

Municipal Police Training Committee
Monthly Meeting Minutes
February 21, 2024

Call to Order

On February 21, 2024, at 10:20AM, Chief James Hicks called the monthly meeting of the Municipal Police Training Committee to order. 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
Superintendent Nora Baston	Present
Chief Brian Clark	Present
Chief Edward Conley	Present
Sheriff Kevin Coppinger	Present
Deputy Superintendent Eddy Chrispin	Present
Sheriff Christopher Donelan	Present
Chief Thomas Gammel	Present
Chief Kelly Nee	Present
Atty. Stacey Pichardo	Present
Major Jon Provost	Present
Secretary Terrence Reidy	Present
Superintendent Richard Sullivan	Present
Ret. Officer Joseph Vieira	Present

EOPSS/MPTC Staff

Undersecretary Gina Kwon, Executive Director Robert Ferullo, Atty. James O'Brien, Atty. Andrea Nardone, Tanya Hardiman, Lisa Caputo, Lara Thomas, Atty. Gina Masotta, Atty. Denise Flagg, Brian Merrick, Denise Mellon, Kristen Lydon, Lisa Kaynakian, Jennifer Sears, Yola Cabrillana, Kathleen Berry, Felisha Arnold, Elsie Sanon, Charmagne Pearson, Cassandra Cahill, Eric Lederman, Hannah MacKillop, Hannah Gianfriddo and Kayla Rosario-Muñoz.

Guests

Jeffrey Scott.

Announcements

Executive Director Ferullo presented Certificates of Recognition for Exceptional Service to the following student officers:

- ❖ Student Officer Patrick Carr – Wellesley PD / Randolph Academy
- ❖ Student Officer Joseph Guarino – Canton PD / Randolph Academy

- ❖ Student Officer Bianca Dixon – UMass PD / Holyoke Academy
- ❖ Student Officer Steven Fritscher – Ware PD / Holyoke Academy
- ❖ Student Officer Tyler Hosley – Barre PD / Holyoke Academy
- ❖ Student Officer Deven Kingman – Sturbridge PD / Holyoke Academy
- ❖ Student Officer Jacob Podmore – South Hadley PD / Holyoke Academy
- ❖ Student Officer Taina Rivera – Chicopee PD / Holyoke Academy
- ❖ Student Officer Connor Shea – Amherst PD / Holyoke Academy
- ❖ Student Officer Korey Therrien – Chicopee PD / Holyoke Academy

On February 1, 2024, Student Officers Guarino and Carr observed a vehicle strike two pedestrians across the street from the Randolph Academy. They immediately gathered medical bags, assessed the situation, and rendered first aid to the injured pedestrians until the arrival of first responders.

On January 25, 2024, Student Officers Dixon, Fritscher, Hosley, Kingman, Podmore, Rivera, Shea, and Therrien encountered a serious motor vehicle accident in Holyoke, involving a vehicle on fire with two individuals trapped inside. The student officers stopped a truck in the area to obtain a fire extinguisher, put out the fire, and swiftly removed the two individuals from the vehicle.

Executive Director Ferullo said that, in a moment of high stress, these ten student officers did exactly what they have been trained to do. Their actions are an example of the characteristics that we strive to instill in all student officers in MPTC academies. We recognize and thank them for their exceptional service.

Chief Hicks thanked and congratulated the student officers for the way they responded to these situations. He said the Committee is proud of their actions and how well they represented the police profession even at this very early stage of their careers.

Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Sheriff Donelan to approve the minutes of the January 17, 2024 meeting. The motion was seconded by Superintendent Sullivan, and a vote was taken. The motion passed with one abstention (Chief Gammel).

Police Standards and Training

Temporary Waivers

There were no temporary waiver requests.

Out-of-State Exemptions

There were four out-of-state exemption requests on the February agenda.

Joshua Pelletier	Fall River PD
Michael Jewett	MassPort PD
Shane Murray	Webster PD
Matthew Edson	Reading PD

At its meeting earlier today, the Standards Subcommittee reviewed and made favorable recommendations to approve the exemption requests for Joshua Pelletier, Michael Jewett, and Shane Murray.

A motion was made by Ret. Officer Vieira and seconded by Sheriff Coppinger to approve the out-of-state exemptions for Joshua Pelletier, Michael Jewett, and Shane Murray. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Matthew Edson graduated from an MCJTC Reserve/Intermittent Program on December 16, 1989 and from a New Hampshire Recruit Academy for fulltime police officers on August 24, 1990. He worked as a reserve officer for the Reading, MA Police Department from April 1989 to June 1990 and as a fulltime officer for the Concord, NH Police Department from June 1990 to June 1992. In June 1992, Reading, MA PD applied for an out-of-state exemption for Officer Edson. Though MPTC staff could not locate a letter confirming that the exemption was issued, there is a document in his file titled “Staff Recommendation, Application for Exemption” signed by the MCJTC’s Exemption Coordinator and Chief of Training at the time, as well as the Police Standards Committee Chairman, which indicates that there was a recommendation to approve the exemption. Officer Edson went on to work as a fulltime officer for Reading PD from July 1992 until March 2023, which is consistent with the exemption having been issued.

MPTC General Counsel/Chief of Staff Jim O’Brien explained that MPTC staff periodically receive lists of certified officers from POST and check to confirm their foundational training. Even though Officer Edson has been retired for almost a year, he remains certified by POST and MPTC staff is asking the Committee to reconfirm his exemption to ensure that our record of his foundational training is complete.

Attorney O’Brien noted that this raises a larger issue of whether officers who resign or retire but remain certified by POST – which could be for a period as long as three years – should be required to continue their in-service training. Chief Hicks said this is probably a discussion the Committee will have at a future meeting and POST should be involved in the discussion at some point.

A motion was made by Ret. Officer Vieira and seconded by Sheriff Coppinger to reconfirm Matthew Edson’s out-of-state exemption. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Bridge Academy Exemptions

Bridge exemption requests for Officers numbered 631 through 633 on the February Bridge Academy A-H Class List were reviewed and recommended by the Standards Subcommittee. Coursework was completed and payroll has been verified.

A motion was made by Ret. Officer Vieira and seconded by Sheriff Donelan to approve the Bridge exemption requests for Officers numbered 631 through 633 on the February Bridge Academy A-H Class List. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Bridge exemption requests for Officers numbered 417 and 418 on the February Bridge Academy I-P List were reviewed and recommended by the Standards Subcommittee. Coursework was completed and payroll has been verified.

A motion was made by Sheriff Donelan and seconded by Sheriff Coppinger to approve the Bridge exemption requests for Officers numbered 417 and 418 on the February Bridge Academy I-P Class List. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Bridge exemption requests for Officers numbered 199 through 229 on the February Bridge Academy Q-Z List were reviewed and recommended by the Standards Subcommittee. Coursework was completed and payroll has been verified.

A motion was made by Sheriff Coppinger and seconded by Chief Gammel to approve the Bridge exemption requests for Officers numbered 199 through 229 on the February Bridge Academy Q-Z Class List. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Bridge Hours

At its meeting earlier today, the Standards Subcommittee was presented with a request by MPTC staff for guidance on whether to count hours submitted by the Norfolk Sheriff's Office for Deputy Sheriff Alfred Wood toward the 2,400-hour Bridge Academy requirement. The matter was tabled by the Subcommittee pending receipt of additional documentation from the Norfolk Sheriff's Office.

Disciplinary Hearings Update

A disciplinary dismissal appeal hearing for former student officers David Bosini and William Corbett, who were dismissed from the Holyoke Police Academy, is scheduled for today, February 21, 2024, at 1:00PM.

A disciplinary dismissal appeal hearing for former student officer Matthew Donaldson, who was dismissed from the Holyoke Academy, is scheduled for March 20, 2024 at 1:00PM.

A hearing for the appeal of a recent dismissal from the Worcester Academy needs to be scheduled.

Executive Director's Report

Basic Training. Chief of Training Nardone presented updates on recruit academies, including academy start dates and demographics.

At the last Committee meeting, Chief Hicks requested additional information as to the reasons for student officer departures from the QCC Academy. That information is included in the Committee's packet today. Chief Hicks said he asked about the reasons for departures because he knows that English is not the first language for many QCC student officers. He had a candidate at QCC who struggled with this, and he has been speaking with MPTC staff about whether there are any additional accommodations we can make for student officers whose first language is not English.

Chief Hicks noted that "not mentally prepared" was listed as one of the reasons for QCC departures in the packet and asked what that means. Chief of Training Nardone said it essentially means that the academy just was not for them. Some student officers have fulltime jobs during the day, and it can be very taxing to work all day and then attend class at the academy at night and on weekends. It can be especially taxing for those who have a spouse and children at home.

Superintendent Baston and Deputy Superintendent Chrispin said that Boston PD started having a family day before the start of academy classes so that the families of their recruits can be prepared for what the academy involves. They are also hoping to introduce a childcare program.

Specialized Training. Chief of Training Nardone presented an update with statistics.

Bridge Academy. Deputy Chief of Training Thomas presented an update on the Bridge Academy. At the last Committee meeting, Chief Hicks asked for additional information regarding the reasons for withdrawals. Deputy Chief of Training Thomas noted that the information is included in today's packet. Chief Hicks asked about academic withdrawals, and Deputy Chief of Training Thomas clarified that candidates who fail a first test and then fail a retest are academically withdrawn and do not have another opportunity to Bridge.

Budget. Executive Director Ferullo indicated that there is nothing significant to report, other than that our Ways & Means budget hearing is scheduled for March 19, 2024.

Facilities. Executive Director Ferullo reported that DCAMM will do site visits on Friday of this week in Hudson, Southbridge, and Marlboro for the three responsive bids for a Central Massachusetts academy. We hope to have more information at the next Committee meeting, but it looks like somewhere between 14 to 18 months for occupancy.

ASHER. Executive Director Ferullo presented an update on ASHER. We expect to have our own equipment in two weeks, which will allow us to step up the pace of this training. The Department of Fire Services and MPTC meet on a monthly basis to discuss and coordinate efforts for ASHER training. Any academy class in session now will have Level 1 training.

Hiring Update. Executive Director Ferullo introduced Jennifer Sears, who recently joined the MPTC as the new Record Division Manager. She previously worked at the Suffolk DA's Office. Lisa Kaynakian also recently joined the MPTC as a new Project Manager in the Data Systems Division. She previously worked at Boston PD.

Old Business

Sheriffs Working Group. Sheriff Donelan discussed the two tracks of training for deputy sheriffs: (1) fulltime academy or Bridge Academy for deputy sheriffs with full police powers and (2) training that does not involve the MPTC for Chapter 37 deputy sheriffs, who are not certified by POST. There was also extensive discussion about the age and PAT requirements for entrance into MPTC academies and how they are impacting Sheriffs Departments.

POST-C. Chief Hicks reported that POST had a preliminary meeting of its Subcommittee on Law Enforcement Officer Certification and this Subcommittee's meetings will be public going forward. Chief Hicks also indicated there has been some discussion about whether there will be a switch to certification on an annual basis, rather than every three years.

Fitness Working Group. Chief of Training Nardone reported that we hope to hold another TSAC class in May and Fitness Manager Melissa Metzke has been working to get strength and conditioning coaches into our academies. Superintendent Baston praised the TSAC class and the positive impact it has had in the Boston Academy.

MPTC Annual Firearms Training Standards – Revised/Updated. The Committee voted to approve the revised/updated firearms training standards at a previous meeting. The approved standards will take effect on July 1, 2024. Sheriff Coppinger asked for clarification on the new standards and whether there is any change from the old standards. MPTC General Counsel/Chief of Staff O'Brien explained that the revised/updated standards do not make any substantive changes to the old standards. Every year, there are two four-hour blocks of training, including the qualification requirement and the skills requirement. They can be mixed and matched, and blocks must be separated by at least three months. Reporting requirements have been broken out into two blocks. But the revised/updated standards still require the same eight hours of training as the old standards.

MPTC Annual First Responder and ECW Training Standards. MPTC General Counsel/Chief of Staff O'Brien reported that the goal of MPTC staff is to ensure that revised/updated training standards for both First Responder and Electronic Control Weapons (ECW) will go into effect on July 1, 2024. He is working with the subject matter experts in these areas and expects that revised/updated standards for both First Responder and ECW will be ready for presentation to and vote by the Committee well in advance of July 1st.

Open Discussion for Items not on the Agenda

Deputy Superintendent Chrispin discussed that Boston PD is looking to introduce virtual reality (VR) training into their academy classes. He explained that recruits want more scenario training, but it can be difficult to find enough time and staff. VR training would not be used as an alternative to scenario training, but as an add-on to training.

Chief Hicks noted that the 2024 IACP Conference will be held in Boston in October, and Boston PD is scheduled to present. If any Committee members have something they would like to present on at the conference, they should reach out to Superintendent Cullinane. Secretary Reidy suggested that ASHER training would be a good topic for presentation.

Next Meeting

The next Committee meeting is scheduled for March 20, 2024, at 10:00AM in Milford, MA.

Adjournment

At 12:00PM, there was a motion by Sheriff Donelan and a second by Chief Gammel to adjourn the meeting. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.