At the Meeting of the Board of Selectmen on Tuesday, February 16, 2021, the Board voted to go into Executive Session at 5:00 p.m. and adjourned to regular session at 5:37 p.m. Remote participation was also available due to COVID-19.

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Members Present: Manuel Silva, Chairman, Antonio Goncalves, Derek DeBarge, and William Rosenblum

First Order of Business: The Pledge of Allegiance

Visitations:

Sergeant Interviews:

6:00 p.m. – David Kornacki, Acting Detective Sergeant

Mr. Silva: I'm sure you know our procedure how we work this. We give you the opportunity to introduce yourself, tell us why you want to become Sergeant, we will ask you a few questions, and then you can have closing comments. And, hopefully we will have the Chief give us a little bit of insight in closing comments as well. The floor is yours.

Mr. Kornacki: Hi my name is Dave Kornacki. I've been with the police department for 26 years. I started as a Patrolman. I had some time as a Patrolman Supervisor. I've been in the Detective Bureau for 25 years now. I'm currently the Acting Supervisor of the Detective Bureau. To be honest, the position of Sergeant is not something I really aspire to. I love my job as a Detective. I think it is what I was born to do. I really am fascinated by the changes of laws that we face all the time and challenges that the police have to adapt to but as my career has reached the point where I am at, I feel like I'm ready to take more of a leadership, teaching and training role within the department because I am not going to be here forever. I have a ton of information that I have extracted from other officers and other agencies throughout my career that I think it is time to start diffusing that out to some other guys within the department. I feel like my career has more than prepared me for this position as a supervisor. Going into taking this test, I felt as though my strength was my experience within this department and I know that historically, experience wins out or test scores wins out. I was really inspired by Brad Tierney and Steve Ricardi with the effort they put into the test. It made me work hard. It made me probably work the hardest I worked on something I really focused on learning these books and studying for this exam and was able to get the highest score for the department. That is a demonstration of my commitment to taking this next step and becoming a supervisor with this department.

Mr. Silva: Thank you. Would anyone like to go first with questions?

Mr. Goncalves: Sure, hi Dave. How are you?

Mr. Kornacki: Good.

Mr. Goncalves: It's a question that I ask every police officer that comes in front of us that's looked for a promotion of any kind and even with the Chief, we understand that the Town has increased and a lot of different types of crime, what do you see as the biggest obstacle right now, year over year, what's becoming a bigger problem for us versus last year or the year before and how do you see combatting it?

Mr. Kornacki: I think Ludlow has really, I hate to be overly optimistic, but I think we have battled this opioid epidemic pretty well I think as a community. I think we were hit very hard early on much more than most communities surrounding us. I think there are a lot of resources within this community that have been very valuable embattling the problem, but I think there's still a problem. I think that is problem number one. I think the second problem, especially with COVID, and how much time people spend on computers, I think the future policing really is cybercrime. We are inundated with cybercrime. We have hundreds of residents in this Town that have been victimized by unemployment scams, we have online harassment, and the problem I see with that in policing is that these investigations are so labor intensive requiring search warrant after search warrant after subpoena and people want answers yesterday when they have a problem so I think those are the two biggest problems we have. The drug problem which I think we have made great progress with and really the future problems I see are really cybercrime related.

Mr. Goncalves: Do you look forward to a time where we have one or two more detectives in the bureau?

Mr. Kornacki: You know, absolutely. I really think...my career has been spent working in the detective bureau, it has always been understaffed in my opinion. But if you ask anybody whatever job they have they always feel overworked and understaffed. But absolutely, I feel that growing that detective bureau

would be great for the officers in the department because it is a position that people aspire to be. It is a position that there is a lot of ownership, a lot of autonomy, a lot of pride in that position and I think opening the detective bureau to having more officers would be great for morale. I also think that we are underserving our community by having a detective bureau the size that we have.

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Mr. Goncalves: I would agree. I know we talked about it Chief and even with the previous Chief, I think that is a bigger problem than speeders, or what ever is out there. I would love to see a little bit more.

Mr. Kornacki: The reality is the patrol is the backbone of policing. They make all the cases. The detective bureau is there to put things together afterwards. As a detective, we support every operation of the police department, we are the support staff. It's the community that expects to speak to a detective, to have a detective investigate their case and that type of thing. Really, being autonomous and having the freedom to leave town and work on a caseload or to carry a case through its fruition, it's an opportunity for us to be able to complete the work that a patrolman can't do because of the confines of their schedule.

Mr. Goncalves: And just one more question. I see you took five FBI courses.

Mr. Kornacki: Yes.

Mr. Goncalves: Are you the only one who took them in the department?

Mr. Kornacki: Actually, what's funny about that I did that when COVID first hit and we were pretty much. . .that was in April and May when police had a lot of downtime. We were trying to adjust to dealing with COVID. My feeling as a detective is a lot of the work that I do is face to face interacting with people communicating with people directly whether it's victims or suspects in cases and a lot of that was taken away from us and I found that we had, I felt like we had a lot of down time. So, I took it upon myself to find a way to occupy that time and that's when I found that course. And after completing it, the detective that works for me in the daytime, Alex Goncalves, went through the course as well. So, two of us are trained in that.

Mr. Goncalves: Yea, it was funny because I was looking through you see those five and they kind of stick out as being something especially cybercrime.

Mr. Kornacki: Probably some of the best training that I've had pertinent to the day I finished the training, I had a case where I used it. So, it has really been beneficial for the department for Alex and I to be trained.

Mr. Goncalves: In identity theft, it's gotta' be huge.

Mr. Kornacki: It absolutely is.

Mr. Goncalves: Depending on what you are looking at. I can just say from my personal experience with you it's a pleasure to work with you.

Mr. Kornacki: Thank you.

Mr. Goncalves: Everybody that we've been involved together with that had an issue or something that needed resolving they've been satisfied with the outcome.

Mr. Kornacki: That's my goal.

Mr. Goncalves: Thank you.

Mr. Silva: Anyone else? Mr. DeBarge.

Mr. DeBarge: Sure, I'll go. Hey, I got to read your background.

Mr. Kornacki: Yea, the shoe is on the other foot now.

Mr. DeBarge: Things come full circle.

Mr. Kornacki: Absolutely.

Mr. DeBarge: I actually started laughing when I was reading it. I was like this is just too funny.

Mr. Kornacki: It's really unbelievable.

Mr. DeBarge: I remember sitting in your office as nervous as I have ever been going through you walking me through how the process was going to go and now it's just funny.

Mr. Kornacki: I hope you were happy with the background that you read. I hope you are happy with my qualifications.

Mr. DeBarge: I'll tell you what. It's funny, this is probably one of the best cover letters I have ever read.

Mr. Kornacki: I don't write cover letters because I've been with this department for 25 years. Like I said, I had no. . .I love my job, so I spoke from the heart when I wrote that.

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Mr. DeBarge: It's easy to tell. I know your background. I know how long you've been with the PD. I know your work ethic very well. The cover letter like I said, it speaks volumes for somebody who doesn't know you. I can take myself away from knowing you and just be unbiased. It's an easy thing sitting here and seeing this, reading this as a stranger it's an incredible background. Your training and all of that it's, for 26 years and 25 of them are DB it's impressive.

Mr. Kornacki: Thank you.

Mr. DeBarge: Let me get into my questions. I try to go outside the box a little bit. Some of them may seem that way, some of them may not and some of them may get redundant between us as you probably well know so here we go. In terms of proactive versus reactive in policing, my question is in two parts. How will you explain your philosophy of proactive versus reactive policing to your shift along with your expectations of the officers on your shift and number 2, and I'll go back if you need me to, how do you consider yourself, proactive or reactive as a supervisor or a leader and why? Can you explain the difference?

Mr. Kornacki: Ok, first of all, I'd like to say that I think proactive policing is absolutely essential ok. The way to achieve that though is by having enough staff to accomplish that. So, the problem that I find as a detective, is often times we are reactive in the sense that we are responding, or we are taking reports that are completed by other officers and sometimes, if you remember, my desk it's still the same as it has always been. It's a disaster. It's like an archeological dig somedays. Where a problem comes after a problem, after a problem and I get to a point where I do feel like a lot of what is done is reactive and if we could manage things in a more proactive way, it would reduce the amount of problems that we have. So, an example of my experience as a proactive police officer, is I was a DARE officer for ten years and I think that is the most effective proactive program policing has ever come up with. It gets officers into schools, which I think is essential, it goes right along with our school resource officers and it creates a powerful positive relationship with the students of our schools and you can't get more proactive than that. It makes a police officer approachable, a friend, someone they can trust, and I think that is essentially what proactive policing is. As a supervisor, to ensure proactive policing, I mean I think the best, in dealing with drug cases, we try proactive approaches to address addiction. We have members of the detective bureau and the department are part of a program that after an event involving an overdose, we do visits to these homes and speak to people and offer them additional resources, so I think that in a sense is kind of proactive and reactive. It's reactive to a problem but its proactive in trying to prevent most problems. As far as other investigations go, there are a lot of crimes we simply can not solve. We try to convey ways to people to avoid becoming victims of those crimes. I did a talk at the Senior Center, probably the last person to speak at the Senior Center since COVID, where I talked about all the different email scams and sweetheart scams and things that I've come across and I think that educating the public of how to not become a victim of these types of things is an excellent example of proactive policing. Did I cover everything?

Mr. DeBarge: You did.

Mr. Kornacki: Ok.

Mr. DeBarge: I am going to go onto my next question which I think I already know your answer, but we are going to go there anyway. In our town, now and going forward, what areas do you see that are in the most need of immediate action? You have to exclude narcotics, traffic, and COVID issues and you can't spend any money.

Mr. Kornacki: Ok, so the training that Alex and I, I'm going to take some water. Is that ok?

Mr. DeBarge: Go right ahead.

Mr. Kornacki: The training that Alex and I took through the FBI cost the town zero. That is like I said to Mr. Goncalves, I think that cybercrime is the future. I think that to go back to your previous question, a lot of this stuff is extremely difficult to solve because our job as investigators is to follow the money. We can only follow it so far. If it stays within the United States, we can get our hands on it. Once it leaves this country, it's gone for good. So, really as a tie into your two questions, this education, this free

education that we sought out on our own, allows us to explain to our community how these things are happening. What can we do to prevent that? Some of the things can't be prevented but there are a lot of things that we can do, a lot of steps that we can take, protective ways through Facebook, through the things that we disperse through social media and what not. There's a lot of things that we can do to prevent ourselves from becoming victims. I've had some seriously huge fraud cases—Some that were unavoidable. Some that the victim couldn't do anything about. I've had other cases that were just as huge that in hind sight, and after speaking to victims they say I can't believe I fell for that. There's a big emotional component that comes with cyber fraud where somebody gets sucked into thinking something is happening that isn't, or they are being offered a deal that is too good to be true, and those kinds of things. I think when you explain to people listen, you know there are experts out there that pick up the phone and call to commit these frauds and when they fail with you, they learn. Much like being a detective. Every time I fail an investigation, I learn from that. I adapt to that situation. So, these fraudsters are doing the same thing. That is the crime of the future. It costs no money to be trained in that way. Just to throw in there, I was asked to be on the United State Secret Service Cyber Fraud Task Force which is like a force multiplier in the since that my being part of this group brings assets to this community that we wouldn't otherwise have. That's on my background if you caught that there. So, there's another aspect where we are bringing resources into this community by being attached to that unit that would cost millions of dollars to provide training to the level that some of these agents are able to help us out with. We had an issue here in town, I made a phone call and by the next morning we had three U.S. Secret Service Agents here because of my affiliation with that group which wouldn't happen otherwise, and it cost nothing.

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Mr. DeBarge: We like that.

Mr. Goncalves: Our favorite cost, zero.

Mr. DeBarge: Finally.

Mr. Kornacki: Finally? There's three from you?

Mr. DeBarge: Finally. Of course.

Mr. Rosenblum: You're lucky.

Mr. DeBarge: I have more.

Mr. Kornacki: I only have twenty minutes. That's why my cover letter was so long.

Mr. Goncalves: Probably started you early.

Mr. DeBarge: I have more but the Chairman would probably get upset. Alright, department morale. As a shift supervisor, you see your shift officers before, during and after their perspective tour of duty or shift. You deal with them on a professional and personal basis. I'll give you an example. My second week on the job, I had my first fail. My shift supervisor called me at home the next morning just to see if I was alright. So, you know how it is, you must do both professional and personal. In this time of COVID, also national outcry for police reform, some groups even calling to defund the police and recently our own Governor signing the Mass. Police Reform legislation, not to mention normal internal strife, it's incumbent upon you to keep the pulse of each officer on your shift and do the utmost to keep morale at positive levels. Do you have a plan for this? If you do not have a plan in place what steps should you take should you see morale either affected by one or dropping on the entire shift?

Mr. Kornacki: So, to address the morale issue, I think morale right now is pretty high. I think we are going through some tough times and I think our department has responded exceptionally to these tough times and I think sometimes it takes bad times to show your resiliency. I think our department has really rallied through all of this. I think we relearned how to patrol, how to investigate crimes, how to handle different situations in the conditions that we are now living. So, my feeling as a supervisor is. . . my job as a supervisor of subordinates is to make sure that they have what they need to do their job. I think that eliminates a lot of stress right there. Whether that be training, whether that be tools or assets, as a supervisor, my job is what can I do for you? My subordinates do not work for me, I work for them. I'm a conduit to the Chief of Police. My job is to make sure that they are happy and when they are happy they are productive and like you mentioned two weeks on the job, that's not the exception, that's the rule at the Ludlow Police Department. We are a family. We take care of each other. We know where everybody lives. We watch over each other. We pick on each other. We tease each other. We are friends to the end. We are friends and family. When somebody makes a mistake, we all make a mistake. When someone succeeds, we all succeed. I think that is the plan. That's the plan that's always been in place. It preceded me. It preceded this Chief. It's just the way we do things around here. It's

instilled in the way we carry ourselves as police officers. It comes naturally. I remember early on in my career some of the older guys picking on me and saying things but when I was having troubles or struggles, they were right there for me and you don't forget those kinds of things. You pattern your behavior after the things that you appreciate and want to emulate. I think that is just the natural way and with this Chief, I feel so supported by this Chief that he gives me the ability to go out there with confidence and do the job that I can do at my best because I know this Chief, supports good police work. Was there more to that question?

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Mr. DeBarge: Nope. Thank you. I'm all set.

Mr. Silva: Mr. Rosenblum.

Mr. Rosenblum: So, I eliminated one question since Mr. DeBarge came into my time. Just kidding.

Mr. DeBarge: I have no regrets.

Mr. Rosenblum: I know.

Mr. Kornacki: I'll answer it again or a different way if you want me to.

Mr. Rosenblum: No, I mean you partly answered it so I'm going to move on from that one. To the point you were saying proactive, reactive and educating the public is being proactive to it, I think educating the public is a way that we don't spend any money is being proactive in that manner. I like that, so I have two questions. First one, how would you handle a dispute between police officers?

Mr. Kornacki: We've handled plenty of disputes among police officers and most of that is handled in house. We are grown men and women, we are not going to agree on everything all the time. We are going to have different ideas or way something is going to be handled. As a supervisor, my job is to make sure the job gets done, gets done well and gets done right. Not tell you how to do it. You can figure that out. If this guy disagrees with this guy, so be it. We are going to talk about it like grown men and women and resolve our issues. Like I said earlier, we are a family, just like you would with a brother or a sister, you are going to have disagreements but when it comes down to it, and there is a crisis in this community, we will always pull together and work together side by side. There is not a single officer that I would not go anywhere with in this department. I would hope they would feel the same about me. So, we handle it. We handle things as adults informally for the most part. I can't think of serious situations where it's elevated to a level where it required anything more than that. We are professionals. Police officers are professionals and when we have disagreements, we handle them in a professional way.

Mr. Rosenblum: And lastly, looking within yourself, what do you see as your main weakness?

Mr. Kornacki: My main weakness. I was hoping you'd go with strengths.

Mr. Rosenblum: Your strengths, we have all those.

Mr. Kornacki: I must admit, my weakness as a supervisor in the detective bureau is I'm an active supervisor. I'm hands on. When I get my hands onto something, I have a hard time passing it on and letting that go. Primarily because that is the position. The detective sergeant and detective supervisors have primarily been like a Tony Ruscio, a player manager. So, it's a strength in a sense that my hands are in there, I dig ditches like the best of them. I think that as a supervisor as time goes by and which I look forward to is relinquishing some of that control over a case and teaching the guys and women that work for me how I've done certain things or passing information on to them so that they can have the tools that they need to do that so my weakness is taking too much ownership of things sometime.

Mr. Rosenblum: I wrote down control freak.

Mr. Kornacki: What's that?

Mr. Rosenblum: (Laughter) I wrote down control freak. That was just so I could. . .

Mr. Kornacki: You know what, you can call me whatever you want.

Mr. Rosenblum: No, no, no. I get that. It's always something that I've looked at as when you are trying to delegate to people is that you basically delegate based on their experiences and their willingness to take on responsibility.

Mr. Kornacki: I've been a detective for so long and a supervisor in the detective bureau for such a short period of time and I already see changes in the way that I handle things. I have some great people that work with me in the detective bureau that ask excellent questions, constantly asking questions, it's not

that I'm directing them. They are coming to me and asking me for guidance and that's a supervisor's dream.

Mr. Rosenblum: I'm good. Thank you.

Mr. Kornacki: Thanks.

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Mr. Silva: You are somewhat lucky, he took one of my questions, actually how you would handle a conflict between two officers that are directly under your supervision, not with you or anything, but just two of them that really aren't working well and how you would handle that. You kind of touched up on that so I'm good. The other question that I have is tell us about what you feel is the most traumatic instance that you had as a police officer and how did you handle it.

Mr. Kornacki: Wow, geez. I'll tell you what. I've got to be honest. You know what? I grew up in this town, I know a lot of families, I know a lot of people in this town. I've dealt with a lot of heartbreak through my career. I've dealt with a lot of death, suicides. I'd have to say without giving specifics about cases there's some suicides that I've investigated and been involved in that have been extremely, extremely difficult. Things that I think about, things I'll never get out of my mind. Car accidents I've seen. Those will never get out of my mind. There are people that I see that are family members of people that have died. I'll see them at Big Y or down the street and I'm immediately taken back to that. We carry a lot of trauma. We witness a lot of trauma. We deal with it the best we can. Some of us have a harder time than others and that's something as a community we need to work on, as a society we need to work on. We need to take care of police officers because we are taking care of you. Like Mr. DeBarge mentioned about police reform, budget cuts and defunding the police, I've never been prouder to be a police officer. I know what I do everyday when I come to work. I know the gratitude that I feel from the people that I help. I know I make a difference in people's lives. I don't care what they say on the news. I don't care what these protest groups have to say about police officers. One on one I've never had a problem with an individual. We had a Black Lives Matter march come through town and I was in that crowd and I talked to everybody there. I didn't have a problem with anybody. I sat down with one of the gentlemen that spoke in front of our police station. We had about an hour-long conversation and at the end of that conversation, I said we have about five miles of common ground and about two inches on each side where we disagree. One on one, society is just fine. We have to stop this group thing where us against them or this against that. That's the problem that we have. I'm rambling. I forgot what the question was. Trauma, yes. Tons of it. They'll be more and I'm ready for it because every time I deal with somebody who goes through trauma, I learn how to help them get through that trauma. That's rewarding to me. Like I said in my cover letter, I'm with people at their best of times and their worst of times. If I can help somebody navigate their life through a traumatic experience, then I've made a difference and that's why I took this job twenty-six years ago and that's why I still do this job.

Mr. Silva: That leads me right into my next question. Why did you choose to be a police officer? What made you say, I'm going to do this? I'm going to become a police officer.

Mr. Kornacki: I think that for me, I can't explain it. It's something that I always felt it was a part of me. Something that I always wanted to do. I remember being in this room sitting across a much different Board of Selectmen, three times to get this job. Every time I didn't get the job, I left this room and I said, what can I do to make myself a better candidate to get this job? Every time I came back, I was a better candidate for it. I want to help people. That is what I aspire to do. I'm on this planet to make it a better place to help people. That's all I want to do. And it's selfish because I get a lot of gratification out of that. When I help somebody, I enjoy that. In some ways I do it for me. I just like that feeling. I just hope not to come back before this Board for this Sergeant's position. I'd like to get it tonight and not have to interview for it again, so I'd like to change that about coming back for interviews.

Mr. Silva: Thank you. Chief is there anything that you would like to say or any questions you have at this time or do you want to wait?

Chief Valadas: I'm going to wait until the end to talk about Detective Kornacki.

Mr. Silva: Ok.

Chief Valadas: A little emotional for me.

Mr. Kornacki: It's been a long road. The Chief and I have spent a lot of time together.

Mr. Goncalves: I'd just like to say Mr. Chairman in reading through the piles of paperwork, one of things that popped out to me was where he states, he wants to improve the quality of life in our community. That's what it's all about. We look to you guys as a guiding light.

Mr. DeBarge: I like when he said he was being selfish.

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Mr. Goncalves: I don't think so.

Mr. Rosenblum: I don't think there's anything wrong with being selfish.

Mr. Goncalves: If he gets a charge out of that, then good everybody wins.

Mr. Kornacki: I enjoy it. It keeps me fired up. I'm probably more passionate about this job now as a result of sitting here right now and thinking about the future of this police department then I ever have in my entire career.

Mr. Goncalves: I can tell you the minor in Philosophy has really helped you.

Mr. Kornacki: You can joke about it, but it actually has. Any education is helpful. Any time you can step into someone else's shoes and understand what they are feeling. I work as a detective and we deal with narcotics, but I've probably spent more time talking to an addict about what makes them tick and what can I do to help them overcome their addiction than I have kicking in doors for sure.

Mr. Goncalves: I know. I hear you.

Mr. Silva: Ok, closing comments. If you have any. Anything you'd like to say to finish up?

Mr. Kornacki: I enjoyed this interview. I had fun. I want to be a Sergeant with the Ludlow Police Department. I want to be a leader. I want to help the young officers develop. I want to help them understand what this job really is. I want to help them to be proud to be police officers. Certainly, this community feeds right into that because I work with a lot of agencies outside of Ludlow, other towns and cities, federal level and state level I know for sure based on the things that I see that this community supports their police department. That provides me with a lot of energy to do the things that I want to do, and I would like to do that as a supervisor.

Mr. Silva: Well, thank you sir.

Mr. Kornacki: Thank you.

Mr. Goncalves: Thanks Dave.

Mr. DeBarge: Thank you.

Mr. Silva: Next candidate is Bradford Tierney.

6:20 p.m. – Bradford Tierney, Officer

Mr. Tierney: Good evening.

Mr. Silva: Good evening.

Mr. Goncalves: Hi, how are you?

Mr. Tierney: Good. I'm Officer Tierney.

Mr. Silva: Good evening, I'm sure you know what our procedure is. We are going to give you a few minutes to introduce yourself, tell us why you want this position, then we'll ask you some questions from the Board, then maybe if the Chief has a question or two which I'm sure he's already asked you, but he may you never know. Then you can give us your closing comments. The floor is yours Sir.

Mr. Tierney: Good evening. My name is Officer Brad Tierney. I'm thirty-two years old. I've been with the Ludlow Police Department for eight years now. I've lived in Ludlow since I was seven years old. I have a log of family here, currently married to my wife Abby. We've been married for eleven years now. We have two kids together. We have a ten-year-old and a four-year-old. I have a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice. I'm currently taking classes for a Master's Degree in Criminal Justice. I used to be in the Army. I served in Iraq from 2010 until 2011 as a military police officer. With the department, I'm currently a field training officer and have been for almost six years now, also the department's first and only Drug Recognition Expert.

Mr. Silva: Ok, thank you. With that, we'll start with our questions and we'll let Mr. Rosenblum go first this time.

Mr. Rosenblum: Congratulations on making it here tonight.

Mr. Tierney: Thank you.

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Mr. Rosenblum: I only have two questions because I know where the other questions are going. So, my first question would be, how would you handle a dispute among police officers?

Mr. Tierney: Between two other officers or between me and another officer?

Mr. Rosenblum: How about both scenarios.

Mr. Tierney: I guess I'd approach them similarly. I believe in handling those things privately behind closed doors. I'd take the two officers aside, speak to them, actually actively listen to them, see what their differences are and try to understand the positions they are coming from, try to find common ground between each other and probably approach the situation the same way if I were having a disagreement with somebody. Being a supervisor, it is very important to be able to actually listen, and not just wait for your turn to talk and talk over people.

Mr. Rosenblum: Ok, what do you see to be your main weakness?

Mr. Tierney: My weakness. I know everyone always wants to in an interview turn a weakness into a strength, but you are asking an honest question, so I'll give you an honest answer about that. For example, if I'm working on a project or something, I sometimes will get too focused on something if it's not working, I keep repeatedly trying to work at it until it works but then I won't. Sometimes it takes me a little bit to step back and look at the bigger picture and approach it in a different way before I can get it accomplished. For example, I was building a retaining wall in front of my house. There was an angle over there and I couldn't get the top brick to lay correctly. It just looked weird. I messed up a bunch of bricks and cut them all wrong. Not until I stepped back, and looked at it in a different light, I realized all I had to do was simply turn it sideways, something stupid like that.

Mr. Rosenblum: Well that's good. Thank you, I'm good.

Mr. Silva: Ok, Mr. DeBarge, you are on Sir.

Mr. DeBarge: Officer Tierney, congratulations.

Mr. Tierney: Thank you Sir.

Mr. DeBarge: I was impressed with your cover letter.

Mr. Tierney: Thank you.

Mr. DeBarge: The D.R.E., that's a pretty impressive thing to have on your resume. How was the school?

Mr. Tierney: It was very tough. It was definitely one of the toughest schools I've had to do for sure.

Mr. DeBarge: How long was that? I'm sorry to cut you off.

Mr. Tierney: It was about a little over two weeks total where we had to go Monday through Friday eight hours a day. We'd go to, forgot what town it was, we'd go out there. But after those two weeks, we had to go for about a week to Arizona to the Maricopa County jail where we did the evaluations on the prisoners. We did that for an entire week.

Mr. DeBarge: Nice.

Mr. Tierney: The closing of that was ridiculously tough. We had to take a test and memorize the D.R.E. matrix, I don't know if you've ever seen it, but we had to memorize it word for word and the test we had to do was a sixteen-paper test that we had to write from memory. It took us eight hours to do it. It was quite a process.

Mr. DeBarge: I would assume that a recertification is. . .

Mr. Tierney: The recertification doesn't seem too bad. You just have to do a certain amount of evals each year then have an instructor also watch one of your evals at one point within those two years.

Mr. DeBarge: Do you get to use it often?

Mr. Tierney: I think I've done it about maybe six times. I've done it for a couple of other towns. I've done it for Palmer and State Police also.

Mr. DeBarge: Right, I'm glad you get to use it. That's a good asset.

Mr. Tierney: Yes, that's a great tool.

Mr. DeBarge: Ok, so in terms of proactive versus reactive policing, I have a question that's got two parts.

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Mr. Tierney: Yes.

Mr. DeBarge: If you need me to go back, I'll go back of course. How would you explain your philosophy of proactive versus reactive policing to your shift along with the expectations you have of that of your officers? Second part is, how do you consider yourself as a leader in proactive versus reactive and why?

Mr. Tierney: My philosophy about being proactive, there are certain nights that as you know that being proactive is certainly feasible and then there are other nights where you are just on four to twelve shift where you are just going call after call after call and it's just hard to be proactive and you are just simply reactive at that point but a midnight shift starting out as a new supervisor you are probably going to have a lot more time to be proactive at that point and depending on what the mission is at that point, if there's like a string of B&Es in a specific area you could tell the officers to target that specific area, do more increased patrols, traffic stops, etc. in that area. I would certainly emphasize as a new shift supervisor not to be mostly reactive if you can help it. Spend your time wisely on the shift. Make our presence known in those areas. What was the second part of your question?

Mr. DeBarge: Your leadership. How would you explain the difference or explain your leadership as far as that type of philosophy, proactive, reactive?

Mr. Tierney: In the sense of leadership, I would try to be an active type supervisor leading from the front not just sitting there, try to be on the street with my officers and leading from the front basically. You set the standard and they'll follow suit.

Mr. DeBarge: In our Town now and going forward, what areas do you see that are in the most need of immediate action? Now there's a caveat to this. You have to exclude narcotics, traffic and COVID related issues and you can't spend any money.

Mr. Tierney: Can't spend any money. Do traffic issues include like drunk driving, drug driving?

Mr. DeBarge: Yup.

Mr. Tierney: And what was the other one to exclude, COVID, traffic?

Mr. DeBarge: Yup, most immediate need in our Town for policing. Can't say narcotics, can't say traffic, can't say COVID related issues and you can't add a division on to the police department by spending money.

Mr. Tierney: Taking a kind of different approach, I got this idea from when I had to study for the promotional exam from one of the books we had to read. For community survey which ties back community policing where it helps the police, or the citizens set the police agenda so in that you ask questions like measuring the fear of crime, perceptions of crime, and what the citizens see that we may not see as law enforcement. Through a community survey like that you can set another agenda to see what other citizens priorities are at that point.

Mr. DeBarge: I like that idea.

Mr. Tierney: That would be pretty low cost.

Mr. DeBarge: I like that idea.

Mr. Rosenblum: Survey monkey.

Mr. DeBarge: I think you can do a survey that wouldn't cost anything. I like that. Good idea. Last one. Department morale. As a shift supervisor, you see your shift officers before, during and after their respective shift. You deal with them on a professional and personal basis. I'll give you a quick example, on my second week on the job I had my first fatal. It was a nasty one. My shift supervisor called me the next day just to see how I was doing. Those kinds of things change the relationship between you and your supervisor, at least it did for me. I never expected that. In this time of COVID and national outcry of police reform, some groups even calling to defund the police, recently our Governor signed Massachusetts police reform legislation not to mention any internal strife. It's incumbent on you to keep the pulse of each officer on your shift and do your utmost to keep up morale at positive levels. Do

you have a plan for this? If you do not have a plan for this, what steps would you take should you see morale affected by one or morale dropping on your entire shift?

Mr. Tierney: I think it starts with getting to know your officers, just like the example you gave of your sergeant cared enough to reach out to you to see how you were doing. But start at the base line of getting to know them and knowing who they are. If they are showing up for their shift and you can see a whole different personality, then you know something is wrong with them at that point. Being an FTO for the past almost six years it's helped me develop a good relationship with a lot of the new guys because I spend eight hours in a day in a car with them for weeks on end, so you get to know them pretty well. You know how they function. Along the lines of morale too, something the Chief has done for quite a long time, and some kind of practice that I'd like to continue to do is always sends out emails for a job well done for like a well written report, a great arrest, or something like that. Everyone I talk to in the department just absolutely loves that and it does keep morale pretty high. It's our job, we do it but it's nice to be recognized for that once and awhile. I would like to continue a tradition like that and recognize officers when they do a job well done.

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Mr. DeBarge: Ok, great. Thank you.

Mr. Silva: Mr. Goncalves.

Mr. Goncalves: How are you?

Mr. Tierney: Good. How are you Sir?

Mr. Goncalves: Good. Congratulations for getting this far. Thank you for your service. I don't know if anybody had said that.

Mr. Tierney: Thank you.

Mr. Goncalves: I can imagine Iraq was quite an experience. An eye opener for you.

Mr. Tierney: It was quite hot.

Mr. Goncalves: Thank you very much. The certified drug recognition expert, how long was that of a course?

Mr. Tierney: It was two weeks long and then a week out in Arizona.

Mr. Goncalves: When did you do that?

Mr. Tierney: Back in 2019.

Mr. Goncalves: Every officer who has come to this Board while I have been here, I see a different. . .I'm a landlord in Town, I'm a businessman here in Town, I see a lot of stuff. What do you foresee as the problem we're carrying 2019, 2020, 2021 going forward? What do you see the beat is? Where are we falling a little bit behind? What's starting to crawl up on us here in Town?

Mr. Tierney: One aspect that you just brought up is the whole drug recognition expert, I think we should have more officers trained as a drug recognition expert and going to the Aride Classes which is a step just below that because, what were the statistics? I think it's each year there's 33,000 traffic fatalities and over a third can be attributed to drunk and drug driving. If we had more officers trained in the recognition of impairment for things like marijuana or other substances would be beneficial for our community to get those unsafe drivers off the street. It's only going to continue to increase with marijuana being legal in this State and other states around here now.

Mr. Goncalves: The amount of drugs and what's happening out on the streets increasing year over year.

Mr. Tierney: Oh, for sure.

Mr. Goncalves: You think a bigger detective department might help?

Mr. Tierney: A bigger detective department to further narcotic investigations absolutely.

Mr. Goncalves: One of the other things, I know we didn't mention it before, I know the department is handcuffed and you guys will kill yourselves to get a warrant just to find out that something is not allowed or thrown out and I know there things shared with me a couple of years ago and I was taken back that the amount of time you take to get a warrant and all the investigative work and you have crossed every 'T' and somehow it is not enough to get that piece of paper or when you do, it's one of theses. . . so education wise, you are in the process of getting your masters.

Mr. Tierney: Yes Sir.

Mr. Goncalves: You've got how much longer on that?

Mr. Tierney: I just finished my last two classes. I should be done in March of next year. I'm taking two classes at a time. It's a lot of work but it's worth it.

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Mr. Goncalves: I loved your email where it says the supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting which is a great philosophy. I would have expected that from Kornacki because he had a minor in philosophy, right? (Laughter) Very good congratulations. Thank you for applying. Good luck.

Mr. Tierney: Thank you.

Mr. Silva: Ok, my question. Give us an example of a traumatic time that you had being a police officer and how did you handle it?

Mr. Tierney: A traumatic time without getting into specifics, I like to have a good support network. My wife is very supportive of me and my career here, kind of being grounded and being with my kids brings me back to reality and continue with meditation. Those are all good tools that kind of handle traumatic events.

Mr. Silva: Ok, my last question is what made you choose to be a police officer?

Mr. Tierney: The guy that came in before me was actually a big influence to me growing up and he was one of the main reasons I set my sights on being a police officer.

Mr. Silva: He actually . . .

Mr. Tierney: I knew him from a very early age. Yes.

Mr. Rosenblum: We will not tell him that. (Laughter)

Mr. Silva: Maybe we should Chief, get him as a recruiter? (Laughter) We thank you. Chief, do you have any questions?

Chief Valadas: Like I said, I'll summarize at the end, but I do want to state for Brad particularly, Detective Sergeant Kornacki is Acting and so is Acting Sergeant Ricardi but Officer Tierney was right. . .the moment I took office and I asked who wanted to step into acting roles, Officer Tierney was right there. During COVID, I have needed, there has been so many times where we've needed officers to, I mean put in above and beyond. I mean you get asked to stay over another four hours on another shift, until 4am in the morning when you have a wife and two young children. This man has flat out, Officer Tierney has flat out stepped it up for my department and I will never forget.

Mr. Silva: Thank you. You Sir, do you have a final comment that you'd like to say?

Mr. Tierney: I just want to thank you for your time here today. I know it's a time-consuming process and it's pretty long sometimes, but I do appreciate your time tonight. Thank you.

Mr. DeBarge: Thank you.

Mr. Goncalves: Thank you.

Mr. Rosenblum: Thank you, have a good night.

6:40 p.m. – Stephen Ricardi, Acting Sergeant

(Mr. DeBarge and Mr. Rosenblum briefly leave the room.)

Mr. Silva: We'll need a couple of minutes. Since we are waiting, I will tell you our procedure you probably know what it is anyway. We let you introduce yourself as soon as the members are back, tell us a little bit about yourself and tell us why you want to be a Sergeant, and then we'll ask you questions from the Board and if the Chief has a question he'll ask and then we'll give you the final word.

Mr. Ricardi: Sounds good.

Mr. Goncalves: You know what's funny, I've lived in this Town my whole life and I don't think I know half of the Department anymore. I was a cook at Frank's Corner for a lot of years.

Mr. Ricardi: We've had a lot of changes.

Chief Valadas: We'll see when we get COVID done we'll be able to have more of you in a social setting we can have you guys meet a lot more of the young officers. I've sat down with Acting Sergeant Ricardi. We've actually done the math. Two-thirds of our department is under the age of 35-36. It's unbelieveable.

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Mr. Goncalves: It's amazing.

Chief Valadas: And we aren't that small. We are a pretty healthy department of 42 full time. I've talked to other Chiefs. They are no where close to our unit.

Mr. Goncalves: It seems like after Witowski retired, then it was just tons right behind him.

Chief Valadas: Seems to be cyclical. Promotions are cyclical. Retirements are cyclical.

Mr. Silva: With that Sir if you could open us up.

Mr. Ricardi: My name is Steve Ricardi. I'm a life-long Ludlow resident. I live here with my wife and my 5-year old daughter. My wife works for the school system in Town. We have another daughter on the way coming shortly. I began my law enforcement career in 2001 in Southwick where I was a reserve police officer and then transitioned to a provisional full-time officer. I left there in 2006 and came to Ludlow. In 2011 I was appointed to the Detective Bureau where I spent most of my time with the department. It has been really beneficial for me. I've been able to make a lot of contacts, work with a lot of federal agencies, state agencies and just kind of learn from the brightest and best supervisors, and investigative minds in our area. Since then I have taken an Acting Sergeant position as of June on the midnight shift. Other than those duties, since 2009, I've been on the Eastern Hampden County Narcotics Task Force which is a regional narcotics unit that handles narcotics investigations in the area. In 2010 I became part of the Hampden County Special Response Team, formerly Ludlow Special Response Team which handles tactically critical incidents and such in the area.

Mr. Silva: Thank you. We'll have Mr. DeBarge first.

Mr. DeBarge: Give me a second. Hey, congratulations.

Mr. Ricardi: Thank you so much.
Mr. DeBarge: How long have you been Acting Sergeant?

Mr. Ricardi: Since June.

Mr. DeBarge: On the midnight shift.

Mr. Ricardi: Yes.

Mr. Goncalves: That's why I don't see him.

Mr. DeBarge: Welcome back to the midnight shift. Alright, I'm going to get right into my questions. Are you able to hear out there? I'm kind of loud. First one of many, in terms of proactive versus reactive policing, I have a two-part question. How will you explain your philosophy of proactive versus reactive policing to your shift which since you are Acting, maybe you've already done that. So how will you explain your philosophy to your shift along with your expectation of this to your officers? Second point of this, is how will you consider yourself as a supervisor proactive versus reactive as a leader and explain.

Mr. Ricardi: Ok, as far as like my style, I think just because of my background in the Detective Bureau and narcotics in general you have to be proactive just because it's not necessarily going to come to you, you have to go and get it, you have to go investigate it so that would be my style. As far as explaining between the proactiveness and reactiveness I guess proactive, like I said, go out and get it, go out and find it, specifically, if we are specifically targeting something like speeding, parking lot narcotics or I don't know, stop signs or whatever like that we can go and do that. Reactive to me is more along the lines of let it come to you. Maybe there's an instance where, like we were supposed to have a terrible ice storm today that's probably a reactive day because you are going to get enough work for yourself between accidents, alarms, everything like that maybe you are not staffing wise, it's not safe for you to go hunting everything known to man. You let it come to you because it's the atmosphere dictates it.

Mr. DeBarge: Do you have an expectation of your shift? I mean they obviously answer is proactive on the midnight shift.

Mr. Ricardi: Yes, I think it's easier on the midnight shift because they are all young guys. They are chomping at the bit to learn to experience stuff so by nature they are proactive anyways. I would say that would be easy for at least the midnight shift.

Mr. DeBarge: Ok, in our Town and going forward, what areas do you see are in need of immediate action? Now there's a caveat to this. You have to exclude narcotics. You have to exclude traffic and you have to exclude any COVID related issues and you can't spend any money. So, you can't create a division in the police department to go at this.

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Mr. Ricardi: I thought we had endless money though?

Mr. DeBarge: Yea, you think so right. You have none.

Mr. Ricardi: A problem that has to be addressed now. I would say right now we are dealing with not so much house breaks right now but car breaks and stolen vehicles so like an easy way to do that is your proactivity for the evening where you. . .it doesn't cost us any money for us to research and map out and figure out what the hot zones are, what the areas we need to be aware of. It doesn't cost us money to reach out to any residents via Facebook or a phone call or whatever to let them know obviously lock your car, don't leave your keys in the car or maybe other things that they are not picking up on, like things that they need to look for and the second half of that, which I would incorporate it into anyways is house break ins because if they are not breaking into cars or stealing cars then they are breaking into houses so kind of the same, we could look at the times where our logs dictate where houses are getting broken into we can figure out time frames, areas and we can attack that proactively with our manpower on shift which doesn't cost any money.

Mr. DeBarge: Alright, I'm good with that. That's a good one. I like these answers. Impressive answers. For my third out of my eight questions, department morale. As a shift supervisor you see your shift officers before, during and after their respective shift. You deal with them on a professional and personal basis. I give you an example on my second week on the job, I had my first fatal. It was a pretty nasty one. My shift supervisor called me the next day just to see if I was alright. So, there's your personal level form. It meant a lot to me to know that my shift supervisor took that extra step. In this time of COVID also national outcry for police reform, some groups even calling to defund the police. Recently our Governor signed the Mass Police Reform Legislation not to mention any normal internal strife, it's incumbent on you to keep the pulse on each officer on your shift and do your upmost to keep up moral at positive levels. Do you have a plan for this? If you don't have a plan for it, what steps would you take should you see moral affected by one, or dropping in the entire shift?

Mr. Ricardi: I think you need to know your people. At least with my shift, they are a different generation than I am. So, each of them has different cues and what makes them tick I guess. So, if you know your people, and you can see how they are being affected or what they are being affected by, it could be something as simple as a text to them or maybe you pull them in the locker room and talk to them. If it's a big picture where you see the morale lowering in the entire shift, then there's got to be at least one center problem so as a supervisor you need to find that problem and address it to the best of your ability.

Mr. DeBarge: I'm good. Thanks.

Mr. Silva: Mr. Goncalves.

Mr. Goncalves: Yes. Thank you again and congratulations.

Mr. Ricardi: Thank you so much.

Mr. Goncalves: Nice to put a face to the name. A little bit along Derrick's questioning except that I want to talk about what I perceive to be the biggest problem in Town over the last few years getting intensively worse, and I think that the drugs are a big problem and it leads to the break-ins and entering, the cutting of the catalytic converters and everything else going on. What do we do to combat that? How do we get a handle on it?

Mr. Ricardi: So, I guess the approach is, like they say is the three prongs where you have the preventative, and the education, the law enforcement which we are and then you have the rehabilitation. Now, I feel like every part is probably missing a little bit, so they are not functioning well together. The preventative and the education, especially with COVID, it's kind of fell off, I know we initiated DARE again and we are trying to get word out, we have different programs where if someone overdoses, we have people that go to the house within 24 to 64 hours to talk to them. Sometimes it

goes over well. Sometimes it doesn't. Sometimes they run out of the house. I mean, but I think we need to figure that out. Step that up a little bit. The law enforcement end from our standpoint is that we go out there, we make arrests, and then they are let out quickly back on the street. We are not talking about just possession, we are talking trafficking, distribution, everything like that.

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Mr. Goncalves: I've said it previously and I know your hands are tied because you spend an awful amount of time trying to get together for warrants. . .

Mr. Ricardi: Right.

Mr. Goncalves: . . .and you either can't get it or when you finally get this person in front of the Judge, it's a little slap on the wrist and the message is sent that, I guess you didn't kill anybody so it's ok.

Mr. Ricardi: I mean we had a. . . as a fairly recently within the last year, we had. . .we worked with State Police drug unit and we raided a house with 7,000 bags. Superior Court charges everything like that and he's out very quickly for whatever reason and now he's a suspect in another Town in significant firearm theft. So, we do our thing. That's like the chink in the armor I think for the law enforcement portion and then the rehabilitation portion like its kind of abrupt, it's kind of brass but if someone doesn't want help you can't help them. Each part has. . . I feel like if each part gets a little bit better, then maybe they can work better as a whole, or it could be more successful.

Mr. Goncalves: Do you see more action on streets on the night shift at 12 o'clock, 12 to 8 or 12 to 7 or the 4 to 12 do you think?

Mr. Ricardi: I mean it depends. I guess it depends on what kind of drug you are talking about. If we are talking about heroin, it's a pretty early drug. People wake up early and they need it. It's almost like breakfast. You know what I mean. Like you start off and that's how I start my day. If you progress to different narcotics, then different types of days like party drugs or anything like that. I guess it's just dependent on that. With our opioids stuff, it seems like daytime is pretty hot and heavy but, night time can be the same too because everybody is on different schedules.

Mr. Goncalves: Probably at night, you are getting more of the crime to field the purchases the next day or whatever. Being a part of the special response and narcotic task force, does that help you out here in Town as far as getting a lot of stuff going? A lot of communication and maybe tips, you find out this guy in the blue car is the same guy they are looking for in Hampden or Wilbraham or something?

Mr. Ricardi: Yes. I've been able to develop a lot of great contacts in pretty much every surrounding Town. The State Police Narc Unit, we worked very well with, so I mean, I'll get calls on my cellphone, all the time, texts, everything like that from depending on what tips they get. They'll bring stuff into Town that they are like, hey, we have a tip on this. Can we get together next week and start working this case, yeah absolutely. From our standpoint in Ludlow, we never turn down help, we never turn down information and it's because we can't. It's resources that we need, and they are great assets.

Mr. Goncalves: Do you see us having a need to grow the detective department?

Mr. Ricardi: I would probably say first and foremost yeah.

Mr. Goncalves: You are the only one, out of all of the training and everything else you took a civil rights training course. Of the three candidates, you are the only one. What prompted that decision?

Mr. Ricardi: We get emails all the time about different trainings. So, it came out that they were offering this on Zoom. I reached out to Chief Valadas and kind of figured that in this role as Acting Sergeant right now, that's kind of like not my forte so I'm trying to better myself, learn more and it would make no sense for me to take a Zoom drug class as opposed to that as where I am right now. I reached out to Chief Valadas and he was all for it and approved it.

Mr. Goncalves: Thank you very much. Congratulations again.

Mr. Ricardi: Thank you.

Mr. Silva: Mr. Rosenblum.

Mr. Rosenblum: Yes, congratulations to making it to this point.

Mr. Ricardi: Thank you.

Mr. Rosenblum: I just have two questions because as we go through them we all notice we have some overlap. To the point you were saying about car break ins, I know that we always talk about anything with being safe and everything. We always say it. I always try to remember one thing, this is just me going off on a tangent for a minute, just saying, I had my car turned once in my driveway. I lock it every night now. The one thing I always do is that I make sure that anything that I have in my car that I would imagine leaving in there is not in plain view just because if someone comes up and even if it's something as simple as quarters or change, we know that . . .

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Mr. Ricardi: That's still something of value.

Mr. Rosenblum: . . . a couple of bucks is enough to get a fix for somebody. That was just my one point off break ins a and car thefts. Two questions. Pretty simple. How would you handle a dispute among police officers? Be it between two other officers or even another officer and yourself?

Mr. Ricardi: So, I would. . . if it were between two officers I would obviously separate them. If it was something that led to a heated discussion, obviously hopefully not violence, but a heated discussion, separate them, get both sides of the story and see if you can kind of play mediator and get them to a happy medium. Maybe it's an argument over Tom Brady playing for the Bucs and the Patriots or maybe it's something more serious but if you know your people and serve as a mediator, you could probably quell the situation very quickly.

Mr. Rosenblum: What do you see as your main weakness?

Mr. Ricardi: The easy answer would be I'm too hard on myself I've heard of public speaking or whatever, but I would say my weakness is, I have, I'm working on it, but it is hard for me sometimes to ask for help, not on things that I don't know how to do. If I don't know how to do something, I will 100 percent ask for help but if it is something that I know how to do I kind of like, I like things a certain way I like things written a certain way, I like things organized a certain way, kind of stubborn OCD, like that so if I know how to do it I'm kind of like, I'll take care of it. I'll do it. But knowing that this supervisory role you need to be able to delegate to people, that's something that I've been actively working on. It's, like I said, it's more like an OCD stubborn thing for me or like I know how I want things organized and written and displayed so I kind of just go that route.

Mr. Rosenblum: Ok, perfect. Thank you.

Mr. Silva: Well congratulations as well and I have two questions for you. The one question I have is give us an instance of a traumatic experience you've had as a police officer and how did you handle it?

Mr. Ricardi: So, probably the most recent one I can think of was a few years ago now where we had a double fatal car accident that was involving two young kids. I was probably second on the scene with another detective. At the time, I think my daughter was maybe 3. So, having a young child kind of, I mean it really puts it into perspective for you. So, my entire night was at the hospital interviewing people, with crime scene, um. . .at the scene with accident reconstruction at the scene with all the State Troopers doing all with what they do for a major car accident. So, I went home after I got out of work and me and my wife had a rule where you wake her you take her as far as the baby. I would never after work, I would never go in her room because I didn't want to wake her up, but that night I went in there, I sat in her rocking chair, it must have been probably an hour and a half and just looked at her, watched her, you know, kind of like gave me a little peace, kind of calmed me down a little bit. That's the best example I can say.

Mr. Silva: And, why did you choose a career as a police officer?

Mr. Ricardi: My Dad. My Dad was a Police Chief in Southwick. He worked his way all the way up the ranks so it's kind of been in my blood since a young, young kid. I've been hooked on it since I was little.

Mr. Silva: Ok, thank you and I don't know if Chief, do you have any questions?

Chief Valadas: I'll summarize at the end, but I will say specifically to Officer Ricardi, or Detective Ricardi, that he served in two roles. He had to. . . after again I asked for acting positions and Officer Ricardi was one of the first officers that said he was interested in a leadership role but I still, we still needed him to continue doing his supplemental work in the Detective Bureau because of his level of experience and how long he's been there. So, he's been, this officer has been going between these two roles, so he's a leader at night on patrol and then I see him during the day and I'm like, weren't you just working and then he's going out to do narcotics work. So, he really stepped it up also and I will not forget.

Mr. Ricardi: Thank you.

Mr. Silva: Your final comments for us.

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Mr. Ricardi: Ok, I just prepared a small thing. I just want to thank everybody for the opportunity. In closing, I'd like to reiterate I feel that I am a strong candidate for the position of Sergeant with the Ludlow Police Department. I come from a police family where I was able to watch my father make his way through the ranks from Patrolman to Chief through hard work, integrity, and professionalism. I was able to learn at a young age what it took to make these moves and what leadership looks like. Most kids listen to music on the radio when their parent's drove them to places. My car rides were slightly different. I remember car rides when I was about 10 listening to weekly tapes from dispatch on which calls my Dad went on that week. I've been hooked on police work ever since those car rides and have taken advantage of every opportunity given to me. I continuously make efforts to better myself during my Police Officer career. I feel that I have gained the confidence in my ability of leadership not only by my superiors but my peers as well. In working my way through the Police Academy my classmates had confidence in my leadership abilities throughout our rigorous and extensive journey and elected me Vice President of our class. A short time after becoming a Police Officer in Ludlow, former Chief McGowan had confidence in my leadership and abilities and appointed me to the Eastern Hampden County Narcotics Task Force which is a highly sought-after position not just at the Ludlow Police Department but any police department in the area. Later, former Chief Madera had confidence in my leadership and abilities and selected me for a position within the Detective Bureau which is also not only a sought-after position but one that is distinguished and respected among the law enforcement community. I have been able to earn the trust and respect and confidence of leadership of my peers at the Ludlow Police Department by being elected as the President of the Patrolmen's Union. Most recently, I'm honored to earn the confidence of leadership in Chief Valadas as he selected me to become an Acting Sergeant on the midnight shift in June. I feel that I have all the abilities and skills needed to be a successful Sergeant of the Ludlow Police Department and if promoted, the Ludlow Police Department gets a Supervisor that always shows up, never gives up, and is never too busy to lend a helping hand. Thank you.

Mr. Silva: Thank you Sir. We'll let Chief give us some comments, recommendations, or whatever he may have.

Chief Valadas: So, let me start. Good evening everyone. And I'll be as brief as possible because I know with these interviews as I have done in the past, certainly if there's a. . . I'll try to give you my experience within as much as possible. I'll start off by telling you that each one of these men. . . it started off as we had eight candidates that took the civil service exam. During COVID it was organized, arranged and still went on. We had the highest success rate we've probably had in twenty years that I can remember. As a matter of fact, we currently have seven candidates. We haven't had seven candidates since, we had eight candidates in 2001, so that shows a commitment that when I initially asked for Acting Sergeants, I had ten people come forward. That's one quarter of my Police Department that came forward and was willing to accept a leadership position. I thought that, that speaks volumes. Each one of these men, I care for them, I'm very proud of them, I told them that I'm very proud to work with each one of them every day. These three officers, right off the bat, they are all LHS graduates. I think that's kind of unique, the fact that all three of them are. They are all still residents in Ludlow. They are all fathers and they raise their children in this community. I think that is very important. You find that in municipalities where you have officers, they are just entrenched in their communities. I think it's what holds them. These men like many other officers, their avenues don't end here. It's a compliment for an officer to say that he could work at any level. All three of these officers could work at any level. They could work at the Federal level, they could work at the State level and of course certainly they are successful in the Municipal level. One of the Detectives, Detective Kornacki alluded to the fact that the Police Sergeant is the backbone of policing, so it's widely regarded in the criminal justice field when it comes to the law enforcement itself, your Police Sergeant in the community is, in my opinion, the most important and crucial person in that community. These are the men and women that 24/7, 365 in an agency like ours, these are. . .you have the front-line officers, and these are their support people. These are the ones. . .these are the people that take the complaints, they take the phone calls, they talk to utility companies, they talk to residents, they talk to commuters, they talk to out of state, we just had a warrant the other day where it was out of Colorado. Our agency, our Sergeant at night is dealing with an agency out in Colorado. So, they are the ones, they do the bread and butter of police work. The Sergeant is the most important role in the Police Department beyond any scope whatsoever. It is the number one thing that I depend on. You must have good front line leaders. The Civil Service process in general, it's very as you all know it is very statute driven and very tedious, so you can have an officer work his entire career and I've met officers where they are in their fifties and they just never pass. They just couldn't do it. The moment you run into a police officer in Massachusetts especially when you make a rank, they immediately ask you in another agency, and I've had encountered this with Federal agencies and State agencies and other municipalities of course they ask, are you a part of a Civil Service Police Department?

And, right away you know they know you have a certain amount of standing because you took an exam that is rigorous. I can't tell you what it feels like to sit there and watch young men and women and they are waiting in a room and there's hundreds of people there and some of them it's the culmination of their entire careers. They are trying to get promoted and others they are doing it almost like without any. . .very carefully because they are saying hey, I've only been a police officer, Civil Service law says in two years I can take an exam. So, they take the exam. I don't blame them. That's an excellent thing to do especially if you are looking to get promoted. All of these men, especially during the State of Emergency, they put in the work to pass the exam, so I want to give them as you all do I want to give them credit for that, ok.

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Each one of them has a certain specialty that they do. I'll start with Detective Ricardi, so his career as a young man, this man is 38 years old, he's been a police officer already for twenty years, so he started off very young. His father is an outstanding man, tremendous a legend in law enforcement locally here, very well known. I see his father's traits in this man here. His narcotics experience as he alluded to, he showed you is very extensive ok, so when I look at Detective Ricardi he's been able to bridge many different things and he takes that and the young patrolmen look at him and they look at him like a mentor with a lot of reverence because of his ability to delve into the narcotic cases. Now on top of that, with our department he has been given the ability to be an investigator again at a young age and I think that has benefitted him and he has accepted the responsibility that comes along with that.

Now Officer Tierney, you are looking at the veteran of the three. Again, I have a lot of reverence for that, but I look back on his career and like you said you know Mr. Goncalves, I mean what does it take for a man to leave everything he's got and go to a foreign country and do what he did. So again, after doing that, then he decides to serve in a civil sense, his home country, his home State, and then his home community ok, and you can see the quality in the man. The FDL program was a program that we initiated and is about 9 years old now. Officer Tierney jumped into the program and they have extra work when they do that and it's irregardless of being, of receiving a very small monetary benefit for that they do it because they want to. That's the only way that you agree with somebody working with you eight hours the entire shift for weeks. You have to want to do that because there are plenty of officers who would be, I'm ok, I just want to... let me do my job. The DRE as he explained is a rigorous course. You don't get too many officers. They have to be screened to do it. He mentioned the A-ride....we are on our way we probably have about maybe a third of the officers A-ride trained. We need to get in more. But, the DRE is, you have to be accepted into the program. I initially provided two candidates. One of them got screened out because of inexperience but he got screened in and they look at your reports. They want copies of their reports, exactly how many arrests he had made, right now it seems to be across the country, the National Highway Safety Administration reiterates that. The number one thing a community can do is you can do a lot of training on all kinds of different scenarios, be it incendiary device explosives, active shooter, whatever it might be, mass casualty the thing we are most likely going to have every single day in your motoring community, you are looking at one to five drivers most likely could be on prescriptions. It could be on illicit substances, but they may be impaired. So, they recommend get a DRE. The problem is most police departments go are like, are you kidding me? It's three weeks of training. I have to find a guy that'll do it, then I have to find somebody not only with the academic skills to do it, but they have to have the motivation to do it to go through all of that and then you have to obviously cover the cost so it's a tremendous task. I tell you, there are cities in Massachusetts that would love to have a DRE officer like Brad Tierney. He doesn't give himself enough credit, he gets called quite a bit from outside agencies and he's done quite a few for us, the State Police ball. So, I mean, you are talking about a skill level that's very high. Their matrix is a 45-minute interview. It's quite extensive. On top of that, so, commendations with all three of these officers you could certainly, they could get commendations, we could hand these things out like once a week, you know what I mean. I read through their reports and you see the exemplary, these exemplary acts, ok if anything a supervisory roll you are less on the street so you are more in a supportive roll, but an Officer like Tierney does front line stuff, he'll leave tomorrow go on duty, he'll go on a call and you could give me commendations for it because he's dealing with a whole gamut of different things that they have to do and I wanted to point that out.

Now, as far as Detective Kornacki, so with Detective Kornacki you are looking at a long career he mentioned the Secret Service I can sum up Detective Kornacki in a lot of different ways but one of the one things I will sum up for you is that I happen to be privy to be at a meeting last February so you have a Secret Service Agent that is driving from Boston to come out here to visit Ludlow ok, now we're a mid-size community but we do not necessarily hit the dashboard too much when it comes to like Boston Brickyard or the Fusion Center. We are not necessarily really high up there. Here's a Secret Service Agent coming to our agency to ask, may we please have the services of Detective Kornacki oh and by the way, we are not the FBI, we can't give you the money for the overtime, and we can't give you a cruiser but we really like your skills and we promise that if you allow him to join our task force, that we are certainly going to help you out. Now as he mentioned, that has come to fruition but, when you get

asked that, when I'm sitting there and I'm meeting State Troopers at the SPD Unit and RDB has a great reputation in a large part because of Detective Kornacki. So, his interviewing skills aren't matched. I haven't seen an interviewer like that, there's a few troopers that I would consider on his level. Again, all three of these police officers could work at any level but you could tell just by the way he has his skills.

With that said, I want to sum it up by saying, Officer Tierney is like a young son to me. Officer Ricardi is like my younger brother because I was his Sergeant when he was a young beginning officer and when I look at Detective Kornacki he's my contemporary, he's like my colleague, we were hired a year apart. We were hired off of the same exam. We had different experiences, came from slightly different backgrounds and didn't know each other. He a little younger than me. As I can tell you, I get a little bit emotional because I care about the guy and means that much to me. Without a doubt, for me, David Kornacki should be the next Police Sergeant with the Ludlow Police Department. I would be honored to have him as Sergeant.

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Mr. Silva: Thank you. Anyone else have any questions for the Chief or anything? Or are you all set?

Mr. Rosenblum: Thank you Chief.

Mr. Goncalves: I'm good.

Mr. Silva: Ok. Can we have a motion if you feel so inclined to do?

Mr. DeBarge: I need to deliberate on it right now. Discussion?

Mr. Silva: That's what I am asking to do if there's any discussion at all. Go ahead Mr. Goncalves.

Mr. Goncalves: Personally, I think we are very fortunate that we have these three guys to pick from. I think the Town is blessed, the Department is blessed. We've got some good heads on shoulders here. Just in general, looking at the years of service, the leadership ability, the overall attitude, I like the idea that during the COVID he was taking classes, he was the only one that really got busy in those down months which was really good and that was a lot trying to prepare for whatever exams you were going to take and take those other classes. I've seen him. I've worked with Detective Kornacki and I think he'd be a great guy as a Sergeant and being able to head that department and hopefully bring this Town and keep the Town in check of whatever problems are with us now and hiding around the corner. That would be my recommendation.

Mr. Silva: Thank you.

Mr. Goncalves: Thank you.

Mr. DeBarge: Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Silva: Yep.

Mr. DeBarge: So, as I have become accustomed doing as we do interviews for police and fire, I grade the questions for each candidate. Each Selectmen that asks questions, I have my own grading system that I've taken from guidelines from other municipalities as we do this. I take into account record, as far as years and items that I take from their packet, and of course I take from their answers to the questions. I score them after all, everyone has completed obviously, and I have Detective Kornacki scoring highest out of the three candidates. The way that he answered the questions I have notes to them as well. I like the way that he expanded on a lot of his answers specifically to some of mine he even asked if he answered the question that I asked. I appreciated that. As I said to his cover letter, it's one of the best that I've ever read. I highlighted some parts where on his cover letter specifically at the end, I will work to get the utmost out of the men and women with whom I have the privilege of working by ensuring to the best of my ability, their well-being and providing them with the tools and guidance needed for success. This isn't to take away from any other candidate of course, I appreciated the fact that he mentioned everyone that he has worked with throughout his career. It goes without saying when you look at his training record those that he worked with. Listen, let's be honest. For those of us who know him and of course I've worked with him, not just as a patrolman, I was in the detective bureau for a while. He could have gone anywhere in his career. He could have gone to the FBI. He could have gone to the Secret Service. He could have left Ludlow and gone anywhere after building his record, or his resume throughout the vast kinds of investigations and cases that he's closed within this department and he's chosen to stay here for reasons that he said in his closing remarks, that he's wanted to make the world and Ludlow a better place. With the other candidates as well, Officer Tierney, great answers to the questions. I think he carried himself very well up against these two candidates on his time, his

time on the job is just not enough for me to select him. I believe he just needs more time to brew on the job for a promotion. Acting Sergeant Ricardi, you know what, excellent job in the interview. I've known him since he's come on but he's up against number 1 in Civil Service for this interview, someone whose got more experience, whose been Acting Sergeant longer, and who has just got more time, I said more experience and for me who I graded higher due to time experience in answers to the questions. I think in this circumstance the bar was set extremely high with the first candidate who again and he even said in his cover letter, scored highest on the exam. So, my vote will be for Detective Kornacki.

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Mr. Silva: Thank you. Mr. Rosenblum.

Mr. Rosenblum: I just kind of took a piece from each candidate and it was great that we got something a little different from each person that I think was great. In every right, all three are great candidates. Officer Tierney, the one thing you can say a survey is a survey. Anyone can do it. You don't know what kind of response you are going to get. You know someone is going to be firing those darts over your head, but I really think that part of a leader is someone that is willing to accept advice, is going to learn from others, so I really like that because it was more like the finals, unrecognized needs and ideas through the community. I thought that was a great answer. I loved that. Acting Sergeant Ricardi I think that when you were saying proactive versus reactive, I've always said when it comes to business or anything that I've done, is that you always want to be proactive rather than reactive so that you are prepared for a situation but he made me think by saying atmosphere can dictate whether you are reactive or proactive. I just thought that was a great answer because you always want to be prepared but like you said on a night when you might have an ice storm, you can't be prepared. You don't know what's going to happen or anything like that. That was a great answer. We get to Detective Kornacki, I mean 26 years, when I looked up, obviously you've been a police officer, you're a police officer, I looked up what does a Sergeant do, you know, what are they and they are basically as you said Chief, first line Supervisor. You are the heart and soul of that department. You are overseeing a lot of staff. You're answering questions. You are leading. Detective Kornacki I think is a great, will be a great leader and is a great leader because of his life experiences as well as his work experience. I mean 26 years and just the pages of training that he's done and also honestly for him to still have the excitement and the passion at this time in his career says a lot for him. I think that he is someone that would probably be better at understanding the strengths and weaknesses of his patrolmen to where he could use their assets to use their skills to put in the to fit the right tasks. I would have to say Detective Kornacki would be my choice just based on his leadership and just in general as in parting his experience. I think this is almost a natural progression for him instead of riding off into the sunset. I would love for him to be able to help the next generation of patrolmen become who he is because he is exemplary and like Mr. DeBarge said, with his record he could go anywhere but he chose to be here and is choosing to enhance our department and as Selectmen that's what we want and I would think as a community so I would be in favor of Detective Kornacki.

Mr. Silva: Thank you. I kind of feel for these two young gentlemen that are exceptional to go up against Officer Kornacki was a tough thing to do. And, as you all know, I believe in rewarding longevity, people who serve the community and it's difficult for me, I could have a really exceptional, exceptional candidate in front of me but without the longevity, would be tough for me to side with them unfortunately and like I said, I feel bad for these young guys but hopefully they'll come back like Officer Kornacki said before he became an officer he came back, I believe he said three times before he was given the position. So hopefully they'll come back before us and I'm sure that they will probably step in that role at some point. But with that, I will entertain a motion.

Mr. DeBarge: Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Silva: Mr. DeBarge.

Mr. DeBarge: I make a motion that we appoint Detective David M. Kornacki as Sergeant effective February 17, 2021.

Mr. Goncalves: Second.

Mr. Silva: We have a motion second. Mr. Rosenblum.

Mr. Rosenblum: Yes.

Mr. Silva: Mr. Goncalves.

Mr. Goncalves: Absolutely.

Mr. Silva: Mr. DeBarge.

Mr. DeBarge: Yes.

Mr. Silva: Mr. Silva, yes. Motion carries 4-0. Thank you Chief.

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Correspondence:

33. Laires Inc. (d/b/a Primavera Restaurant) - Petition for Amendment-Alteration of Premises. Board to schedule a public hearing.

    Moved by Mr. Rosenblum, seconded by Mr. Goncalves to schedule a public hearing for Laires, Inc. (d/b/a Primavera Restaurant) Petition for Amendment-Alteration of Premises for March 2, 2021. Vote 4-0. All in favor.

34. John R. Maher, Director of Governmental Affairs, Charter Communications – notification of Charter Communications Annual Complaint Form 500 for 2020.

    Moved by Mr. DeBarge, seconded by Mr. Goncalves to file. Vote 4-0. All in favor.

35. Megan Rogers Coll, P.E. – notifying the Board that the Economic Development Administration Regional Counsel has reviewed the First Priority Lien for the Ludlow Mills Riverside Drive Infrastructure Project and it is legally sufficient.

    Moved by Mr. Rosenblum, seconded by Mr. DeBarge to file. Vote 4-0. All in favor.

36. Kim M. Batista, CMMC, Town Clerk – notifying the Board of her appointment as a Certified Massachusetts Municipal Clerk.

    Moved by Mr. DeBarge, seconded by Mr. Goncalves to accept the letter for Ms. Batista's appointment as a Certified Massachusetts Municipal Clerk and to send letter of congratulations. Vote 4-0. All in favor.

Unfinished Business:

Update on Town run vaccination site.

Ms. Villano stated the Town was notified yesterday by the State that the Town of Ludlow will not be receiving any vaccines. Ms. Villano stated the Town is still prepared and can apply for the vaccine again. Ms. Villano stated the State is gearing all their efforts to mass sites and pharmaceutical companies at this time.

Board to approve and execute the contract between Marcus Communications and the Town for the Radio Communications Project.

Moved by Mr. DeBarge, seconded by Mr. Rosenblum to approve and execute the contract between Marcus Communications and the Town for the Radio Communications Project and designate the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen to approve all change orders. Vote 4-0 all in favor.

Board to review list of hourly pay rate changes totals for summer employees and approve Recreation Commission's request of the hourly pay rate changes for their summer employees.

Moved by Mr. Goncalves, seconded by Mr. DeBarge to approve the Recreation Commission's hourly rate change for this upcoming year for the camp counselors, directors, life guards, head life guards and before/after school counselors and directors as submitted. Vote 4-0 all in favor.

New Business:

Board to review warrant articles for insertion into the May 10, 2021 Annual Town Meeting.

Ms. Villano stated the report of the Town Officers, the outstanding committees, the budget, the revolving accounts, the reserve fund, the capital planning, the building infrastructure, stabilization fund, Celebrate Ludlow are all standard articles.

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Moved by Mr. Goncalves, seconded by Mr. DeBarge to approve the Standard Articles to be put in the May 10, 2021 Annual Town Meeting. Vote 4-0 all in favor.

250th Anniversary Fund
Moved by Mr. DeBarge, seconded by Mr. Rosenblum to open the 250th Anniversary Fund with $25,000 from free cash. Vote 4-0 all in favor.

Board reviewed the following articles for insertion: adding money to Article 13 of the June 22 Special Town Meeting (Fiber for the new school and Senior Center); Classification study for LATOSS union; COVID 19 expenses; Plastic Bags; licensing for solicitors and canvassers; animal control fine increases; senior abatement increase to $7.50 per hour (State Minimum Wage); and the $250 Anniversary Fund. Moved by Mr. Goncalves, seconded by Mr. Rosenblum to place the remaining items as per the attached list onto the May 10, 2021 Annual Town Meeting. Vote 4-0 all in favor.

Department of Public Works
Moved by Mr. Goncalves, seconded by Mr. Rosenblum to insert the five Department of Public Works articles onto the May 10, 2021 Annual Town Meeting as submitted. Vote 4-0 all in favor.

Planning Board
Moved by Mr. Goncalves, seconded by Mr. Rosenblum to include the Planning Board Zone Change for 193 Center Street onto the May 10, 2021 Annual Town Meeting. Vote 4-0 all in favor.

Board to open the Special Town Meeting to be held within the Annual Town Meeting.

Moved by Mr. DeBarge, seconded by Mr. Rosenblum to open the Special Town Meeting to be held within the Annual Town Meeting on May 10, 2021. Vote 4-0 all in favor.

Board to approve the Citation for Susie M. Conti, a Ludlow resident who recently turned 100 years old.

Moved by Mr. Rosenblum, seconded by Mr. DeBarge to approve the Citation for Susie M. Conti, a Ludlow resident who recently turned 100 years old. Vote 4-0 all in favor.

Board perused Selectmen Meeting Minutes of February 2, 2021.

Chairman approved and signed all bills, warrants and abatements. A record of all warrants is in the Selectmen's office for perusal until provided to the Town Accountant's office.

Closing Comments:

Mr. Goncalves praised the Ludlow Police officers for keeping the community safe. He encouraged residents to beware of scams and not to provide any personal information to solicitors. Mr. Goncalves encouraged residents to call the Town Hall for assistance regarding vaccines. He also stated residents should continue to be cautious of their surroundings and if you see something, say something.

Mr. Rosenblum thanked the three Sergeant interview candidates. He also stated the Town should be proud of the dedication of our first responders. Mr. Rosenblum encouraged residents to lock their cars at night and keep valuables out of plain sight. Mr. Rosenblum encouraged residents to stay vigilant to keep our COVID-19 numbers down, so the kids can stay in school, be social, and for the betterment of their mental health.

Mr. DeBarge stated he toured the Wilbraham Senior Center vaccination site. Mr. DeBarge stated the Town is doing it's best to provide a vaccination site for our community and Eric Segundo, our Veterans' Agent is assisting veterans here in Western Massachusetts.

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Mr. Silva stated our COVID-19 numbers are coming down and encouraged residents to be vigilant and stay safe.

Moved by Mr. Rosenblum, seconded by Mr. DeBarge to adjourn the meeting at 8:11 p.m. Vote 4-0. All in favor.

Ludlow Board of Selectmen

All related documents can be viewed at the Board of Selectmen's Office during regular business hours.