Department History

The Carneys Point Police Department was established as the Upper Penns Neck Police Department in 1937. Thomas Smith was sworn as the first Chief of Police and Thomas Durr was the only other police officer. The first police department was located in a green house on the corner of Shell Road and Cleveland Avenue. The routine duties included answering complaints and crossing school children at the intersections. The equipment consisted of one police vehicle, a 38 caliber Smith & Wesson six shot revolver and a set of handcuffs. During this time, there were no cells to detain individuals who broke the law. Instead, they were transported to a jail cell in either Penns Grove Borough or Pennsville Township. During this time, mutual aid was prevalent. When any serious crimes took place, the officer would conduct the investigation himself and deliver any necessary evidence to Trenton for processing. Chief Smith retired from the police department in 1946 when he became a lawyer and eventually a judge.

Thomas Durr was sworn in as Chief of Police in 1947 until he passed away on April 9, 1970. Under his command, the police force grew to 5 men working five shifts. The shifts consisted of 8AM-4PM, 4PM-12AM, 12AM-8AM and two overlapping shifts; 12PM-8PM and 8PM-4AM. In 1950 when DuPont did away with the quartermaster, they donated the building located on D & Division Streets to the Township. This building was modified and housed the police department, the courtroom, and the municipal offices. The police department obtained a two way radio system and obtained dispatching services. Occasionally, when there were problems in the “village area” officers would walk a beat. In 1968, the police department formed a detective unit and obtained a second police vehicle. In 1970, the working rotation switched to three shifts per day and the department grew to two men working each shift.

In 1970, Chief Thomas Pedrick was sworn in and remained in that position until his retirement in 1974. During his tenure he initiated the K-9 unit. In 1975, Chief William T. Luzzo was promoted to the rank of Chief of Police. While serving in that capacity, Upper Penns Neck Township was renamed Carneys Point Township and the police department acquired a third police vehicle. During his tenure, the department relocated to its current location and became “modernized” to improve the quality of life for our residents.

In 1998, Chief Luzzo retired after 38 year of service and Chief Cosmo Mangiocco was appointed to replace him. Chief Mangiocco served in this capacity until January, 2006 when he was replaced by the sixth Chief of Police in the history of the township, Chief Edmund Spinelli, Jr. In 1988, Chief Spinelli initiated his career as a member of the New Jersey State Police (#4928). In 1990, he transferred to the Penns Grove Police Department where he served in both the Patrol and Detective Divisions. He then transferred to the Carneys Point Police Department in 1996 where

he also served in both the Patrol and Detective Divisions. Chief Spinelli proudly commanded the 27 member police department until his sudden passing in November 2011.

Robert DiGregorio was hired by the Carneys Point Police Department in 1988 and during his career, worked in the capacity of a Patrolman, Detective Corporal, Detective Sergeant, Detective Lieutenant and was appointed Chief of Police in January 2012. Chief DiGregorio was assigned to the Criminal Investigation Unit in 1996, where he excelled as a Detective. Well known for his outstanding abilities and persistent nature as a Detective. Chief DiGregorio has handled numerous complex investigations on both the State and Federal levels. Chief DiGregorio was assigned to various other law enforcement agencies during his career as a Detective due to his outstanding abilities, most notably the United States Drug Enforcement Administration, the New Jersey State Police and the Salem County Prosecutor's Office. Chief DiGregorio was recognized as the Officer of the Year by the Salem County Chief's of Police on two occasions during his tenure as a Detective. Chief DiGregorio is most notably known for several high profile narcotics investigations that were Federally prosecuted, the Robinson kidnapping which was Federally prosecuted, the investigation of several bank robberies and the Hines' homicide which appeared to be unsolvable from the initiation of the investigation. Chief DiGregorio is well respected by his peers in the law enforcement community, the public and the members of the Carneys Point Police Department. Chief DiGregorio served the community of Carneys Point Township with pride, dignity, integrity and honor for 26 years until his retirement on February 1, 2014.

Gerald Krivda was hired September of 1997 after successfully completing his training at the New Jersey State Police Academy in Sea Girt. Chief Krivda served as a patrol officer in the Police Department keeping the streets safe. Promoted to the rank of Corporal in 2001, he worked as a supervisor on the road in the patrol division until his promotion to Sergeant in 2008. During his tenure within the patrol division, Chief Krivda accumulated numerous accommodations, which included the prestigious Medal of Honor, Combat Award and numerous meritorious awards. Appointed to the position of Police Chief on March 4, 2014 Chief Krivda continues to serve the community of Carneys Point Township honorably.

Dale VanNamee was hired as a Patrolman in August 2006 and graduated from Cape May County Police Academy in January 2007. During his tenure in the Patrol Division, Chief VanNamee acted in the capacity of a Shift Sergeant in the absence of the Corporal and Shift Sergeant. In January of 2011 Chief VanNamee was assigned to the Criminal Investigation Division, where he was currently serving prior to his appointment as Chief of Police. While serving in the Criminal Investigation Division, Chief VanNamee was responsible for the supervision of officers under his direct and indirect command as well as conducting and supervising numerous complex investigations. Chief VanNamee was promoted to the rank of Sergeant in April of 2014 and was then later promoted to the rank of Lieutenant in December of 2018. During his tenure in the Patrol and Criminal Investigation Divisions, Chief VanNamee

received numerous awards and acknowledgments which include VFW Officer of the Year 2015, Exceptional Duty Award and the Meritorious Service Award for various years. Chief VanNamee also received the Distinguished Service Award in 2009 and has received an abundance of Letter of Commendations over the years. During his years of service to Carneys Point Twp, Chief VanNamee has had extensive education and specialized training. Appointed to the position of Police Chief on March 1, 2021 Chief VanNamee continues to serve the community of Carneys Point Township with dedication, integrity, compassion and honor. We welcome him as the Chief of Police and wish him all the best as he begins this journey.