

Municipal Police Training Committee
Full Committee Monthly Meeting Minutes
MPTC Headquarters, Randolph, MA
March 17, 2025

Call to Order

On March 17, 2025, at 10:35 a.m., Chief James Hicks called the monthly meeting of the Municipal Police Training Committee to order at 42 Thomas Patten Drive, Randolph, MA. Advance notice of the meeting was posted in compliance with the open meeting laws. A quorum of the fifteen-member Committee was present. The meeting was recorded and broadcast over Microsoft Teams.

Attendees: Voting Members

Chief James Hicks	Present
Deputy Chief Christine Amendola	Present
Sergeant Detective Eddy Chrispin	Present
Chief Brian Clark	Present
Chief Edward Conley	Present
Chief Jennifer Gundersen	Present
AAG Stacey Pichardo	Present
Major Jon Provost	Present
Undersecretary Gina Kwon	Present
Detective Jennifer Sattler	Absent
Superintendent Richard Sullivan	Absent
Sheriff Kevin Coppinger	Absent
Chief Ryan Couture	Absent
Superintendent Lanita Cullinane	Absent

EOPSS/MPTC Staff

Atty. John Melander, Executive Director Rick Rathbun, Deputy Executive Director Amy Fanikos, Atty. Jim O'Brien, Atty. Gina Masotta, Atty. Andrea Nardone, Tanya Hardiman, Lisa Caputo, Jen Sears, Kristen Lydon, Denise Mellon, Aiesha Grenier, Josh Orenberg, Eric Lederman, Elsie Sanon, Luther Joseney, Brian Merrick, Deb Crafts, John Mazza, Tori Koch, Denise Flagg, and James Gribaudo.

Guests

AAG Mary Nguyen.

Announcements

Chief Hicks asked AAG Stacey Pichardo to introduce Mary Nguyen who will represent the AG's Office while AAG Pichardo is out on maternity leave. AAG Nguyen has led the AG's Insurance and Unemployment Fraud Division for the past two years. Previously, AAG Nguyen worked in the Plymouth County DA's Office as a prosecutor for 17 years, doing both trial and appellate work. AAG Pichardo said she believes AAG Nguyen will be a valuable member of the Committee.

Undersecretary Gina Kwon attended law school with AAG Nguyen and reaffirmed her qualifications and experience.

Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Chief Clark and seconded by Deputy Chief Amendola to approve the minutes of the February 19, 2025, meeting. A vote was taken, and the motion passed with two abstentions (Chief Conley and Chief Gunderson).

Police Standards and Training

Temporary Waivers

There were no temporary waiver requests on the March agenda.

Out-of-State Exemptions

There were three out-of-state exemption requests on the March agenda:

Jessica Flynn	Merrimack College PD
Kyle Vaught	Franklin PD
Roberto Moré	Boston University PD

At its meeting earlier this morning, the Standards Subcommittee reviewed and made a favorable recommendation to approve all three exemption requests. MPTC Deputy General Counsel Gina Masotta noted an error in the Committee's meeting book. The meeting materials list Roberto Moré's department as UMass Lowell PD, but he is a member of Boston University PD.

A motion was made by Chief Gundersen and seconded by AAG Pichardo to approve the out-of-state exemption requests for Jessica Flynn, Kyle Vaught, and Roberto Moré. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Bridge Academy Exemptions

There were no Bridge exemption requests for the A-H or Q-Z class lists this month.

A Bridge exemption request for Officer numbered 434 on the Bridge Academy I-P Class List was reviewed and recommended by the Standards Subcommittee. Coursework was completed and payroll has been verified.

A motion was made by Chief Gundersen and seconded by Chief Clark to approve the Bridge exemption request for Officer numbered 434 on the Bridge Academy I-P Class List. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Update on Instructor Certification Revocation Appeals

Since the last meeting, the Standards Subcommittee issued decisions on two instructor certification revocation appeal hearings. Sherriff Coppinger was not present at today's meeting. He will report out the decisions at the April meeting.

Chief Hicks asked whether the two instructors, James Dugan and David Ostrovitz, were notified of the decisions. MPTC Deputy General Counsel Masotta confirmed they were both notified and clarified that Lieutenant Ostrovitz works for Marblehead PD and Sergeant Dugan works for Paxton PD.

Executive Director's Report

FY25 Budget. Executive Director Rathbun informed the Committee that agency spending is within all allocated budget amounts. The Joint Ways & Means hearing with EOPSS is scheduled for March 28, 2025, in Clinton, MA. This will be the next step in planning the 2026 budget.

Facilities. MPTC Chief Operating Officer Kristen Lydon reported that there were no updates on MPTC facilities this month.

Recruit Training Update. Chief of Training Andrea Nardone presented an update on recruit academies, including academy start dates, graduation dates, separations and departures, and demographics. Major Provost announced that MSP is preparing to run its first concurrent academy classes with the 91st and 92nd RTTs. He explained that MSP is hoping to address its attrition rate and injuries to recruits. MSP is also looking for more manageable class sizes and feels they will be able to train recruits more effectively with smaller classes. Chief Hicks said he likes the idea and believes it could be an opportunity for recruits who fail or drop out of the first class to return and join the second class.

In-Service and Specialized Training. Chief of Training Nardone presented an update on in-service and specialized training and noted that current statistics, broken down by academy and total number of training hours, are included in the Committee's meeting book today.

Bridge Academy. Chief of Training Nardone reported that the Bridge Academy continues to hold steady. There was one exemption issued by the Subcommittee this morning. We are awaiting confirmation of work hours for 117 officers in the Bridge Academy A-H Class, 75 officers in the I-P Class, and 63 officers in the Q-Z Class.

ASHER. ASHER Director John Mazza presented an update on the ASHER program and the classes that are in session and scheduled. Last week, the ninth session of AAIR train-the-trainer was delivered. By the end of next week, he anticipates that we'll have approximately 350 certified instructors. To date, 53 two-day AAIR responder classes have been delivered with a total of 1,558 certified first responders. The ASHER team has also trained approximately 2,678 civilians in the CRASE program. In May, we will begin offering instructor-level classes for the ERASE program (Exterior Response to Active Shooter Events), which is ambush training. The first session is planned for May 12-16, 2025. The second session will be June 9-13, 2025. Director Mazza noted that he is looking for locations where ERASE classes can be held.

Open Discussion for Items Not Requiring Votes

Constable Discussion. Sergeant Detective Chrispin said there continue to be questions about who will be setting and implementing training standards for constables. Chief Hicks noted that all Chiefs received an email from POST last month asking them to identify the constables in their respective areas. He reached out to POST to inquire what the expectations are of the Chiefs and whether they will be expected to have oversight of constables.

There was discussion about what training for constables might look like. Chief Conley said he believes that if they are making arrests, a full-time police academy should be required. Chief Gundersen relayed her experience in South Hadley with constables who came from out of town and exploited vulnerable residents of her community and said she never got an answer when she tried to find out how they were able to work in South Hadley.

Chief Hicks asked about MPTC's role in training for constables. Colonel Rathbun relayed that he recently spoke to POST's Executive Director, Enrique Zuniga, about it, but POST is still digesting the results of the survey that was sent to Chiefs and it would be premature at this point to discuss any involvement by MPTC staff.

MAWLE Quarterly Meeting. Deputy Chief Amendola reported that MAWLE (Massachusetts Association of Women in Law Enforcement) would like to get a breakdown of instructor demographics. They are particularly concerned about gender but would like overall demographics too. Chief of Training Nardone said she would look into getting that information.

Old Business

Working Groups. Chief of Training Nardone noted that the Academy and Buildings Review Working Group doesn't really exist anymore, and the Sheriffs Working Group hasn't met. She reported that Executive Director Rathbun and Deputy Executive Director Fanikos met with MACLEA last week at the Crime Lab. The Fitness Working Group continues to roll out the pilot program for physical training. Undersecretary Kwon reported that she'll be scheduling a meeting soon for the Academy Consolidation Working Group. The HRD Cadet Program Working Group has been established and includes Deputy Chief Amendola, Chief Couture, and MPTC Assistant Legal Counsel Denise Flagg. They plan to meet soon, but Executive Director Rathbun needs to connect with HRD first.

POST/Police Reform/LEA Certification Standards. EOPSS Deputy General Counsel John Melander reported that he relayed to POST the Committee's feedback on the use of force and code of conduct standards from the December meeting. The biggest issue in the use of force standards was 13.03(1)(g), which directed officers to make efforts to ascertain whether an individual's lack of compliance is based on non-criminal factors and lists several factors for officers to consider. The Committee expressed concern that requiring officers to think about a laundry list of things while an incident is ongoing could cause them to hesitate and create a dangerous situation. The Committee suggested that such a list might be more appropriate as part of use-of-force reporting, so that it's an after-the-fact consideration rather than during an incident. POST made some minor changes in response to the Committee's concern, which are included in the draft in the Committee's meeting book today. MPTC General Counsel Jim O'Brien explained that POST didn't want to move the list to the reporting section, so the old 13.03(1)(g) is now the new 13.03(1)(f). POST staff want to know if the Committee is amenable to the changes made.

Chief Hicks expressed concern about the word "encourage" in 13.03(1)(f) and who will decide if an officer has complied. In a text message to Attorney O'Brien during the meeting, Annie Lee of POST relayed that POST is trying to give officers some flexibility with that language.

Chief Gundersen said she thinks the new language is better than the old language but expressed concern about its location in the standard. She and Executive Director Rathbun suggested that it would be better suited for inclusion in department policies and/or in a purpose statement at the

beginning of the standard. There was consensus among the Committee members that the concern is not so much with the language but with whether or not it belongs in a standard.

MPTC Regulations (550 CMR 3.00 & 550 CMR 6.00) – Revised/Updated. Attorney Melander reported that a public hearing was held on March 7, 2025, for the proposed revisions to 550 CMR 3.00 and 550 CMR 6.00. The hearing was well attended, but there was not a lot of public testimony. Attorneys Melander and O'Brien noted some important suggestions that were made. Eric Atstupenas, General Counsel to MACOPA, spoke about how POST requires a cross-check with the NDI (National Decertification Index) and suggested that such a check should also be required for enrollment into an academy, along with the background check currently required. Lisa Butner, a former MSP trooper and current member of Tufts PD, discussed the HRD Standards for enrollment, particularly those regarding vision. She advocated for updates to the standards and reasonable accommodations, particularly given the difficulties today in hiring good police officers. An attorney for MSPCA also suggested that animal cruelty training should be required training.

Attorney Melander advised that he also received some written comments on the use of force regulations. The Chief of Bellingham PD expressed concern about language in the use of force regulation at 550 CMR 6.04(6). James Hazeldine of Norfolk PD also submitted written commentary with an inquiry about the PAT and whether MPTC would be taking control of supervisory training for law enforcement officers who are being promoted to higher rank.

Attorney Melander said the Committee is free to make additional changes to the regulations based on the public commentary and other minor stylistic things. The draft of 550 CMR 3.00 in the Committee's meeting book today includes some changes already made by EOPSS/MPTC staff after the public hearing, including adding a cross-check of the NDI as an academy enrollment requirement as suggested by Eric Atstupenas and other changes meant to align the regulation with MPTC's Policies and Procedures.

There was extensive discussion about promotional training, whether it is required every time an officer is promoted, and whether MPTC should be providing all promotional training. Attorney Melander proposed changing the language in our regulations to specify that promotional training for sergeants or other first-line supervisors must be the training prescribed by MPTC but the training for all other promotions shall be at the discretion of departments. EOPSS/MPTC staff will draft the language for inclusion in the regulations and send out a revised draft to the Committee members before the April meeting.

There was consensus that the draft of 550 CMR 6.00 did not require any further changes and was ready for a vote by the Committee.

A motion was made by Chief Gundersen and seconded by Chief Conley to accept the revisions to 550 CMR 6.00 (Use of Force). A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Review of MSP's RTT Curriculum. Attorney Flagg presented the findings of her comparison of MSP's RTT curriculum and statutory training requirements. She noted that Major Provost, Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Richard (retired), and MSP staff were helpful in assisting her and providing the information she needed. She reported that she found all statutory requirements were met. Undersecretary Kwon clarified that the comparison was conducted because police reform requires all law enforcement officers to complete an MPTC-approved academy.

A motion was made by Major Provost and seconded by Chief Clark to approve MSP's RTT curriculum. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

East Falmouth Academy. Executive Director Rathbun advised that a letter sent to Chiefs regarding an investigation into complaints received about the East Falmouth Academy is included in today's meeting book and said there is no other information he can share at this time. Chief Hicks informed the Committee that the MPTC's investigation is being conducted in conjunction with EOPSS and, if any other information becomes available, the Committee will be updated in executive session.

Matters not known at the time of posting that legally come before the Committee

None.

Next Meeting

The next Committee meeting is currently scheduled for Wednesday, April 16, 2025.

Adjournment

At 12:34 p.m., a motion was made by Chief Gundersen and seconded by Chief Clark to adjourn the meeting. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.