

**BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING  
JUNE 16, 2026, AT 6:00 p.m.  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**PRESENT:**

Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu, Chairperson  
Commissioner Rory Ghio  
Commissioner Dean Kilbourne  
Commissioner Paul Lemieux  
Commissioner Terry Lewis  
Commissioner Gloria Sapp Smith  
Council Member Sue Tyler  
Board of Finance Liaison, Jon Mace

**ABSENT:**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Zoppo-Sassu called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

**2. PRESENTATION OF AWARDS**

Officers Laroche, Yager, and Follett received the Medical Lifesaving Award for assisting someone experiencing a medical emergency while in their vehicle.

Officer Pirog and her partner, K9 Frankie, received a Letter of Commendation for their assistance with multiple outside agencies during April.

Connecticut State Police Trooper Pecora received a Letter of Commendation. Trooper Pecora, along with his K9 partner Sammi, assisted BPD officers during a narcotics investigation.

Lt. O'Connor and Officers Iurato and Jacobs received the Exceptional Service Award for their efforts in developing a new interactive, scenario-based training seminar.

**3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Jim Pelletier, President of the Bristol Police Union, spoke regarding the traffic enforcement cameras and vape shop ordinance.

Nick DeFazio, Bristol Police Officer, spoke about the Honor Them Community Ball Hockey Initiative.

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Lemieux moved to APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE MAY 19, 2026, REGULAR POLICE BOARD MEETING, Seconded by Commissioner Sapp-Smith.

VOTE: UNANIMOUSLY PASSED

**5. APPROVAL OF VARIOUS MONTHLY REPORTS**

Commissioner Lewis moved to APPROVE MONTHLY REPORTS AND PLACE ON FILE, Seconded by Commissioner Ghio.

VOTE: UNANIMOUSLY PASSED

## **6. CORRESPONDENCE**

None

## **7. COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Awards Committee Clarification and Guidance

At the last Police Board meeting, the Board asked Corporation Counsel for clarification and guidance on the Awards Committee. Moving forward, it will revert to a departmental committee without Commission representation.

Commissioner Ghio moved to ACCEPT THE GUIDANCE FROM CORPORATION COUNSEL AND PLACE ON FILE, Seconded by Commissioner Sapp-Smith.

VOTE: UNANIMOUSLY PASSED

Mayor Zoppo-Sassu clarified how the process will work. There should be an appropriate notice of that committee, and notes should be taken and recorded in accordance with the proceedings. The Mayor asked that any other concerns regarding the awards specifically be directed to the Mayor.

## **8. OLD BUSINESS**

8.1 Chief Morello

8.2 Police Commissioners

Council Member Tyler responded to Jim Pelletier, Union President, regarding his participation in last month's meeting. (Copy attached)

Commissioner Lemieux asked about the signage on Memorial Boulevard regarding the new ordinance prohibiting no-through trucks. Chief Morello will look into the signage.

## **9. NEW BUSINESS**

9.1 Chief Morello

i. Chief's Report

Chief Morello brought the City's recent vape shop ordinance to the Commissioners' attention. Chief Morello noted that a new ordinance requires vape shops to be licensed through the city. Part of the licensing process is that the police department is now responsible for conducting requisite background checks and annual compliance checks. The Ordinance Committee originally proposed a licensing fee of \$750. The licensing fee was intended to curb the proliferation of vape shops throughout the city. Despite these concerns, the ordinance committee voted to reduce the fee to \$250.00. Chief Morello asked that this ordinance be revised, either by substantially raising the licensing rate or by removing the police department from the added responsibilities outlined in the ordinance altogether. Chief also suggested that, to be responsive to the community's legitimate health concerns, this matter be referred to zoning to restrict such shops.

Council Member Tyler stated that she is on the ordinance committee and that the Committee initially discussed a \$750 fee; it was lowered due to significant input from our local businesses. The Committee did not want to be a council that puts businesses out of business. There are public safety and health concerns, and having a licensing procedure and a fee adds another layer. DCP already does some checks; this is just adding another layer, where the police department and/or the public, BBHD, can also step in from time to time.

Mayor Zoppo-Sassu asked Councilman Dickau to provide an overview of concerns expressed by the business community and others regarding the level of licensure. Councilman Dickau stated that there wasn't much discussion at the hearing about the licensures. The main concern that came up often was how close many of them were to schools. Language was sent to zoning requiring vape shops to be 1,000 feet from any school or place of worship and 3,000 feet apart.

Commissioner Kilbourne moved to REFER BACK TO THE ORDINANCE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER THE INPUT AND COMMENTS BY THE CHIEF OF POLICE, SPECIFICALLY REGARDING THE FEE STRUCTURE AND INVOLVEMENT OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT, Seconded by Commissioner Lewis.

A discussion was held.

Commissioner Ghio stated that the fee should cover all costs incurred by the city. Commissioner Ghio asked the Chief to conduct a cost analysis to determine the appropriate fee.

VOTE: UNANIMOUSLY PASSED

Chief Morello reviewed the items under the Chief's Report.

Commissioner Lewis moved to PLACE THE CHIEF'S REPORT ON FILE, Seconded by Commissioner Sapp-Smith.

VOTE: UNANIMOUSLY PASSED

9.2 Police Commissioners  
None

## **10. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Commissioner Kilbourne moved to CONVENE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS A CANDIDATE FROM THE ENTRY-LEVEL POLICE OFFICER ELIGIBILITY LIST AND TAKE ANY ACTION AS NECESSARY, Seconded by Commissioner Sapp-Smith.

The following will go into executive session: Mayor Zoppo-Sassu, Commissioners Kilbourne, Lemieux, Sapp-Smith, Ghio, and Lewis; Council Member Tyler; Chief Morello; and Deputy Chiefs Moskowitz and Osborne.

Commissioner Kilbourne moved to CONVENE INTO PUBLIC SESSION, Seconded by Commissioner Sapp-Smith.

VOTE: UNANIMOUSLY PASSED

No votes were taken in executive session.

Commissioner Ghio moved to REMOVE CANDIDATE #13 FROM THE ENTRY LEVEL POLICE OFFICER ELIGIBILITY LIST DATED MAY 29, 2026, Seconded by Commissioner Sapp-Smith.

VOTE: UNANIMOUSLY PASSED

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Ghio moved to ADJOURN, Seconded by Commissioner Sapp-Smith.

VOTE: UNANIMOUSLY PASSED

The regular meeting of the Board of Police Commissioners called for the 16th day of June, 2026, was  
HEREBY ADJOURNED AT 7:25 p.m.

*Lisa Ziogas*  
Recording Secretary

DRAFT

I appreciate this opportunity to address the message that was delivered last month by Officer Pelletier. I apologize ahead of time if it goes over 7 minutes and 43 seconds, but I find it crucial to respond, not only to myself and the commission but to all the BPD officers, their families & friends.

As some of you know, I was a Bristol Police Explorer in the 1980's, had a short stint as a part time Plymouth Police Officer before being hired by Farmington PD where I spent my 27-year career. My first marriage and the father of my daughter was a Bristol Police Lt, who ended up becoming Chief here. Many of my family members were law enforcement officers, and many of friends, neighbors, and real estate clients are/were LEO. My blood runs blue.

First, I would like to thank Officer Pelletier for standing up and speaking at last month's Police Commission Meeting. Not many people will speak at a public meeting to share their thoughts and concerns. But one who does utilize their first amendment rights should also use caution to speak factually and avoid gaslighting and political grandstanding.

Last month Officer Pelletier started his speech with the assertion that the men and women of BPD felt unsupported by me, because the commission was evaluating the question of and details of the Awards Committee vs. a Police Commission Sub Committee. The Awards Committee has long been thought to be a POLICE COMMISSION subcommittee. A notion that the Chief, the DC's and the Commission have all agreed on. So instead of reviewing, correcting and clarifying a process to improve efficiencies for the PD, as well as the Commission, it was spun it into "City Councilwoman Sue Tyler doesn't support the PD". Thankfully most of the BPD didn't buy into this reality distortion and know that they are greatly supported and appreciated not only by me, but the entire commission and all our elected officials. Many of our officers and employees clearly understand that the Commission has different roles and responsibilities, and **a decision on policy does not affect support for the department**. I am perplexed at why Officer Pelletier would play into theatrics instead of participating in fixing policy and procedures in a clear and professional manner. Officer Pelletier's two primary roles currently; Accreditation Officer and Bristol Police Union President demand otherwise. His actions haven't represented the interests of the officers or enhanced the image of the members of this department and certainly haven't upheld professional and operational excellence.

Let me provide some historical & factual background just on the topic of the infamous Awards Committee.

- Over the last four years, Commissioner Ghio (Chair of Award's Committee) has had many discussions with me and other commissioners about the Awards Committee

process and the frustrations of it being a PC subcommittee vs. a Department Committee. A couple of examples being rules pertaining to a public meeting and the Commission voting on minutes of a meeting after awards have been issued.

- Commissioner Ghio asked me to attend the March Awards meeting, out of his frustration over the process. I attended this meeting and was surprised when I received a cold and unwelcoming response from two officers in the room. I sat respectfully, only contributed one thought which I felt was brushed off by these two. Immediately after that meeting I spoke with the Chief (in a pre-scheduled meeting) and shared with him that I had been sent by Commissioner Ghio and I outlined many of the concerns. The Chief discussed how times have changed and this generation needs more “pats on the back”. He finished our conversation on this topic by saying maybe he would go to the next meeting to check it out himself.
- When the minutes of the March Award Committee came out in the agenda for the March Commission meeting a couple of weeks later, it was noted that my attendance was listed as “Public Participation” and the Chair was listed as absent. Following a call from Commissioner Ghio about this, I sent an email asking that this be corrected. DC Osborne reached out to me. Most of this conversation was fixated on whether I could attend the meeting in Commissioner Ghio’s place. DC Osborne also insisted on knowing about some of the other concerns and wasn’t satisfied when I first said that if the Commission came up with any changes it would go through the Chair to the Chief. Due to more insistence, I gave DC Osbourne a couple of examples such as if this is a public meeting it shouldn’t be held behind locked doors in the Chief’s conference room, which was not accessible to the public. All of this was very bizarre to me that there was so much push back by police administration to decide who & what & how of a Commission subcommittee.
- At the March Commission meeting, Commissioner Ghio clarified that if he couldn’t attend an Award’s meeting another commissioner would be sent and be his designee.
- As the April awards committee meeting approached Commissioner Ghio asked me again to cover the meeting. This one had been moved to City Hall because of my conversation with DC Osbourne about the public meeting location. Three award submissions received by Commissioner Ghio were shared with me and subsequently two other police commissioners so other thoughts could weigh in.
- Again, I walked into the Award’s meeting on April 7<sup>th</sup>, I felt disdained by the same two officers that I was attending. The tone of this meeting was very tense and was the most uncomfortable that I have ever experienced in all the public meetings that I attended in my four and a half years with the Council. I made the mistake of thinking that my previous conversations with the Chief (who was not present) and

with DC Osborne (who was present and ran the meeting) had already shared the Commission's questions with members of Committee (evident to me by the meeting location change).

- I did refuse to sign one form that DC Osborne repeatedly tried to get me to sign, and my response more than once was I would speak to the Chief first. That being that the form had two signature lines, the Chief and the Chair (which I was supposed to be).
- At the conclusion of this meeting, I contacted the Chief and asked him to meet with him. We met a few hours later briefly and texted later that evening. The Chief had already gathered his information and determined that I was "at fault". Despite one of my text messages being "I am not going to tolerate any more BS or disrespect from JP", the Chief never even acknowledged or questioned this statement. In my opinion it was because the Chief, like others, was fully aware of Officer Pelletier's long-time attitude and aggression towards me (spanning back to the previous Mayor).

At the end of April, the Office of the Mayor received a three-page letter from the Police Union Attorney Eric Brown. Included in this letter was the Union giving the city "Notice of Prohibited Practice under MERA and Demand that Harassment Cease". I was identified as the alleged harasser, towards Officer Pelletier. Detailed in the letter from the attorney was a motive, that I was "upset that meeting participants did not agree with her positions", and a false claim that I "used her text message exchange with the Chief of Police to press him to open an Internal Affairs investigation against Union President Pelletier. The Chief refused, having spoken with all individuals present in the room and having concluded that the conduct at the meeting was attributable to Commissioner Tyler and not to Mr. Pelletier."

There doesn't seem to be any of Officer Pelletier's comments about the Awards meetings or the actual issue at hand that weren't twisted or taken out of context. I know this because more than a few officers who have reached out to me privately to share their displeasure about this campaign waged against me.

Also, during last month's speech Officer Pelletier made comments about me saying that I am trying to "silence or retaliate against officers", reminding everyone of my "pushing for an outside chief" two years ago, and claiming that I have animosity towards and am undermining the Bristol Police Department. All these words and mischaracterizations are right out of the playbook of former mayor Jeff Caggiano. Officer Pelletier should know that Jeff admitted in front of two witnesses on Tuesday April 23, 2024, in the Mayor's Office that it was Officer Pelletier that Jeff had spoken to about "me pushing for an outside chief" and attributed the idea of having a vote of no confidence in me only to Officer Pelletier. Why

was Officer Pelletier intimately involved with this political narrative, created by the former mayor to spin his own agenda.

I unabashedly and adamantly state for the record that I support 100% the men & women of the BPD, that I have never harassed or retaliated against any officer and NEVER suggested or encouraged the Chief to IA anyone.

There were so many other comments and claims that Officer Pelletier made last month that I feel the need to address, but I will do so at another time and in a different format.

I will finish with some of my lingering questions.

- How does a review of policy or clarification of sub committee vs department committee turn into a circus?
- How did initial conversations between commissioners and police administrators be used to fuel claims of not supporting the officers?
- Why was a text exchange between the Chief and a City Councilwoman turned over to employees rather than discussed between the two?
- Officer Pelletier has my phone number. Why did he never attempt to speak with me? As everyone knows, I am open to conversing with anyone on any topic.

Susan Tyler