

# City of Newburgh

## Press Release

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**For immediate release**

**January 12, 2006**

### Community Input Helps Create New Police Complaint/Compliment Form

In partnership with the community, the City of Newburgh Police Department has developed new procedures for handling complaints from the public. At the Jan. 12 City Council Work Session, community representatives joined Police Chief Eric Paolilli to unveil a new Complaint/Compliment Form and a new process.

Late last summer, about 30 community members met with representatives from the Police Department and the City Manager's office. The group included members of the Black Ministerial Fellowship, the NAACP, Latinos Unidos of the Hudson Valley, and other community organizations and individuals. The community group, City Manager, and the Police Department identified improving response to complaints from the public as a priority.

From the initial meeting, a core team of community members volunteered to review the current process and develop ways to make it better. In addition to greater accountability, the team also identified a need to provide a safe, comfortable place for people to file complaints.



*Police Chief Eric Paolilli (at microphone) with members of the Citizen- Police Complaint/Compliment committee. The members are (l-r) Jannett Rivera, Richard Rivera, Minister Harry Brown, Rev. James Sherman, Stuart Sachs (not pictured), Angel Figueroa, and Chester Johnson.*

“We recognize that some people may be uncomfortable with coming to the Police Department to lodge a complaint,” said Chief Eric Paolilli. “With this in mind, our community partners identified several sites in the City our residents could easily access and feel comfortable making a complaint.”

The sites include the City Manager’s office, (second floor, City Hall, 83 Broadway), the City of Newburgh Recreation Department, (City Activity Center, 401 Washington Street), the Youth Bureau, (104 South Lander Street), Newburgh Free Library, (124 Grand Street), Ebenezer Baptist Church, (76 First Street), New Beginners Church, (171 Broadway), and God’s Vineyard, (448 Broadway).

Thanks to Latinos Unidos, the new Complaint/Compliment forms are available in English and Spanish. If you need help in completing a form, assistance is also available at the sites.

You can also go directly to the Police Department and file a complaint with any member of the Police Department, who will then report the matter to a supervisor.

All complaints will go directly to Chief Paolilli. Complainants can expect to receive a written response within 10 business days from the time the complaint is filed.

“Improving customer service is a priority of my administration,” City Manager Jean-Ann McGrane emphasized. “All City departments, including the Police, have been tasked with developing procedures and policies to better serve the people of the City of Newburgh. Collaborations such as this are examples of how we can insure we are doing the best possible job.”

Richard Rivera of Latinos Unidos of the Hudson Valley commented, “This particular process as far as I can recall is the first grassroots effort of its kind in the City of Newburgh. It was truly a representation of all segments of the community and City government. I thought the process was excellent and the participation of the community as a whole was extremely important.”