

**Municipal Police Training Committee**  
**Full Committee Monthly Meeting Minutes**  
**MPTC Headquarters, Randolph, MA**  
**November 20, 2024**

**Call to Order**

On November 20, 2024, at 10:12 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
Superintendent Nora Baston	Present
Sergeant Detective Eddy Chrispin	Present
Chief Brian Clark	Present
Sheriff Kevin Coppinger	Present
Sheriff Christopher Donelan	Present
Chief Jennifer Gundersen	Present
Deputy Chief Stacey Pichardo	Present
Major Jon Provost	Present
Secretary Terrence Reidy	Present
Detective Jennifer Sattler	Present

**EOPSS/MPTC Staff**

Atty. John Melander, Interim Executive Director Jeff Farnsworth, Atty. James O'Brien, Atty. Gina Masotta, Atty. Andrea Nardone, Tanya Hardiman, James Gribaudo, Lisa Caputo, Jen Sears, Amy Fanikos, Elsie Sanon, Denise Flagg, Denise Mellon, Kristen Lydon, Felisha Arnold, Steven Cromack, Cassandra Cahill, Sabrina Perez-Martinez, Eric Lederman, and Hannah Gianfriddo.

**Guests**

MSP Colonel Geoffrey Noble, Chief Ryan Couture, Detective Lieutenant Mark Wheeler, Detective Lieutenant Jeff Diotte.

## **Announcements**

Chief Hicks welcomed MSP Colonel Geoffrey Noble. Colonel Noble thanked Chief Hicks and spoke about how he has spent his first several weeks with MSP traveling around the Commonwealth to meet with members of MSP and others in the law enforcement community. He said he views the Committee as one of the most important groups he has met with. He is committed to ensuring the highest standards of training for MSP and looks forward to working with the Committee.

## **Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes**

**A motion was made by Sheriff Donelan and seconded by Chief Clark to approve the minutes of the October 16, 2024, meeting. A vote was taken, and the motion passed with five abstentions (Superintendent Baston, Secretary Reidy, Major Provost, Sheriff Coppinger and Atty. Pichardo).**

## **Police Standards and Training**

### **Temporary Waivers**

There were no temporary waiver requests on the November agenda.

### **Out-of-State Exemptions**

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

Jennifer McNaught	Lincoln PD
Jacob Zimmer	Amherst College PD
Christopher Juhl	Suffolk County Sheriff's Department

At its meeting earlier today, the Standards Subcommittee reviewed and made a favorable recommendation to approve the exemption requests for Jennifer McNaught and Jacob Zimmer.

**A motion was made by Sheriff Coppinger and seconded by Atty. Pichardo to approve the out-of-state exemption requests for Jennifer McNaught and Jacob Zimmer. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.**

Deputy Sheriff Christopher Juhl of the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department 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 first before the Standards Subcommittee at its August 2024 meeting, where he sought an exemption advisory. He was present at that 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 also explained to the Subcommittee 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. At the August 2024 meeting, the Subcommittee issued a positive exemption advisory to Deputy Sheriff Juhl, contingent upon confirmation that he qualified in firearms with an MPTC-certified instructor, was certified in CPR/First Aid, and passed the core competency exam.

At its meeting earlier today, the Standards Subcommittee reviewed and made a favorable recommendation to approve the exemption request for Deputy Sheriff Juhl.

Chief Hicks asked a number of questions regarding Deputy Sheriff Juhl. Chief Hicks asked whether he has been performing police duties and functions in his current role with the Suffolk Sheriff's Department and, if so, why the Sheriff's Department did not seek an exemption and POST certification for him on or before June 30, 2023, with the rest of the I-P cohort. It was pointed out that if he has not been performing law enforcement duties with Suffolk, he would have an interruption-in-service issue because he last worked in Ohio in April 2019.

**A motion was made by Sheriff Coppinger and seconded by Chief Gundersen to table the exemption request for Chrstopher Juhl until the December meeting so that additional information could be obtained. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.**

#### Bridge Academy Exemptions

There were no Bridge exemption requests on the November Bridge Academy A-H Class List.

A Bridge exemption request for Officer numbered 431 on the November 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 Sheriff Coppinger to approve the Bridge exemption request for Officer numbered 431 on the November Bridge Academy I-P Class List. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.**

Bridge exemption requests for Officers numbered 343 and 344 on the November Bridge Academy Q-Z Class 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 Sheriff Donelan to approve the Bridge exemption requests for Officers numbered 343 and 344 on the November Bridge Academy Q-Z Class List. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.**

## Disciplinary Hearings

On December 18, 2024, the Standards Subcommittee will hear the appeals of former Student Officer Jermaine Lewis, who was dismissed from the Boylston Academy, and former Student Officer Joshua Almestica, who was dismissed from the Plymouth Academy.

## **Executive Director's Report**

Budget. Interim Executive Director Jeff Farnsworth said he did not have anything new to report on the budget, but everything is moving along as anticipated.

Facilities. Interim Executive Director Farnsworth reported there has been a delay with utility installation at the East Falmouth facility. The first academy class is currently scheduled to begin in December, and we may need to push the start date back by a few weeks given the delay. Chief Hicks asked about staffing for the East Falmouth facility. Interim Executive Director Farnsworth said that the open position for a program coordinator closes today, and we decided not to interview any of the candidates who applied for the academy director position. He said there have been conversations with a retired chief in the area who may temporarily cover the position with assistance from Plymouth Academy Director Eileen Goodick.

MPTC Operations Manager Jay Gribaudo reported that construction at the Marlboro facility is ongoing and remains on schedule for an anticipated opening date in September 2025.

Recruit Training Update. MPTC Chief of Training Andrea Nardone presented an update on recruit academies, including academy start dates, graduation dates, and demographics. She noted that we have a number of academies scheduled to start around the same time in order to meet demand. Chief Hicks remarked that he was at a recent MPTC academy graduation and there was no senior staff member from the MPTC or Committee member on stage. He believes it is important that a Committee member be present and part of the program for every graduation. He usually does it himself, but he asked that other members of the Committee begin doing it too.

In-Service and Specialized Training. Interim Executive Director Farnsworth reported that MPTC staff recently discovered that some officers were bypassing their required TY25 online training by using technologies that override the controls meant to prevent fast-forwarding through the training. There are multiple instances of officers completing trainings in minutes that should take hours. Both the produce of the content (Lightheavy) and the Acadis system itself have safeguards in place to prevent this type of thing, and we are actively working with Lightheavy and Acadis to determine exactly how officers were able to circumvent those safeguards. All online learning has been taken down while we work to correct the issue and determine the scope. The Executive Director at POST has been notified, as well as any agency heads with officers identified as having fast-forwarded through any of their TY25 online training. We are working with Acadis representatives to make sure we have the ability to audit this in an automated fashion going forward. Once that happens, we will review prior training years. We are hopeful that online training will be back up soon.

Secretary Reidy remarked that this is likely an issue in higher education too, and technology that allows people to cut corners is a pervasive problem. He commended MPTC staff for their work in discovering and correcting this issue expeditiously.

Deputy Chief Amendola asked whether there was any appetite for going back to doing all veteran officer in-service training in-person only. Superintendent Baston said it would not be feasible for a large department like Boston. Chief Hicks said it would likely cause a hardship for small departments too, as it can be costly to send officers to in-person trainings and back-fill their shifts.

Bridge Academy. Chief of Training Nardone reported that Bridge continues to wind down and the most recent numbers are included in the Committee's packet of materials today.

ASHER. Interim Executive Director Farnsworth said that several people from ALERRT in Texas are in Massachusetts this week. He and the Regional Director did a presentation yesterday in Falmouth. Train-the-trainer classes are running now in Boston and Leicester. Presentations are scheduled for SRO conferences so that each will have a block of ALERRT training. We are running a CRASE class for MPTC staff in December, and a new incident management class – which represents the first of its kind in the country – will be held in Massachusetts in March.

Secretary Reidy said he recently hosted a meeting for all New England public safety chiefs at the Milford facility and it was very well-received. He reported that the sentiment is that no other New England states are doing what Massachusetts is doing, and a lot of the other states are looking to start doing something similar. Secretary Reidy thanked Interim Executive Director Farnsworth for his assistance in putting the meeting together.

## **Old Business**

Working Groups. Chief of Training Nardone reported that Basic Training Division Manager Amy Fanikos is working to roll out changes to our PT curriculum, and fitness Manager Melissa Metzke is working to get instructors certified in the new curriculum. MPTC staff have met with Campus Police groups on multiple occasions and are communicating with MACLEA's President on a regular basis. They continue to have questions about the new firearms law, and we are doing our best to help them get answers.

MPTC Executive Director Position. Chief Hicks reported that the Search Committee has completed its work and forwarded three candidates for the MPTC's Executive Director position to Secretary Reidy for his consideration. Secretary Reidy thanked the Search Committee for its work, especially in such a short amount of time, and remarked that all three candidates submitted to him were extremely qualified.

POST/Police Reform. Chief Hicks said he will save all things POST-related for one larger discussion that falls under both Old Business and New Business.

## **Open Discussion for Items Not on the Agenda**

Chiefs Hicks reported to the Committee that MPTC staff has sent letters to all MPTC-certified instructors who appear on POST's disciplinary list and are in the process of evaluating whether they are in compliance with the *MPTC Certified Instructor Code of Conduct*. Chief Hicks said that Committee members who get questions on this issue should forward them to Chief of Training Nardone.

## **New Business**

TY26 In-service Training Survey. Curriculum & Instruction Specialist Steven Cromack presented the proposed topics for TY26 in-service training, which come from the results of the survey sent to departments. The draft proposal is in the Committee's book, and the proposed working theme is "frontline decisiveness." We are hoping for a vote of approval from the Committee at the December meeting. There was extensive discussion among the Committee members about community policing and the history of policing, and how best to teach both younger officers who don't know the history of policing and older officers who didn't come up in the age of community policing.

Best Practices for FTO Supervisors Class Curriculum. Chief of Training Nardone said that Veteran Officer Training Coordinator Laura Nichols and her team have been working on an FTO supervisory training. We do not need a vote from the Committee, but there are materials relating to the training in the Committee's book for review. Chief of Training Nardone encouraged any Committee member with thoughts or questions about it to reach out to her.

Updates on POST/Police Reform and LEA Certification Standards. EOPSS Deputy General Counsel John Melander reported that EOPSS and MPTC staff continue to work with POST on use of force standards, which make up part of the LEA certification standards. Yesterday, members of MPTC, EOPSS, MSP, and POST met to discuss the use of force standards. Attorney Melander said he believes POST has made great strides in incorporating feedback from MPTC, MSP, and Eric Daigle. A redlined draft that reflects some of those changes is included in the Committee's meeting book today. But after yesterday's meeting, there were additional changes made that we believe move the ball in the right direction and we will provide the Committee with a copy of the most updated draft so we can discuss it at next month's meeting.

Chief Hicks noted that there are also materials in today's meeting book relating to the Code of Conduct standards, which is also part of LEA certification standards. He urged the Committee members to review the materials and provide feedback.

Chief Hicks also noted that there is a survey out now to Chiefs and other stakeholders regarding physical fitness and mental health standards. He urged the Committee members to review that too and respond.

### **Next Meeting**

The next Committee meeting will be held on December 18, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. in Randolph, MA.

### **Adjournment**

**At 12:13 p.m., a motion was made by Sheriff Coppinger and seconded by Chief Clark to adjourn the public portion of the meeting, enter into Executive Session, and not reconvene in open session. A roll call was taken:**

Chief James Hicks	Yes
Deputy Chief Christine Amendola	Yes
Superintendent Nora Baston	Yes
Sergeant Detective Eddy Chrispin	Yes
Chief Brian Clark	Yes
Sheriff Kevin Coppinger	Yes
Sheriff Christopher Donelan	Yes
Chief Jennifer Gundersen	Yes
Deputy Chief Stacey Pichardo	Not Present
Major Jon Provost	Yes
Secretary Terrence Reidy	Yes
Detective Jennifer Sattler	Yes

**The motion passed unanimously, and the Committee went into Executive Session.**