



City of Groton, Connecticut

Police and Community Together (PACT) Committee Meeting Minutes

Zbierski House
1 Beach Pond Road
Groton, CT 06340

6:30 PM

Thursday, April 20, 2023

I. ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. The following PACT members were present: Mayor Keith Hedrick, Chief Erick Jenkins, Captain Trish Lieteau, Wendy Connal, Christina Gore, Gary Trahan, George Baloga, Doris Pulaski, and Juliette Parker. Community members who were present are Bernadette Kunkemoeller, Paul Kunkemoeller, Leslie Forbes, Pam Daniels, James Orlando, Bill Robarge, Craig Mittleman, Marti Hinchey, Cheryl Auerbach, and Peter Auerbach.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made to accept the March 16, 2023 Minutes by Wendy Connal, seconded by Chief Jenkins. The motion passed unanimously.

III. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Mobile Meetings - A recap was given of previous mobile meetings. The next mobile meeting is planned to be with restaurant representatives.
- B. Investigations – There are no new updates on the investigation of the homicide that occurred a year ago.
- C. Cameras – Four of the cameras have arrived. The best positions for the cameras are have been so that all evacuation routes from the city are covered
- D. COVID kits and KN95 masks are available at the front desk. Their availability has been posted to the Facebook page. Vaccines are administered at the Farmer’s Markets and at L&M.
- E. Free gunlocks are available in the lobbies of both the police department and the municipal building.
- F. “Honkers” works year round to keep Eastern Point Beach free of Canada geese. This is done so that goose poop does not affect the water quality in a way that would cause the beach to be closed.

IV. CHIEF UPDATE

- A. Chief Jenkins is retiring in July 7, 2023.
- B. Work continues on a high priority federal agency case.

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- C. A motor vehicle stop resulted in finding narcotics, counterfeit money, scales, and weapons in the car.
- D. A stolen car was found, and the woman who stole it was apprehended. This was the fourth car she had stolen, all from the sub base.
- E. There were three cases of people evading accidents. One person who had been in a one-car crash was arrested. Two other cases involved two car accidents.
- F. Little League Opening Day was successfully held on April 15, 2023, at 9:30 a.m.
- G. The Eggstravaganza Egg Hunt was successfully held.
- H. The City Police Budget was OK'd by the Town Council on April 15, 2023. The RTM subcommittee and full RTM reviews will follow. The RTM public hearing is Opening Day, May 1, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at Thrive 55. The full RTM review is on May 4, 2023.
- I. The police force still needs two additional officers.
- J. Cleanup Day will be held April 22, 2023. Volunteers should come to the Municipal Building between 9 a.m. and 12 p.m. Gloves, maps, and trash bags will be provided.
- K. Leaf pickup will continue on Wednesday.
- L. Food distribution will occur at St. John's Church from 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. on April 28, 2023.
- M. Statistics: Since the last report, there have been 969 calls for service, 519 self-initiated checks, 240 motor vehicle stops, 70 medical calls, 6 emotional support calls, 184 warnings issued (171 verbal and 13 written), 190 parking tickets in the EB area, 43 arrests, 7 DUI arrests, 9 Failure to Appear arrests, 3 hit and run events, 7 driving while under suspension, and 37 motor vehicle infractions. The statistics will be put on Facebook and will be reported to the RTM

V. NEW BUSINESS

- A. A volunteer hearing official to hear contests of parking tickets once a month is still needed.

VI. NEW BUSINESS – PUBLIC DISCUSSION

- A. Chief Jenkins recapped the concerns that the public had aired at the previous Zbierski House meetings: speeding on Shore and Beach Pond, signage, cars at the beach shining lights at night, parking on Beach Pond, and gate closings at the Beach.
- B. Changes in signage at West Meech and Hillside are complete.
- C. Police presence in the area and timely closing of the beach gates is monitored.
- D. Speeding – Four solar speeding signs are in the budget. Many traffic stops have been made on Eastern Point Road. A member of the public said that the sign type that blinks red and blue is more effective than what was ordered, according to NHTSA.
- E. Digital signs which allow for three lines of text are being considered to remind drivers of the risks of speeding near the beach.
- F. The matter of a resident parking area on Beach Pond was discussed. A request should be made to the mayor and the City Council for resolution, in accordance with City Ordinance #215.

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- G. Beach Pond is scheduled to be repaved in the July/August time frame. Some of the parking issues can be reviewed then.
- H. Speed bumps were discussed. A speed bump study has been done, and the fire department is particularly opposed to speed bumps. Pfizer had them and had them taken out as unsatisfactory. If cars are damaged by the speed bumps, lawyers have advised that the City would be responsible. The public is still interested in them, particularly in speed humps and speed tables. Other shore line towns have them near their beaches. George Baloga said that speed bumps he encountered in one town seemed to be particularly good. A member of the public said that NHTSA may know of newer designs, and that if a speeding car hits someone, the City might also bear responsibility. The mayor said that he would investigate further.
- I. The addition of crosswalks was suggested by the public, particularly to control pedestrian street crossings near the beach. There is however, no place to put a landing in that area at this time.
- J. It was reported that when there are many cars parked on Shore Avenue in the area of the old Griswold Hotel Beach that a traffic problem is caused because there is only room for one care to pass. The problem is particularly severe in the area where the road has a sharp curve.
- K. The foul smell experienced near the foot of Tyler Avenue is still happening. It is possible that check valves are needed to keep salt water out of the street drains. It is still not clear whether the smell is worse at the incoming or outgoing tide. Study of the problem will continue.
- L. The City is studying rising ocean resilience.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Wendy Connal, seconded by Christina Gore. It was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

The next meeting will be held in City Council Chambers, on May 18, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.