

Municipal Police Training Committee
Standards Subcommittee Meeting
MPTC Headquarters – Randolph
August 15, 2023

I. CALL TO ORDER

At 9:03 a.m. on August 15, 2023, a virtual meeting of the Standards Subcommittee was called to order. Advance notice of the meeting was posted in compliance with the open meeting laws. A quorum of the seven-member Subcommittee was present. The meeting was broadcast over Microsoft Teams.

Subcommittee Members Present

- Chair Kevin Copping
- Superintendent Nora Baston
- Superintendent Richard Sullivan
- Chief Jennifer Gundersen
- Chief Edward Conley (joined at 9:17 a.m.)

MPTC/EOPSS Staff Present

- Jim O'Brien
- Robert Ferullo
- Felisha Arnold
- Elsie Sanon
- Gina Masotta
- John Melander

II. APPROVAL OF SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Standards Subcommittee minutes from the July 19, 2023 Meeting. A vote was taken, and the motion passed with two abstentions (Superintendent Sullivan and Superintendent Baston).

III. POLICE WAIVERS AND OUT-OF-STATE EXEMPTIONS

Temporary Waivers

There was one temporary waiver on the August agenda.

1. Meaghan E. Wonson

Essex PD

- Training:
 - September 1, 2020: Graduated from the Massachusetts Law Enforcement Training Alliance (MLETA) Reserve/Intermittent Police Academy Class #20.
 - February 2023: Enrolled in Bridge.
- Work Experience as a Law Enforcement Officer:
 - November 2020 – Present: Reserve Officer for Essex PD.
- Exigency: Essex PD currently has a staffing shortage, including recently losing two full-time officers, and has an immediate need for a full-time officer.
- CPR/First Responder Certified: Yes (TY21, TY22, and TY23 in-service complete).
- Firearms Certified: Yes (TY21, TY22, and TY23 in-service complete).
- Expected Academy: Next scheduled Lynnfield Police Academy on 1/22/24.

A motion was made by Chief Gundersen and seconded by Superintendent Sullivan to recommend to the full Committee that the temporary waiver for Officer Meghan E. Wonson be approved. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Out-of-State Exemptions

There were four out-of-state exemptions on the August agenda.

1. Scott J. Bergeron

Otis PD

- Basic Training:
 - Graduated March 16, 2000 from the 120-hour Agawam, MA Basic Reserve Training Program.
 - Graduated April 2, 2008 from the 650-hour 318th CT Basic Police Officer Recruit Training Program conducted at the Connecticut Police Academy.
- Work Experience as a Law Enforcement Officer: 20+ years as part-time/full-time officer.
 - 2000 – 2007: Part-time officer for Granville, MA Police Department.
 - 2008 – May 2021: Full-time officer for Granby, CT Police Department.
- In-Service/Specialized Training: Yes, in CT.
- Break in Service: No.
- CPR/First Responder Certified: Yes (6/24/23).
- MPTC Firearms Certified: Yes (7/12/23).
- MPTC Police Officer Core Competency Exam: Yes (83% on 8/6/23).

2. Bayley M. Laughlin

Milford PD

- Basic Training:
 - Graduated July 22, 2021 from the 371st CT Basic Police Training Program. As of January 2022, the CT curriculum totaled 1,345 hours, including a 400-hour field training program completed at the Department.
- Work Experience as a Law Enforcement Officer: 2+ years as a fulltime officer.
 - July 2021 – Present: Full-time officer for Willimantic, CT Police Department.
- In-Service/Specialized Training: Yes, in CT.
- Break in Service: No.
- CPR/First Responder Certified: Yes (8/3/23).
- MPTC Firearms Certified: Yes (8/1/23).
- MPTC Police Officer Core Competency Exam: Yes (83% on 8/2/23).

3. Patrick P. Flathers

Clark University PD

- Basic Training:
 - Graduated December 20, 2019 from the 594.25-hour 180th New Hampshire Full-Time Police Academy.
- Work Experience as a Law Enforcement Officer: 3 ½+ years as a full-time officer.
 - December 2019 – September 2021: Full-time officer for Rochester, NH Police Department.
 - September 2021 – Present: Full-time officer for Bedford, NH Police Department.
- In-Service/Specialized Training: Yes, in NH.
- Break in Service: No.
- CPR/First Responder Certified: Yes (12/11/21 – valid 2 years).
- MPTC Firearms Certified: Yes (7/24/23).
- MPTC Police Officer Core Competency Exam: Yes (76% on 7/27/23).

4. Bryan J. Bliss

Merrimack College PD

- Basic Training:
 - Graduated November 15, 2002 from the 469.5-hour 129th New Hampshire Full-Time Police Recruit Academy.
- Work Experience as a Law Enforcement Officer: 20+ years as a full-time officer.
 - November 2002 – Present: Full-time officer for Windham, NH Police Department (Sergeant 2014 – present).
- In-Service/Specialized Training: Yes, over 650 hours in NH.
- Break in Service: No.
- CPR/First Responder Certified: Yes (6/14/23).
- MPTC Firearms Certified: Yes (8/4/23).
- MPTC Police Officer Core Competency Exam: Yes (86% on 8/10/23).

A single motion was made by Superintendent Sullivan and seconded by Superintendent Baston to recommend to the full Committee that Officers Scott J. Bergeron, Bayley M. Laughlin, Patrick P. Flathers, and Bryan J. Bliss have the necessary training/experience to obtain an exemption from the requirement of completing a full-time MPTC operated/authorized Police Academy. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Out-of-State Exemption Advisories

The August agenda had one request by MPTC staff for guidance on an out-of-state exemption advisory.

1. Jason A. Bettencourt

Peabody PD

- Basic Training:
 - Graduated August 30, 2017 from the 12-week, 524.5-hour Uniformed Police Training Program run by the Department of Homeland Security at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) in Glynco, GA.
- Work Experience as a Law Enforcement Officer: 6 years as a full-time officer.
 - August 2017 – Present: Federal Police Officer, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Kittery.
- In-Service/Specialized Training: Yes, extensive additional training.
- Break in Service: No.
- CPR/First Responder Certified: Yes.
- MPTC Firearms Certified: Yes.
- MPTC Police Officer Core Competency Exam: No.

The Subcommittee members in attendance discussed the Committee's history of not accepting any federal training as the equivalent of a full-time MPTC Police Academy and whether that should be revisited. The matter was tabled for more information on the curriculum at the federal training program attended by Officer Bettencourt and how it compares to the curriculum at a full-time MPTC Police Academy.

Out-of-State Exemption Withdrawals

Jim O'Brien explained that MPTC is being audited by the Office of the Comptroller and received notice that the audit was expanded to include out-of-state exemption and temporary waiver requests in 2021 and 2022. After an internal review, MPTC staff found that the following six individuals were granted out-of-state exemptions by the Committee but did not take the core competency exam within 90 days as required:

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| 1. Matthew Eggleston | Sturbridge PD |
| 2. Dan Quaranto | Franklin PD |
| 3. Kevin Kojoian | Rehoboth PD |
| 4. Clarella Thomas | Wellesley College PD |
| 5. Nicole Collins | Wellesley College PD |
| 6. Edward Elvidge | Yarmouth PD |

Ultimately, Matthew Eggleston, Dan Quaranto, and Edward Elvidge were not hired by their respective departments, which explains why they did not take the core competency exam. Kevin

Kojoian was hired by Rehoboth PD but only worked for a very short time before leaving the department. Clarella Thomas and Nicole Collins were hired as the Chief and Deputy Chief of Wellesley College PD; both took the exam outside the 90 days and failed. Clarella Thomas is no longer with Wellesley College PD, and Nicole Collins is currently on administrative leave. (According to Wellesley College PD, Nicole Collins took and passed the exam in June.)

Meeting minutes reflect that these six individuals received out-of-state exemptions. Since they did not fulfill the core competency exam requirement, MPTC staff asked that the Standards Subcommittee vote to withdraw their exemptions.

A motion was made by Chief Gundersen and seconded by Superintendent Sullivan to recommend to the full Committee that the out-of-state exemptions granted to the above-identified six individuals be withdrawn. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Out-of-State Exemption Exam Waivers

When police reform took effect, several campus police departments came under MPTC's umbrella for the first time. Some of those departments sought out-of-state exemptions for officers who had been working in Massachusetts for many years but attended out-of-state academies. The Committee granted many of those requests and established a precedent for waiving the core competency exam requirement for some of the officers because of their extensive work experience in Massachusetts. Meeting minutes and MPTC records reflect these exam waivers for a number of officers.

However, during the internal review of out-of-state exemptions in connection with the audit, MPTC staff identified the following eleven officers, who received out-of-state exemptions and did not take the core competency exam, but could not find a record of the exam requirement being waived:

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| 1. Christopher Stechmann | UMass Amherst PD |
| 2. Louis Copponi | UMass Worcester PD |
| 3. Thomas Karns | Harvard University PD |
| 4. Richard Riggs | Salem State PD |
| 5. Gene Labonte | Salem State PD |
| 6. Roland Brule | MIT PD |
| 7. Kevin Leonard | Simmons University PD |
| 8. Jonathan Lent | Massport PD |
| 9. David Ransom | Berklee College PD |
| 10. Sean Percy | Barnstable Sheriff's Office |
| 11. Ruben Quesada | Northern Essex Community College PD |

The first ten officers fall into the category of officers with extensive Massachusetts work experience for whom the Committee was waiving the core competency exam. Accordingly, MPTC staff asked that the Standards Subcommittee vote to formally waive the core competency exam requirement for them in line with past practice.

The eleventh officer, Ruben Quesada, is currently the Chief of the Swampscott Police Department. Chief Quesada first came to Massachusetts and began working at Northern Essex Community College (NECC) PD just after police reform. NECC PD obtained an exemption for him from both MPTC and the Massachusetts State Police (MSP). Though he did not take the core competency exam required by MPTC, he took and passed the MSP competency exam. As such, MPTC staff also asked that the Standards Subcommittee vote to formally waive the core competency exam requirement for Chief Quesada.

A motion was made by Chief Gundersen and seconded by Superintendent Sullivan to recommend to the full Committee that the core competency exam be waived for the above-identified eleven officers. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Out-of-State Exemption Correction

MPTC staff's review of out-of-state exemptions also showed that Charles Marren, an active officer with Harvard University PD, is on MPTC's master out-of-state exemption list but does not appear to have received an exemption from the Committee. Jim O'Brien explained that Harvard University PD initially inquired about an out-of-state exemption for Officer Marren in May 2000, citing his graduation from the FBI National Academy in Quantico. In a letter dated June 30, 2000, MPTC's predecessor, the Massachusetts Criminal Justice Training Council (MCJTC), advised Harvard University PD that Officer Marren lacked the required basic recruit training and would not qualify for an exemption from a full-time police academy. In a subsequent letter dated July 20, 2000, MCJTC notified Harvard University PD that Officer Marren's federal training would be considered the equivalent of a reserve intermittent training program and was sufficient to obtain an exemption therefrom.

Despite the correspondence received from MCJTC in 2000, Harvard University PD sought an out-of-state exemption for Officer Marren in 2021 based on his federal training. The Subcommittee did not recommend that the exemption be granted, and the full Committee denied the request. The denial is reflected in the minutes of the Committee Meeting on October 27, 2021. However, Charles Marren's name appears on MPTC's master out-of-state exemption list. Acadis also indicates that he received an out-of-state exemption. Jim O'Brien checked to see if anything changed but did not find any indication that the Committee changed its vote. He also reached out to Harvard University PD, which did not provide an explanation. Accordingly, it appears that Charles Marren's name was inadvertently included on the master exemption list and MPTC staff asked that the Subcommittee vote to correct the record and remove his name from the list.

A motion was made by Superintendent Sullivan and seconded by Superintendent Baston to recommend to the full Committee that Charles Marren's name be removed from the out-of-state exemption list. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Chief Gundersen and seconded by Superintendent Baston to recommend to the full Committee that Charles Marren be allowed to attend the Bridge Academy. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

IV. BRIDGE HOURS/EXEMPTIONS

Bridge Exemptions

The Standards Subcommittee considered a Bridge exemption request for Officer numbered 620 on the August Bridge Academy A-H Class List.

A motion was made by Chief Gundersen and seconded by Superintendent Sullivan to recommend to the full Committee that it approve a Bridge exemption request for Officer numbered 620 on the August Bridge Academy A-H Class List. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

The Standards Subcommittee considered Bridge exemption requests for Officers numbered 386 through 408 on the August Bridge Academy I-P Class List.

A motion was made by Superintendent Sullivan and seconded by Superintendent Baston to recommend to the full Committee that it approve Bridge exemption requests for Officers numbered 386 through 408 on the August Bridge Academy I-P Class List. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

The Standards Subcommittee considered Bridge exemption requests for Officers numbered 45 through 62 on the August Bridge Academy Q-Z Class List.

A motion was made by Superintendent Baston and seconded by Chief Conley to recommend to the full Committee that it approve Bridge exemption requests for Officers numbered 45 through 62 on the August Bridge Academy Q-Z Class List. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Bridge Hours

MPTC staff requested Subcommittee guidance on crediting/not crediting law enforcement work hours for one officer enrolled in the Bridge Training Program.

1. David Tebbetts

Endicott College PD

Since July 2022, Officer Tebbetts has worked as an Endicott College Police Officer. Prior to that, he worked as Federal Reserve Police Officer. He obtained a Bridge exemption in May 2023. But, based on internal discussions, MPTC staff realized that they credited hours worked by Officer Tebbetts as a Federal Reserve Police Officer. He has worked over 8,000 hours as Federal Reserve Police Officer and 1,440 hours as an Endicott College Police Officer. After some discussion, there was consensus among the Subcommittee members present that Officer Tebbetts' hours as a Federal Reserve Police Officer should not have been counted. MPTC staff asked that the Subcommittee vote to remove Officer's Tebbetts' name from the Bridge exemption list until such time as he has worked the required 2,400 patrol hours.

A motion was made by Chief Gundersen and seconded by Superintendent Sullivan to not accept the hours worked by Officer Tebbetts as a Federal Reserve Police Officer and to

remove his name from the Bridge exemption list. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

V. DISCIPLINARY DISMISSAL APPEALS

There is an outstanding appeal hearing for Student Officer Ingram, who was dismissed from the Springfield Academy. Jim O'Brien will follow up with Student Officer Ingram's attorney to schedule the hearing.

VI. OTHER MATTERS

At the July 19, 2023 Subcommittee meeting, MPTC staff sought guidance from the Subcommittee on crediting/not crediting hours worked by police officers at the Big E in West Springfield. Jim O'Brien explained that MPTC staff frequently receive inquiries regarding Big E hours, and police departments have argued that there is a difference between working inside the Big E and working outside of it. The Subcommittee members discussed that hours worked inside the Big E could constitute patrol hours (that should be credited) while hours worked outside the Big E are generally traffic details (that should not be credited), and it may make sense to consider this issue on a case-by-case basis with departments submitting whatever materials necessary to support their request.

At today's meeting, Jim O'Brien provided the Subcommittee with additional information about the Big E from West Springfield PD Chief Paul Connor. According to Chief Connor, the Big E runs for two and a half weeks every year and approximately a million and a half people visit the fair. West Springfield PD has a sub-station inside the fairgrounds; command staff are present, and a captain oversees shifts. Officers working inside the fairgrounds are in full uniform with a duty belt. They are paid \$30 per hour, while officers working outside the fairgrounds are paid \$60 per hour. Chief Connor provided records for the calls for service from the previous two Big E fairs for the Subcommittee's review.

There was extensive discussion among the Subcommittee members in attendance about how the Big E compares to other fairs and events in Massachusetts and how to be consistent on this issue.

A motion was made and seconded to include evaluation of Big E hours as an agenda item at the next meeting of the full Committee. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

At 10:26 a.m., a motion was made by Chief Gundersen and seconded by Superintendent Baston to adjourn the Standards Subcommittee meeting. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.