



**WATERTOWN POLICE COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES
WATERTOWN TOWN HALL
61 ECHO LAKE ROAD
WATERTOWN, CT
WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2026 - 7:00 P.M.**

1. Convene Regular Meeting

Chairman Richard Antonetti called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

PRESENT: Richard Antonetti, Chairman
Carmine Verno, Secretary
Robert McCarthy
Richard Rossi

ABSENT: David Jannetty, V. Chairman

ALTERNATES
PRESENT: Brian Mays

ALTERNATES
ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT: Joshua Bernegger, Police Chief

3. Public Participation

Frankie Popilowski stated the last time I was online you couldn't hear when Richard Antonetti started talking, it blocked everybody at home. Ms. Popilowski thought it was great if we could get a new police station and that she did not like the speed cameras due to having no privacy.

4. Minutes Approval

a. Regular Meeting – April 8, 2026

Motion: Carmine Verno seconded by Robert McCarthy to approve meeting minutes of April 8, 2026.

Discussion: none.

Motion passes unanimously.

5. Correspondence

a. Correspondence from Mr. Victor Torres regarding a request for a traffic study of Mt. Fair Drive and Visa Drive in Watertown. – Joshua Bernegger has spoken to Mr. Torres and did go out and look at the intersection in question as did the Public Works Director, Jerry Lukowski. We have stepped up enforcement there since his complaint came in and caught some violators running that stop sign, most of which are residents of that neighborhood. The Public Works Department will include that intersection to enhance the paint on the road and putting a stop bar there which it currently doesn't have so it will be more visual cues that you need to come to a stop there.

b. Request from Ms. Jodana Montero regarding a request for a "handicap" parking space at 47 Central Avenue in Oakville. – Joshua Bernegger stated Ms. Montero has a handicap son. The ramp that leads out of their house leads directly onto the front walk, which leads directly to the road, not to the driveway. Every now and then neighbors park and block the sidewalk right there. Ms. Montero was wondering what possible solutions there could be to the problem. The remedy would be the commission to approve a handicap parking sign to put in front of their home, which is within your authority as the local traffic authority to do. But anyone with a handicap placard could park there, it would not be their personal parking place. I think Ms. Montero should come and speak to the commission about what exactly the issue is and what the remedy would be. I have been unable to get back in touch with her.

Chairman Richard Antonetti suggested tabling this matter on the request that she appear at our next meeting.

Motion: Carmine Verno and seconded by Robert McCarthy: To table the request and see if we can make contact with the person.

Motion passed unanimously

6. New Business – none.

7. Old Business

a. Mr. Greenwood's request for a "Stop" sign installed at the intersection of Belden and Trumbull Streets.

Joshua Bernegger stated this request started last month and we agreed we needed more data from that roadway before the commission can make an informed decision. We haven't had any accident history at this location. We employed a stealth radar device to start collecting data and it was installed a week ago. I would like to get 4 weeks of data, then present that next month to the commission as far as volume and speed.

Motion: Carmine Verno seconded by Richard Rossi: to table until we receive the appropriate documentation.

Motion passed unanimously

Joshua Bernegger stated these requests for stops signs for reconfiguring intersections, the

manual on uniform traffic control devices, the guidance that is provided says that an engineered study should be performed with the installation of any new stop sign and that particular study should be recommending a stop sign based on warrants that are listed in that manual. In deviating from that guidance would expose the town to liability should an incident happen at that intersection. The Director of Public Works and I have been trying to figure out what the most cost-effective way would be to have an actual engineered study done of those intersections. There is no budget in the town that funds traffic studies, that conversation would have to be had with the Town Manager as well.

b. Update concerning the Department of Transportation evaluation of a passing zone located in the vicinity at 251 Litchfield Road. – no further update from the DOT.

8. Chairman's Report: Discussion of a Police Station/Community Center – no report at this time but we will have an extension report at our next meeting. I am confirming some printing to gather all the documentation regarding a new Police Station/Community Center for the next meeting.
9. Chief's Report
 - a. April, 2026– Monthly Department Activity Report
Joshua Bernegger reported:
 1. The Watertown Police Department has one recruit officer attending the police academy in New Haven, scheduled to graduate on July 30th.
 2. Conditional offers have been given to two additional applicants, who will be replacing Deputy Chief Dominguez and Officer Marinaro, who announced his resignation. Background investigations are underway. Academy seats have been secured in July and August.
 3. A new application process for police officers has been initiated to find a candidate to replace Master Sergeant Jay DeMarest who will be retiring in September.
 4. Deputy Chief Dominguez's last day of employment in Watertown was May 7th. She was sworn in as the Town of Stratford's new police chief on May 8th. We wish her well in her new role.
 5. An application process for the deputy chief position closed on Friday, May 8th. Active lieutenants in the Watertown Police Dept. were eligible. All three lieutenants have submitted applications. An interview process is being scheduled. A new deputy chief should be named prior to the next Commission meeting.
 6. A lieutenant's promotional process has been posted, with a deadline of May 15th for eligible employees to submit their letters of interest.
 7. Dispatcher Nick Ciaburri has submitted his resignation, with his last day of work scheduled for May 19th. An application process is in the works to find a qualified applicant for the vacant position.
 8. The Town of Watertown Radio Communications Upgrade Project continues as scheduled. NORCOM is working on installing new equipment at each of our tower sites and installing mobile radios in police and public works vehicles. Motorola anticipated the delivery of the fire

department's radios in June; however, they are now reporting it may be November or December before the radios become available.

The commission extended their support for the Deputy Chief's new position.

10. Adjournment

Motion: Robert McCarthy seconded by Carmine Verno to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Motion passes unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Antonetti
Chairman