Municipal Police Training Committee
Monthly Meeting Minutes
November 15, 2023

Call to Order

On November 15, 2023, at 10:30 a.m., 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.

Announcements

Chief Hicks welcomed Norton PD Chief Brian Clark to the Committee. Chief Clark shared his background with the Committee.

Superintendent Lanita Cullinane is stepping down from the Committee. MAMLEO has made a nomination for her replacement and the approval process is underway.

Attendees: Voting Members

Chief James Hicks	Present
Superintendent Nora Baston	Present
Chief Brian Clark	Present
Chief Edward Conley	Present (until 11:17 a.m.)
Sheriff Kevin Coppinger	Present
Sheriff Christopher Donelan	Present
Chief Thomas Gammel	Present
Chief Jennifer Gundersen	Present
Superintendent Richard Sullivan	Present
Atty. Stacey Pichardo	Present
Major John Provost	Present
Undersecretary Gina Kwon	Present

EOPSS/MPTC Staff

Executive Director Robert Ferullo, Atty. John Melander, Atty. James O'Brien, Atty. Andrea Nardone, Jay Gribaudo, Tanya Hardiman, Lara Thomas, Atty. Gina Masotta, Atty. Denise Flagg, Denise Mellon, Ara Nerssessian, Jean Avril, Lisa Caputo, Kristen Lydon, Yola Cabrillana, Kathleen Berry, Felisha Arnold, Brian Merrick, Elsie Sanon, Melissa Metzke, and Jason Brennan.

Guests

Peter Murray, Chief William Coupe, Jr., Richard Tracey, Skylar Bartram, Brian Willard, and Chief Richard Fuller.

Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Sheriff Donelan to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2023 meeting. The motion was seconded by Chief Gundersen, and a vote was taken. The minutes were approved with three abstentions (Chief Clark, Chief Gammel, and Chief Conley).

Police Standards and Training

Temporary Waivers

A temporary waiver request for John Leighton of Scituate PD was reviewed and recommended for approval by the Standards Subcommittee.

A motion was made by Sheriff Coppinger and seconded by Superintendent Sullivan to approve the temporary waiver for Officer John Leighton. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Out of State Exemptions

There were four out-of-state exemption requests on the November agenda:

Robert J. Keith	Medford PD
Skyler S. Bartram	Barnstable Sheriff
William R. Gorman, Jr.	Boxborough PD
Chaislyn M. Burgio	Seekonk PD

The Standards Subcommittee reviewed and made a favorable recommendation to approve all four requests.

A motion was made by Chief Gammel and seconded by Sheriff Coppinger to approve the out-of-state exemptions for Officers Keith, Bartram, Gorman, and Burgio. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Bridge Academy Exemptions

A Bridge exemption request for Officer numbered 627 on the November A-H list was reviewed and recommended by the Standards Subcommittee. Coursework was completed and payroll has been verified.

A motion was made by Sheriff Donelan to approve the Bridge exemption request for Officer numbered 627 on the Bridge Academy November A-H list. The motion was seconded by Chief Gammel, and a vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

A Bridge exemption request for Officer numbered 414 on the November I-P list was reviewed and recommended by the Standards Subcommittee. Coursework was completed and payroll has been verified.

A motion was made by Atty. Pichardo to approve the Bridge exemption request for Officer numbered 414 on the Bridge Academy November I-P list. The motion was seconded by Superintendent Baston, and a vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

Bridge exemption requests for Officers numbered 93 through 123 on the November Q-Z list were reviewed and recommended by the Standards Subcommittee. Coursework was completed and payroll has been verified.

A motion was made by Chief Gundersen to approve Bridge exemption requests for Officers numbered 93 through 123 on the Bridge Academy November Q-Z list. The motion was seconded by Sheriff Donelan, and a vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

Bridge Hours

At its meeting earlier today, the Standards Subcommittee considered a request from MPTC staff for guidance on whether to credit the work hours of Officer Brian Willard for Bridge. Officer Willard is a Special Police Officer for the Town of Weymouth. He is currently assigned to Weymouth PD's Natural Resource Division as a Natural Resource Officer under the command of the Special Operations Division. One of his duties as a Natural Resource Officer is Animal Control. Officer Willard and Weymouth PD Chief Richard Fuller were present at the Subcommittee meeting to provide additional information and answer any questions. After reviewing the matter and hearing from Office Willard and Chief Fuller, the Subcommittee voted unanimously that Officer Willard's Weymouth PD work hours should be credited.

This matter was not on the full Committee's meeting agenda today. It will be addressed by the full Committee at its December meeting.

Interruptions in Service

At its meeting earlier today, the Standards Subcommittee also considered whether time spent in federal law enforcement service by Peter Murray and Richard Tracy should be considered an interruption in service. By way of background, MPTC General Counsel/Chief-of-Staff noted that, per our CMRs, officers who have an interruption in service of five or more years where they have not performed police duties and functions must go back and re-complete a full police academy. Historically, the Subcommittee and full Committee have considered a move to federal law enforcement to be an interruption in municipal police service, though exceptions have been made. Peter Murray is an agent for the ATF. Richard Tracy is a U.S. Postal Inspector. Prior to becoming federal agents, both attended full-time MPTC-operated police academies. Agent Murray went on to work for UMass Amherst PD for approximately eight years. Postal Inspector Tracy worked as a patrol officer for Tisbury PD and West Brookfield PD for a total of approximately four years. Thereafter, both moved on to federal service. After long careers with their respective federal agencies, each is looking to return to municipal policing. Millville PD is seeking to hire Agent Murray. Millville PD Chief William Coupe, Jr was present at today's meetings with Agent Murray to provide additional information and answer questions. Postal Inspector Tracy was also present at today's meetings. He is not tied to any department yet but is looking for guidance as to whether he would get an exemption before going any further.

Sheriff Coppinger provided a summary of the Subcommittee's discussion about this matter and advised that they did not view Agent Murray's or Postal Inspector Tracy's time in federal law enforcement to be a break in service because they attended full-time MPTC academies, they worked as patrol officers for a period of time thereafter, and their work as federal agents was akin to that of local detectives. The Subcommittee voted unanimously that Agent Murray's time with ATF should not be considered an interruption in service. Since Postal Inspector Tracy is not in the hiring process

with any particular department yet, no vote was taken with respect to whether his time with the U.S. Postal Inspection Service constitutes an interruption in service.

Chief Gundersen noted that going forward she believes it is important for the Committee to evaluate the job duties of each individual in this situation on a case-by-case basis.

Chief Hicks said that he tends to be very critical when considering these matters because it is important for us to be consistent and to protect the high standards we have for municipal police work. But he believes there is some uniqueness to these cases because Agent Murray and Postal Inspector Tracy attended full-time MPTC academies, spent time working as local police officers in Massachusetts, and as federal agents primarily worked in Massachusetts conducting investigations. Chief Hicks said that any motion on this matter should be specific to those facts.

A motion was made by Chief Conley that, based on the evidence before the Committee specific to Peter Murray, his time with the ATF did not constitute an interruption of service. The motion was seconded by Sheriff Coppinger, and a vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

A second motion was made by Chief Conley that Peter Murray must successfully complete the MPTC core competency exam prior to beginning service as a Massachusetts police officer. The motion was seconded by Superintendent Sullivan, and a vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

Since Postal Inspector Tracy is not currently in the hiring process with any particular department, no vote was taken with respect to whether his time with the U.S. Postal Inspection Service constitutes an interruption in service.

Disciplinary Hearings Update

Since the last Committee meeting, three decisions on disciplinary dismissal appeals have issued. At today's meeting, Sheriff Coppinger reported out the decisions. He summarized the facts related to each appeal and reported the decisions as follows:

1. Student Officer Mourice Ingram, Springfield Academy: After a hearing on September 27, 2023, the Subcommittee sustained the six Class III violations against SO Ingram but overruled his dismissal from the Academy. SO Ingram is immediately eligible to re-enroll in any MPTC operated or authorized academy, subject to sponsorship and compliance with all academy enrollment requirements. In the event he becomes enrolled in and attends a future academy, the Class III violations shall not be a part of his record at that academy.

2. Student Officer Alec Duarte, Holyoke Academy: After a hearing on October 2, 2023, the Subcommittee sustained the three Class I violations against SO Duarte (*cheating, dishonesty, conduct unbecoming)* and upheld his dismissal from the Academy. However, the Subcommittee reduced SO Duarte's period of ineligibility for enrollment in any subsequent academy from 20 years to 15 years.

3. Student Officer Alyssa Ippolito, Holyoke Academy: After a hearing on October 3, 2023, the Subcommittee overturned the Class I violation against SO Ippolito (*conduct unbecoming*) and her dismissal from the Academy. Because SO Ippolito successfully completed all Academy coursework and the only remaining requirement of her prescribed course of study was the graduation ceremony, the Subcommittee directed the MPTC to issue her a graduation certificate from the Academy.

Executive Director's Report

Recruit Academy Update. Chief of Training Andrea Nardone shared updates on the recruit academies.

Academy Start Dates. Chief of Training Nardone presented the upcoming Academy start dates.

Academy Demographics. Chief of Training Nardone reported on Academy Demographics.

Bridge Academy Update. Deputy Chief of Training Lara Thomas presented an update on the Bridge Academy. She estimates that the number of Q-Z officers who are eligible for the Bridge Academy but are not enrolled to be approximately 82. MPTC staff is proposing that we cut off enrollment on February 1, 2024 and is asking for the Committee's support.

A motion was made by Chief Gammel that the deadline for the Q-Z group to enroll in the Bridge Academy is February 1, 2024. The motion was seconded by Chief Gunderson, and a vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

Specialized Training was presented by Chief of Training Nardone.

In-Service Update was presented by Chief of Training Nardone. Curriculum Manager Denise Flagg requested that Committee members solicit in-service topics for TY25 from their regions. If possible, she would like to bring the topics to the Committee for a vote in January or February.

ASHER. Executive Director Ferullo advised that there are two ASHER trainings occurring now.

Budget. Executive Director Ferullo reported that he is working with Undersecretary Kwon to free up funding for specialized training.

Facilities. Executive Director Ferullo provided updates on the ongoing construction of the East Falmouth facility. MPTC Facilities Manager Jay Gribaudo presented current photos of the project. We anticipate having the first East Falmouth class begin in September of 2024. Executive Director Ferullo also advised that we are continuing to move forward with the RFR process for a Central Massachusetts academy.

Recruit Survey. MPTC recently conducted a survey of Chiefs regarding their anticipated recruit training needs. The survey results show there will be a high demand for recruit training. We will continue to plan carefully to accommodate demand and to stretch class numbers so long as it does not negatively impact the quality of the training.

Undersecretary Kwon commended Executive Director Ferullo for his work on all the new MPTC training facilities, which will help meet increased training demands. None of the new facilities would have been possible without Executive Director Ferullo's tireless advocacy.

Old Business

Working Groups. Executive Director Ferullo said the Sheriffs Working Group has a draft training proposal to accommodate corrections officers.

CMRs. Attorney Melander has been keeping track of things that need to be corrected in the MPTC CMRs. Chief Hicks said a small working group will be created to work through some of these issues and come up with a draft of revisions for review and approval by the Committee.

New Business

Police Academy Physical Training Pilot Program. MPTC Physical Fitness Manager Melissa Metzke updated the Committee on the PT Pilot Program implemented at the Plymouth and Boston Police Academies. When the fitness working group was formed approximately one year ago, they discussed injury rates. This pilot program was designed to reduce injuries using a fitness framework that incorporates more variety in training and brings in more job-related tasks. As part of the program, they created a training calendar, which includes days for strength training, running, and recovery. Plymouth tested 57 recruits and Boston tested more than 100. Using the pilot program, the Plymouth Academy had no injuries from day one to the start of phase two. Superintendent Baston reported that it was initially more of a challenge to implement the program in the Boston Academy and there were 35 injuries (including 23 lower extremity injuries). Fitness Manager Metzke recommended that Boston keep analyzing the injuries because injury trends are important. She also stressed that injury prevention strategies are crucial – stress is okay, but recruits need time to recover so they can adapt and get fitter; too much stress with no recovery time actually makes them less fit. The Boston Academy also brought in Dr. Rui Li, Associate Clinical Professor of Exercise Science at Northeastern University, for a site visit to review their physical training. Her assessment and recommendations were the same as Fitness Manager Metzke. Superintendent Baston said that Boston is happy with the results of the pilot program and believes they would have lost good recruits to injuries without it. She believes we should be training smarter and using the science.

Chief of Training Nardone said that, ultimately, the goal of the fitness working group is officer wellness and creating an academy setting where it becomes a lifestyle that recruits carry forward with them. The working group is looking for the Committee's blessing to continue with the training calendar created for the pilot program and to revamp the Health and Wellness curriculum. A draft curriculum would be presented to the Committee in or around May 2024. The Committee authorized the fitness working group to continue with the training calendar and move forward on the draft curriculum.

Annual Firearms Training Standards. Sergeant Jason Brennan, the MPTC Firearms Statewide Coordinator, presented on possible revisions to the annual firearms training standards. After the 2022 recertification process, they received feedback from instructors that some aspects of the standards are difficult to interpret. This has been an ongoing issue, and it leaves room for inconsistency. Examples of some of the recurring questions that have arisen include requalification for instructors, qualifications for individuals who are employed by more than one department, and qualifications for

unarmed departments. Potential revisions to the standards would not change any of the current requirements for departments but just make them easier to understand. Sergeant Brennan believes he can have a draft of the revisions for the Committee's review by December.

Next Meeting

The next Committee meeting is scheduled for December 20, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. in Randolph. A schedule for the 2024 Committee and Standards Subcommittee Meetings will be shared with the Committee in the next few days.

Adjournment

At 1:48 p.m. there was a motion by Chief Gammel and seconded by Superintendent Sullivan to adjourn the meeting. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.