

Municipal Police Training Committee
Standards Subcommittee Monthly Meeting Minutes
MPTC Holyoke
May 20, 2026

I. CALL TO ORDER

On May 20, 2026, at 9:08 a.m., an in-person meeting of the Standards Subcommittee was called to order at MPTC Holyoke, 600 Kelly Way, Holyoke, 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

- Sheriff Kevin Coppinger
- Chief Brian Clark
- Major Jody Greene
- Chief Jennifer Gundersen
- AAG Mary Nguyen

MPTC/EOPSS Staff Present

- Jim O'Brien
- Gina Masotta
- Andrea Nardone

Guests

- Officer William Graham II
- Deputy Chief Aaron Wojtkowski, Newbury PD
- Deputy Sheriff James MacDonald, Plymouth County Sheriff's Dept.
- Assistant Deputy Superintendent Arthur Short, Plymouth County Sheriff's Dept.
- Chief Chris Soffayer, Millis PD
- Chief Joao Chaves, Halifax PD
- Deputy Sheriff Juan Nunez, Hampden County Sheriff's Dept.
- Attorney Andrew DiCenzo
- Chief Jay Gearing, West Springfield PD
- Captain Nolan Ryan, West Springfield PD

II. APPROVAL OF SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES

A motion was made by Chief Gundersen and seconded by Chief Clark to approve the Standards Subcommittee minutes from the meeting on April 22, 2026. A vote was taken, and the motion passed with one abstention (Major Greene).

III. POLICE STANDARDS

Temporary Waivers

There were no temporary waiver requests on the May agenda.

Out-of-State Exemptions

There was one out-of-state exemption request on the May agenda.

1. Shane Smith Belmont PD

- Basic Training:
 - Graduated from the New Hampshire Police Academy for Part-Time Officers on June 18, 2000.
 - Graduated from the 469.5-hour 128th New Hampshire Police Academy for Full-Time Officers on June 28, 2002.
- Work Experience as a Law Enforcement Officer:
 - June 2000 – January 2002: part-time police officer for the Salem, NH Police Department.
 - February 2001 – July 2003: part-time police officer for the Hampton, NH Police Department.
 - June 2002 – April 30, 2026: full-time police officer for the Salem, NH Police Department, rising to the rank of Deputy Chief.
- In-Service/Specialized Training: Yes, in NH.
- Break in Service: No.
- CPR/1st Aid Certified: Yes – 5/8/2026.
- MPTC Firearms Certified: Yes – 3/31/26.
- MPTC Police Officer Core Competency Exam: Yes – 4/17/26 (80%).

A motion was made by Chief Gundersen and seconded by Major Greene to recommend to the full Committee that Shane Smith 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 Advisory

1. William Graham II Newbury PD

- Basic Training:
 - Completed a 120-hour Northeast Regional Police Institute reserve/intermittent training program on December 22, 1990.
 - Graduated from the 480-hour Maine Criminal Justice Academy for full-time law enforcement officers on May 24, 1996.
 - Completed the 81-hour New Hampshire Law Package at the 111th New Hampshire Police Academy on March 28, 1997.
- Work Experience as a Law Enforcement Officer:
 - 1990 – 1996: reserve/intermittent and part-time officer for the Merrimac, MA Police Department.
 - 1992 – 1996: part-time police officer for the Groveland, MA Police Department.
 - May 1996 – December 1996: full-time police officer for the Lewiston, ME Police Department.
 - March 1997 – April 2021: full-time police officer for the New Hampshire State Police.
 - June 2022 – September 2025: part-time police officer for the Bradford, NH Police Department.
 - September 2025 – present: part-time police officer for the Durham, NH Police Department.

- In-Service/Specialized Training: Yes, in NH.
- Break in Service: Yes, April 2021 – June 2022.
- CPR/1st Aid Certified: N/A.
- MPTC Firearms Certified: N/A.
- MPTC Police Officer Core Competency Exam: N/A.

Officer William Graham and Newbury PD are seeking an exemption advisory. Officer Graham completed a 120-hour NERPI reserve/intermittent training program in December 1990. From 1990 to 1996, he worked as a reserve and part-time police officer for the Merrimac, MA Police Department. From 1992 to 1996, he worked as a part-time police officer for the Groveland, MA Police Department. He graduated from the 480-hour Maine Criminal Justice Academy for full-time officers on May 24, 1996, and worked as a full-time police officer for the Lewiston, ME Police Department until December 1996. On March 28, 1997, he completed the 81-hour law package required for lateral transfers in New Hampshire. He went on to work as a full-time officer for the New Hampshire State Police until April 2021. From June 2022 to September 2025, he worked as a part-time police officer for the Bradford, NH Police Department. Since September 2025, he has worked as a part-time police officer for the Durham, NH Police Department. MPTC Deputy General Counsel Gina Masotta explained that Officer Graham is on today’s agenda because the number of hours for the Maine police academy he completed is significantly lower than our 800-hour recruit officer course.

Officer Graham and Newbury PD Deputy Chief Aaron Wojtkowski were present at today’s meeting. Officer Graham provided the Subcommittee with more details regarding his employment over the years. He said he has spent his entire law enforcement career working patrol. He also noted that, as a part-time officer in New Hampshire over the last few years, he has been required to complete the same annual in-service training as full-time officers.

Chief Gundersen said she believes Officer Graham’s Maine academy, together with the New Hampshire law package training, is sufficiently close to other out-of-state academy training that the Subcommittee has accepted in the past.

A motion was made by Chief Gundersen and seconded by Chief Clark that William Graham’s out-of-state police training is substantially equivalent to an MPTC-operated or authorized academy, and a positive exemption advisory should be issued. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

IV. INTERRUPTION-IN-SERVICE 5+ YEARS

1. James MacDonald Marion PD/Plymouth County Sheriff’s Dept.

MPTC staff is seeking guidance from the Subcommittee as to whether Deputy Sheriff (DS) James MacDonald has had a break-in-service of more than 5 years. DS MacDonald completed a reserve/intermittent training program in 2010 and began working at the Plymouth County Sheriff’s Department (“Plymouth”) around that same time. His primary job title when he started was Assistant Fleet Supervisor. He was promoted to Fleet Supervisor in 2021 and still holds that title today. A job description submitted by Plymouth summarizes his duties as “overseeing the general repairs and maintenance” of all vehicles for Plymouth. DS MacDonald is also a sworn deputy sheriff on a part-time basis. He has been a member of various SWAT teams, like SEMLEC and METRO-LEC, since

2015 and serves as the rook operator. He has been doing all MPTC in-service since at least TY22 according to information contained in Acadis and has been an MPTC-certified firearms instructor since 2024. DS MacDonald was originally sponsored for the Bridge Academy by Plymouth and completed his coursework in the spring of 2023. He was subsequently hired by Marion PD as a Special Police Officer in 2024 and has worked over 1,300 hours in that role. Marion PD submitted a Bridge exemption request on his behalf in March 2026. The question for the Subcommittee is whether his hours as a Fleet Supervisor with Plymouth can be counted toward the 2,400 hours.

DS MacDonald was present to answer questions for the Subcommittee. He was accompanied by Assistant Deputy Superintendent Arthur Short from Plymouth, Millis PD Chief Chris Soffayer, and Halifax PD Chief Joao Chaves. Sheriff Coppinger asked DS MacDonald to outline his law enforcement duties in his roles as Fleet Supervisor and rook operator. DS MacDonald summarized his duties as Fleet Supervisor, which he said included overseeing inmates for a period of time. He spoke extensively about the work he has done and the police operations in which he has participated as a rook operator and member of various specialized SWAT teams over the years. He told the Subcommittee he responded to the Boston Marathon bombing, the incident in which Sean Gannon was killed, and hundreds of other SWAT calls. ADS Short said that part of the reason for this issue with DS MacDonald's hours for Bridge is that Plymouth categorizes this SWAT work as "details," even though it is actually law enforcement work. Chiefs Soffayer and Chaves attested to the important role played by DS MacDonald and the invaluable experience he brings to critical police incidents.

A motion was made by Chief Clark and seconded by Chief Gundersen that James MacDonald's work for the Plymouth County Sheriff's Department does not constitute a break-in-service. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Juan Nunez Hampden County Sheriff's Dept.

Deputy General Counsel Masotta advised that MPTC staff are also seeking guidance as to whether Deputy Sheriff Juan Nunez has had an interruption-in-service of more than 5 years. He graduated from a reserve/intermittent training program in February 2013. From 2014 to 2018, he worked as a security officer at Mercy Medical Center and was sworn as an SPO through Springfield PD in that role. DS Nunez began working at the Hampden County Sheriff's Dept. in February 2019, which is more than five years after he graduated from his reserve academy, and he has only worked details in his role there. DS Nunez was hired by Holyoke PD in June 2021 as an auxiliary officer, which was eight years after his graduation from the reserve academy. He began working patrol shifts for Holyoke in December 2021 and left the department in May 2023. He was hired by West Springfield PD in May 2023. He went on to work for Brimfield PD from August 2023 to January 2024. Finally, he was hired by Baystate Medical Center in May 2024 and remains there today.

The question before the Subcommittee is whether the hours worked by DS Nunez at Mercy Medical Center can be counted as law enforcement work. Mercy Medical completed a questionnaire regarding his duties and provided a job description, which is included in the Subcommittee's meeting materials for today. Deputy General Counsel Masotta reminded the Subcommittee that they considered this question in 2023 for another Hampden deputy sheriff, Thomas Caron, and found that the hours he worked in the same position at Mercy Medical Center were not akin to patrol hours and should not be counted. DS Caron was scheduled to appear before the full Committee for a review of that decision in July 2025. Because their issues are essentially the same, MPTC staff scheduled DS Nunez to appear with DS Caron before the full Committee. However, given the ongoing discussions

between POST and the Sheriffs, a decision was made to remove DS Caron and DS Nunez from the Committee's agenda last summer.

DS Nunez and his attorney, Andrew DiCenzo, were present at today's meeting to answer questions. Attorney DiCenzo summarized DS Nunez's responsibilities at Mercy Medical Center and argued that they were akin to police duties and functions. He said that DS Nunez carried a badge, conducted patrols, responded to emergencies, participated in situations that required de-escalation procedures, and recounted a 2016 arrest about which he testified in court. He said that DS Nunez also kept up with all required in-service training during this time.

AAG Nguyen asked if DS Nunez carried a firearm while working at Mercy Medical. Attorney DiCenzo said he carried a baton and pepper spray but not a firearm. Chief Gundersen said she appreciates the difficult and important work done by security officers at Mercy Medical, but she does not believe it constitutes police duties and functions. She recommended that the discussion be presented to the full Committee and welcomed guidance from POST.

A motion was made by Chief Gundersen and seconded by Chief Clark that the hours worked by Juan Nunez at Mercy Medical Center did not constitute law enforcement duties/functions and that the matter should be referred to the full Committee for review. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

V. BRIDGE EXEMPTIONS

The Standards Subcommittee considered Bridge exemption requests for Officers numbered 667 and 668 on the May Bridge Academy A-H class list. Coursework was completed and payroll has been verified.

A motion was made by Chief Gundersen and seconded by Chief Clark to recommend to the full Committee that it approve the Bridge exemption requests for Officers numbered 667 and 668 on the May 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 448 and 449 on the May Bridge Academy I-P class list. Coursework was completed and payroll has been verified.

A motion was made by Major Greene and seconded by Chief Clark to recommend to the full Committee that it approve the Bridge exemption requests for Officers numbered 448 and 449 on the May 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 360-362 on the May Bridge Academy Q-Z Class List. Coursework was completed and payroll has been verified.

Sheriff Coppinger inquired about the hours for Officer numbered 361 and whether hours from the King Richard's Faire were counted toward the 2,400 hours. Deputy General Counsel Masotta said she confirmed with MPTC staff that Officer numbered 361's 2,400 hours did not include hours worked at King Richard's Faire.

A motion was made by Chief Gundersen and seconded by Chief Clark to recommend to the full Committee that it approve the Bridge exemption requests for Officers numbered 360-362 on the May Bridge Academy Q-Z Class List. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Deputy General Counsel Masotta also noted that Officer numbered 357 on the April Q-Z Class List presented to the full Committee last month was inadvertently left off the list presented to the Subcommittee. While Officer numbered 357 was therefore not reviewed/approved by the Subcommittee last month, the full Committee approved the Bridge exemption.

VI. BRIDGE HOURS

The Subcommittee considered whether hours worked by officers at the Big E constitute law enforcement work that should be counted toward the 2,400 hours required for a Bridge exemption. Sheriff Coppinger provided some background and reminded the Subcommittee that this is a question they have been discussing for quite some time. He said that since POST's position is that anyone wearing a badge, carrying a gun, and making arrests must be certified, he believes that Big E hours should be counted. Chief Clark agreed with Sheriff Coppinger.

West Springfield PD Chief Jay Gearing and Captain Nolan Ryan were present at today's meeting and provided more information about the Big E and the type of work done by officers there. Chief Gearing said the Big E consists of 175 acres in West Springfield and is the third largest fair in the country. He said 1.6 million people attended over 17 days last year, and Special Police Officers are the primary police presence inside the event. Chief Gearing described the fair as essentially its own city "inside the fence." Some days, there are 130,000 attendees, making it comparable to the third or fourth largest city in the Commonwealth. Moreover, 400-500 campers results in a significant overnight population. Officers working inside the fence appear for roll calls, patrol on foot and in marked cruisers, respond to calls for service (including calls made to 911), make arrests, write police reports, transport detainees, take witness statements, secure crime scenes, and maintain public order. Chief Gearing said he is advocating for these hours worked inside the fair to be counted. He clarified that he is not asking for consideration of hours worked outside the fence, like traffic details. He noted that West Springfield PD's payroll records and pay rate clearly distinguish between patrol assignments inside the fence and detail assignments outside the fence.

A motion was made by Chief Gundersen and seconded by Chief Clark that patrol assignments worked by officers inside the fence of the Big E constitute law enforcement duties/functions and those hours may be counted toward the 2,400 hours required for a Bridge exemption. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

At 10:07 a.m., a motion was made by Chief Gundersen and seconded by Major Greene to adjourn the Standards Subcommittee meeting. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.