumulative effect of continued development and increased volume of traffic.

B. Public Safety Building Update

Chief Kreitz stated Jake Muller has been working with Kaestle Boos for potential design modifications.

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. Review of P&Z Plans – 130 Danbury Road

The Board of Police Commissioners reviewed the project. They have no concerns over the project.

6. CHIEF'S REPORT

A. Training/PR Report

The following report was submitted by Capt. Brian Durling, Division of Professional Standards.

**Ridgefield Police Department
Training & Community Policing/Public Relations Report
April 2025**

Training Attended:

- Apr. 1-4:** Ofc. Bloom and Ofc. Biros attended School Resource Officer training at the New Britain Police Department.
- Apr. 7-10:** Ofc. B. Romero, Ofc. Biros, and Ofc. Conrad attended Telecommunicator training at the police academy in Meriden.
- Apr. 21-May 2:** Ofc. Vasquez and Ofc. Kay attended the Fairfield County Detective Conference at the Newtown Police Department.
- Apr. 22-24:** Sgt. DiFalco attended the first half of his training to become an Instructor in Methods of Instruction. He will complete his practicum in June.
- Apr. 29-30:** Three dispatchers attended training on Dispatch Response to Active Killers.
- Apr. 21-25:** Capt. Durling conducted training with the Ridgefield Fire Department on joint response to Crisis Intervention and De-escalation.

P/R Events:

- Apr. 6:** Officers made a visit to a young boy's police-themed birthday Party at the rec center.
- Apr. 10:** Officers attended the University of New Haven criminal Justice Career Fair.
- Apr. 26:** Lt. Knoche and Det. Ryan represented the department at the Ridgefield Senior Spectacular Expo.
- Apr. 26:** Capt. Durling participated in the DEA's National Drug Takeback Day.

April: The Citizen's Police Academy hosted its four additional Classes in a variety of topics.

Upcoming Events:

The Citizen Police Academy is continuing every Wednesday night through May 7.

The department will host an intern from Ridgefield High School for several weeks.

The department's annual Memorial Ceremony is scheduled for May 22.

A total of 18 Public Relations were performed during the month to include:

- Officers met with the staff and children at local houses of worship.
- Several car seat installations were performed
- Officers met with local businesses and spoke with employees
- Officers met with children from local day cares/preschools
- Officers met with residents and staff at Ballard Green
- DARE graduations
- Officer McKnight performed a K-9 demonstration
- Multiple Social Media posts were put out

B. Department Stats

Chief Kreitz reported the total number of incidents for the month of April 2025 was 1,660. He highlighted some of the statistics for the month.

7. UNION PARTICIPATION

None.

**Commissioner Caporale made a motion to adjourn at 9:30pm.
Commissioner Money seconded the motion.**

Motion carried unanimously,

Respectfully Submitted,

Issy Caporale
Police Commission Secretary