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PRESS RELEASE
POLICE SINGING THE BLUES IN STRATFORD
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The Town of Stratford will celebrate another Blues on the Beach Day on Saturday, July 20th, an event in which Mayor Laura Hoydick takes special pride. The event requires the participation of local police officers to assure the public safety.

This year the town has had some difficulty getting officers to volunteer to serve the event. That is because there is a morale crisis threatening to cripple the efficient operation of the department. Stratford has become little more than a training ground with officers leaving soon after they arrive for better opportunities elsewhere.

Since 2010, rank and file members of Local 407 Stratford Police Union have worked without a pension. In the meantime, Chief Joseph McNeil collects a handsome pension. Efforts by the union to negotiate a pension have met with threats of retaliation and, historically, with layoffs threatened.

This has led to the union to take the extraordinary step of hiring counsel to defend it and its membership as it goes public with its appeal for equity and economic security. The Union has hired Norm Pattis of New Haven, a veteran civil and criminal defense lawyer to protect it.

“What I’ve learned is shocking,” Pattis said. “For example, efforts to learn the truth about why Shelton Police were called to the home of Chief McNeill in November, 2022 have been stonewalled; FOI requests left unfulfilled.”

“Efforts to assure fair and equitable distribution of overtime to all members have been met with a pattern of rewarding cronies of the Chief and punishing critics.” “The result has been, and will continue to be, costly litigation,” Pattis said.

“Wouldn’t it make more sense to engage in fair and public negotiations about how best to assure a secure future for all of Stratford’s nearly 100 police officers,” the lawyer said.

This week, when you attend Blues on the Beach, take a moment to thank a local officer for his or her dedication and service. And then search for the mayor and ask the following: “Wouldn’t it be better to pay our public servants an adequate pension rather than seeing overtime used indiscriminately to prop up an administration that is rapidly losing the confidence of its membership?”