

**Municipal Police Training Committee**  
**Standards Subcommittee Monthly Meeting Minutes**  
**MPTC Headquarters, Randolph, MA**  
**August 21, 2024**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

On August 21, 2024, at 9:02 a.m., an in-person meeting of the Standards Subcommittee was called to order at MPTC Headquarters in Randolph, MA. 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
- Chief Edward Conley
- Major Jon Provost
- Superintendent Richard Sullivan

**MPTC Staff Present**

- Jim O'Brien
- Gina Masotta
- Denise Flagg
- Felisha Arnold

**II. APPROVAL OF SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES**

A motion was made by Chief Conley and seconded by Major Provost to approve the Standards Subcommittee minutes from the July 17, 2024, meeting. A vote was taken, and the motion passed with two abstentions (Superintendent Baston and Superintendent Sullivan).

**III. POLICE WAIVERS AND OUT-OF-STATE EXEMPTIONS**

**Temporary Waivers**

There were no temporary waivers on the August agenda.

**Out-of-State Exemptions**

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

**1. Jack Stafford                      Burlington PD**

- Basic Training:

- Graduated on August 21, 2020 from the 582.25-hour 182<sup>nd</sup> New Hampshire Full-Time Police Academy.
- Work Experience as a Law Enforcement Officer:
  - August 2020 – present: full-time police officer for the Derry, NH Police Department.
- In-Service/Specialized Training: Yes, in NH.
- Break in Service: No.
- CPR/1<sup>st</sup> Aid Certified: Yes – 8/12/2024.
- MPTC Firearms Certified: Yes – 8/12/2024.
- MPTC Police Officer Core Competency Exam: Yes – 8/10/2024 (87%).

**A motion was made by Superintendent Sullivan and seconded by Chief Conley to recommend to the full Committee that Jack Stafford be granted an exemption from the requirement of completing a full-time MPTC operated/authorized Police Academy. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.**

## **2. Domenico Cerasani                      Westfield State University**

- Basic Training:
  - Graduated on December 21, 2017 from the 607.5-hour FLETC Uniform Police Training Program.
  - Graduated on April 6, 2018 from the 545-hour United States Capitol Police Academy.
  - Graduated on December 7, 2022 from the 375<sup>th</sup> Training Session of the Connecticut Police Academy.
- Work Experience as a Law Enforcement Officer:
  - April 2018 – May 2022: full-time police officer for the United States Capitol Police, Washington, D.C.
  - December 2022 – April 2023: full-time police officer for the Enfield, Connecticut Police Department.
- In-Service/Specialized Training: Yes, with Capitol Police, and TY24 in MA.
- Break in Service: Yes – 1+ year.
- CPR/1<sup>st</sup> Aid Certified: Yes – 8/15/2024
- MPTC Firearms Certified: Yes – 7/25/2024.
- MPTC Police Officer Core Competency Exam: Yes – 8/12/2024 (76%).

**A motion was made by Chief Conley and seconded by Superintendent Baston to recommend to the full Committee that Domenico Cerasani be granted an exemption from the requirement of completing a full-time MPTC operated/authorized Police Academy. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.**

## **3. Nicholas Parham                      Northeastern University**

- Basic Training:
  - Graduated on January 4, 2006 from the 650-hour Connecticut Police Academy Basic Police Officer Recruit Training Program.
- Work Experience as a Law Enforcement Officer:

- January 2006 – May 2021: full-time police officer for the Groton, CT Police Department, promoted to the rank of Detective Lieutenant in November 2016.
- In-Service/Specialized Training: Yes, with CT, and TY22, TY23, and TY24 in MA.
- Break in Service: Yes – 3+ years.
- CPR/1<sup>st</sup> Aid Certified: Yes – 7/24/2024
- MPTC Firearms Certified: Yes – 7/19/2024
- MPTC Police Officer Core Competency Exam: Yes – 8/14/24 (77%).

**A motion was made by Superintendent Sullivan and seconded by Chief Conley to recommend to the full Committee that Nicholas Parham be granted 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**

#### **1. John Grella                      Essex County Sheriff's Dept.**

- Basic Training:
  - Graduated on August 19, 1994 from the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy's 576-hour Basic Law Enforcement School, 87<sup>th</sup> Session.
  - Graduated on November 22, 1996 from the DEA's 712-hour Basic Agent Training Program, Class No. 107.
- Work Experience as a Law Enforcement Officer:
  - August 1994 – July 1996: full-time police officer for the Arlington County Police Department in Arlington, VA.
  - July 1996 – July 2023: Special Agent for the DEA, assigned to the New England Field Division.
  - July 2023 – present: Superintendent for the Essex County Sheriff's Department, overseeing the Office of Professional Standards.
- CPR/1<sup>st</sup> Aid Certified: No.
- MPTC Firearms Certified: No.
- MPTC Police Officer Core Competency Exam: No.

The Essex County Sheriff's Department is seeking an advisory opinion as to whether John Grella would qualify for an exemption from the requirement of attending a full-time MPTC operated/authorized police academy. Superintendent Grella graduated on August 19, 1994 from the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy's 576-hour Basic Law Enforcement School. He went on to work as a full-time police officer for the Arlington County Police Department in Arlington, VA, until July 1996, when he joined the DEA. He completed the DEA's Basic Agent Training Program and then transferred directly to DEA-Boston, where he spent the next 27 years. In July 2023, he retired from the DEA and began working at the Essex County Sheriff's Department. He currently oversees the Office of Professional Standards.

MPTC Deputy General Counsel Gina Masotta advised that she reviewed the curriculum for Superintendent Grella's academy training in Virginia and believed it to be comparable to that of a

fulltime MPTC academy. She noted that his time with the Arlington County Police Department was approximately one month short of the two years of full-time law enforcement experience required for an out-of-state exemption and, historically, the Subcommittee and full Committee have considered a move to federal law enforcement to be an interruption in municipal police service. However, in November 2023, the Subcommittee and the full Committee considered an interruption-in-service question for ATF Agent Peter Murray, who attended a fulltime MPTC academy early in his career, worked for a few years as a municipal officer, and then went on to spend 20+ years in the ATF. Like Superintendent Grella, Agent Murray spent his federal career assigned to Massachusetts, doing investigative work with officers from local departments on Massachusetts cases. Based on the facts presented by Agent Murray, the Subcommittee and Committee voted unanimously that his work as a federal agent was akin to that of a local detective and therefore his time with ATF did not constitute an interruption in service.

Superintendent Grella was present at today's meeting to provide information and answer questions. He summarized his training and experience for the Subcommittee consistent with the information outlined above and explained that he spent the entirety of his DEA career assigned to DEA-Boston, where he worked extensively with officers from local departments and MSP. His duties included working as a case officer and undercover officer, conducting surveillance and enforcement operations, preparing search warrants, and providing testimony in Massachusetts court proceedings. His primary partner from 1999 to 2019 was a Waltham Detective assigned as a DEA Task Force Officer.

There was discussion among the Subcommittee members about how Superintendent Grella's time with the DEA is similar to that of Agent Peter Murray's time with the ATF, given that Superintendent Grella spent the entirety of his federal career assigned to DEA-Boston working investigations in Massachusetts with Massachusetts police officers. There was consensus among the members of the Subcommittee who were present at the meeting that they would accept Superintendent Grella's work experience in Virginia and with the DEA as two or more years of full-time law enforcement experience as a police officer.

**A motion was made by Chief Conley and seconded by Superintendent Baston to issue a positive exemption advisory for John Grella, contingent upon confirmation that he has qualified in firearms with an MPTC-certified instructor, been certified in CPR/First Aid, and passed the core competency exam. A vote was taken, and the motion passed with one abstention (Sheriff Coppinger abstained to avoid a potential conflict of interest).**

## **2. Christopher Juhl**

### **Suffolk County Sheriff's Dept.**

- Basic Training:
  - Graduated on February 18, 2006 from the 952-hour Monterey Peninsula College P.O.S.T.-certified Basic Law Enforcement Academy in California.
  - Graduated on December 9, 2009 from the 282-hour Ohio Peace Officer Basic Training Program at the Eastland Police Academy.
- Work Experience as a Law Enforcement Officer:

- December 2009 – April 2019: full-time deputy sheriff for the Franklin County Sheriff's Office in Columbus, Ohio.
- December 2019 – present: Deputy Sheriff for Suffolk County Sheriff's Department, Investigative Division (started in August 2019, sworn as a Deputy Sheriff on December 19, 2019).
- CPR/1<sup>st</sup> Aid Certified: No.
- MPTC Firearms Certified: No.
- MPTC Police Officer Core Competency Exam: No.

The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department is seeking an advisory opinion as to whether Christopher Juhl would qualify for an exemption from the requirement of attending a full-time MPTC operated/authorized police academy. Deputy Sheriff Juhl graduated on February 18, 2006 from the 952-hour Monterey Peninsula College P.O.S.T.-certified Basic Law Enforcement Academy in California. He did not work as a law enforcement officer in California and instead moved to Ohio, where he joined the Franklin County Sheriff's Office in Columbus, OH in September 2008. He initially worked there as a full-time corrections officer and then graduated on December 9, 2009 from the 282-hour Peace Officer Basic Training Program at the Eastland Police Academy in Ohio. Thereafter, he worked as a full-time deputy sheriff for the Franklin County Sheriff's Office until April 2019. Deputy Sheriff Juhl then moved to Massachusetts and joined the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department. He was sworn in as a deputy sheriff in December 2019 and has been assigned to the Investigative Division.

Deputy Sheriff Juhl was present at today's meeting to provide additional information and answer questions from the Subcommittee. He advised that the reason his Ohio academy training was only 282 hours is because Ohio accepted his California academy training and only required him to complete a limited portion of its typical 6-month basic training program, mostly that which focused on Ohio law. He explained that the Franklin County Sheriff's Office in Columbus, OH is akin to a municipal police department and he was doing patrol work as a deputy sheriff there. He also spoke about some of his duties as a deputy sheriff in the Investigative Division at the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department, which include conducting investigations, performing interviews, taking out complaints, testifying in court, etc.

There was discussion by the Subcommittee about the fact that Deputy Sheriff Juhl did not get a law enforcement job within two years of graduating from his California academy, but there was consensus among the members present that he essentially graduated from another full-time academy in Ohio thereafter and immediately began working as a law enforcement officer there. There was also discussion about the type of work he has been doing at the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department and consensus that it qualifies as law enforcement work.

**A motion was made by Superintendent Baston and seconded by Chief Conley to issue a positive exemption advisory for Christopher Juhl, contingent upon confirmation that he has qualified in firearms with an MPTC-certified instructor, been certified in CPR/First Aid, and passed the core competency exam. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.**

#### **IV. BRIDGE HOURS/EXEMPTIONS**

##### **Bridge Exemptions**

The Standards Subcommittee considered Bridge exemption requests for Officers numbered 637 through 641 on the August Bridge Academy A-H Class List.

**A motion was made by Superintendent Baston and seconded by Superintendent Sullivan to recommend to the full Committee that it approve the Bridge exemption requests for Officers numbered 637 through 641 on the August Bridge Academy A-H Class List. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.**

The Standards Subcommittee considered a Bridge exemption request for Officer numbered 425 on the August Bridge Academy I-P Class List.

**A motion was made by Superintendent Baston and seconded by Major Provost to recommend to the full Committee that it approve the Bridge exemption request for Officer numbered 425 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 336 through 337 on the August Bridge Academy Q-Z Class List.

**A motion was made by Superintendent Sullivan and seconded by Superintendent Baston to recommend to the full Committee that it approve the Bridge exemption requests for Officers numbered 336 through 337 on the August Bridge Academy Q-Z Class List. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.**

##### **Bridge Hours**

The Plymouth County Sheriff's Office recently submitted a Bridge exemption request for Deputy Sheriff Anthony Viola. According to information gathered by MPTC staff, Deputy Sheriff Viola graduated from an MCJTC reserve/intermittent academy on December 22, 1990 and from a Plymouth County Sheriff's Department correctional training program in 1992. He worked as a full-time correctional officer for Plymouth County from 1992 to 1994. He left Plymouth in 1994 and began working for the Massachusetts Trial Courts as a full-time court officer, which is a position he has continued to hold through present. He also worked as a seasonal officer for Falmouth PD in the summer of 1996, but Falmouth PD's records do not indicate whether he was a sworn officer. In 2001, Deputy Sheriff Viola returned to the Plymouth County Sheriff's Office as a part-time deputy sheriff and has worked there ever since. He worked in the housing unit from 2001 to October 2008 and then began doing hospital watch work from December 2009 to the present. MPTC staff is seeking guidance from the Subcommittee as to whether Deputy Sheriff Viola's hospital watch hours from 2001 through the present are the type of hours we can count for Bridge purposes and whether there was any interruption in service in the 1990s that would prevent us from counting his hours from 2001 on. MPTC staff noted that if we were to count all his hours

from 2001 through the present (including the hospital watch hours), Deputy Sheriff Viola has worked the required 2,400 hours.

Deputy Sheriff Viola and Plymouth's Deputy General Counsel were present for today's meeting to provide additional information and answer any questions from the Subcommittee. Deputy Sheriff Viola advised that his hospital watch work consists of prisoner care, custody, and transport. He explained that his part-time work for Plymouth since 2001 has primarily been on the weekends since he's still working full-time as a court officer.

MPTC General Counsel/Chief-of-Staff Jim O'Brien noted that any potential interruption-in-service in the 1990s would be more than 20 years old, and our rules did not apply to deputy sheriffs back then. He indicated that the main question for him was whether MPTC staff should count Deputy Sheriff Viola's hospital watch hours for Bridge purposes. We have counted hospital watch hours in the past for full-time deputy sheriffs doing other work that we count as law enforcement hours. But we have not previously had a scenario where the only work as a deputy sheriff is hospital watch hours on a part-time basis.

**A motion was made by Superintendent Baston and seconded by Chief Conley to count Deputy Sheriff Viola's hospital watch hours with the Plymouth County Sheriff's Office from 2001 through the present for purposes of the Bridge Academy requirement of 2,400 law enforcement work hours. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.**

## **V. ADJOURNMENT**

**At 9:46 a.m., a motion was made by Superintendent Sullivan and seconded by Chief Conley to adjourn the Standards Subcommittee meeting. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.**