

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MATURO LOOKS TO HIRE CIVILIAN DISPATCHERS FOR POLICE
WOULD ADD OFFICERS TO THE STREETS AND REDUCE THE STRESS OF EXTENDED
HOURS WORKED**

East Haven Mayor Joseph Maturo, Jr. has sent a letter to the East Haven Police Union, Local 1662 informing them of his intention to hire qualified civilian dispatchers to replace uniform officers who now perform that responsibility at the Police Department. In that same correspondence, the Mayor is asking the Union to waive a 180 day notice requirement so he would be able to effect this change as soon as possible.

An agreement between the Town and Local 1662, dated September 2007 establishes the Town's (management) right to employ civilian dispatchers in the Police Department. However as part of that agreement the Town agreed to provide the Union with 180 days notice of such intent.

"Both Chief Larrabee and I have been monitoring the amount of hours that our officers have worked due to our previous and current staffing levels. Although we have been working tirelessly to increase those levels, we have been somewhat stifled by continued retirements, resignations and other DOJ related matters, that have created a significant amount of extra hours for the remaining dedicated men and women protecting our community. As the Union has expressed, the extra workload that our officers have had to maintain, certainly affects their quality of life and has been wearing on each of them and certainly not a preferable schedule for our department." stated Maturo.

In his letter, Maturo has asked the Union to become part of the solution and assist the administration in hiring and getting the new civilian dispatchers on board expeditiously, which will allow trained and experienced Police Officers to return to their primary responsibilities of protecting our citizens.

"Throughout the country, towns and cities have released their police and fire personnel from doing additional dispatcher duties and replacing them with trained qualified civilians enabling their emergency services personnel to return to their primary duties and responsibilities of Police Officers and Firefighters. In each of these cases, it has enabled the municipalities to increase the amount of available "on line" personnel without affecting the quality of dispatching in each of those departments. The transition to all civilian dispatchers, which has already taken place in our Fire Department, enabled us to have an additional firefighter respond to an emergency. The same transition in our Police Department will enable another officer to respond to emergencies and at the same time help to eliminate the burden of extra hours that our Officers are now required to work. As Mayor I have listened to the pleas of our 'men and women in blue' and with the union's help will work to achieve a better working environment as soon as possible." Maturo.

"As has been stated previously, my administration, Chief Larrabee and the Board of Police Commissioners are continuing to look at every avenue to be able to bring our department up to acceptable staffing levels as quickly as humanly possible. We continue to thank the dedicated men and women of our department and will continue to provide them with the resources needed to achieve our stated goal of becoming one of the best Police Departments in the state.", Maturo concluded.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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