

Municipal Police Training Committee
Full Committee Monthly Meeting Minutes
MPTC Headquarters, Randolph, MA
December 18, 2024

Call to Order

On December 18, 2024, at 10:08 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
Superintendent Nora Baston	Present
Sergeant Detective Eddy Chrispin	Present
Chief Brian Clark	Present
Chief Edward Conley	Present
Sheriff Kevin Coppinger	Present
Sheriff Christopher Donelan	Present
Chief Jennifer Gundersen	Present
Secretary Terrence Reidy	Present
Superintendent Richard Sullivan	Present
Major Jon Provost	Absent
Deputy Chief Christine Amendola	Absent
Deputy Chief Stacey Pichardo	Absent
Detective Jennifer Sattler	Absent

EOPSS/MPTC Staff

Undersecretary Gina Kwon, Atty. John Melander, Interim Executive Director Jeff Farnsworth, Atty. James O'Brien, Atty. Gina Masotta, Atty. Andrea Nardone, Felisha Arnold, Kathleen Berry, Yola Cabrillana, Lisa Caputo, Amy Fanikos, Denise Flagg, Hannah Gianfriddo, Kris Gottlander Gentile, Aiesha Grenier, James Gribaudo, Tanya Hardiman, Lisa Kaynakian, Tori Koch, Eric Lederman, Kristen Lydon, Denise Mellon, Brian Merrick, Elsie Sanon, and Jen Sears.

Guests

Chief Ryan Couture

Announcements

The 2025 Committee meeting schedule was recently shared with the Committee. There are some scheduling conflicts for the meeting on January 15, 2025. There was a discussion about moving the

meeting to Tuesday, January 21, 2025. MPTC staff will reach out to Committee members who were unavailable today, and an updated schedule will be shared in the next few days.

Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Sheriff Donelan and seconded by Chief Gundersen to approve the minutes of the November 20, 2024 meeting. A vote was taken, and the motion passed with two abstentions (Chief Conley and Superintendent Sullivan).

Police Standards and Training

Temporary Waivers

There were no temporary waiver requests on the December agenda.

Out-of-State Exemptions

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

Joshua Aguero	Southcoast Health PD
Noah Glover	Stoughton PD
John Singletary	Tufts Medical Center

Officer Aguero's exemption request has been postponed to the January meeting.

At its meeting earlier today, the Standards Subcommittee reviewed and made a favorable recommendation to approve the exemption requests for Noah Glover and John Singletary.

A motion was made by Sheriff Coppinger and seconded by Chief Clark to approve the out-of-state exemption requests for Noah Glover and John Singletary. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Bridge Academy Exemptions

A Bridge exemption request for Officer numbered 645 on the December Bridge Academy A-H Class List was 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 request for Officer numbered 645 on the December Bridge Academy A-H Class List. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

There were no Bridge exemption requests for the I-P or Q-Z Class Lists this month.

Disciplinary Dismissal Appeals

Appeal hearings for former student officers Jermaine Lewis, who was dismissed from the Boylston Academy, and Joshua Almestica, who was dismissed from the Plymouth Academy, are scheduled for this afternoon.

Instructor Certification Revocation Appeals

Six instructor certification revocation appeal hearings were held before the Standards Subcommittee on December 17, 2024, for the following officers: Edmond Bussiere, Freddie O'Neal, Robert Curran, Ray Anair, Matthew Ritvo-Cabezas, and Cory Taylor. Decisions on each matter are pending. We anticipate holding another round of hearings on January 15, 2025.

Executive Director's Report

Budget. Interim Executive Director Jeff Farnsworth discussed the budget and said there are no issues to report at this time. He commended the MPTC's Fiscal team for their outstanding work to keep our finances in order.

Facilities. Interim Executive Director Farnsworth reported that we experienced some delays getting the utilities hooked up for our East Falmouth facility. The issues have been fixed, but we had to push back the start date of the 1st ROC to January 13, 2025. MPTC Chief Operating Officer Kristen Lydon reported that construction on the Marlboro facility is moving along as scheduled. She also noted that we recently had a flood at our Randolph facility, and repairs are underway.

Recruit Training Update. MPTC Chief of Training Andrea Nardone presented an update on recruit academies, including academy start dates, graduation dates, and demographics.

Chief Hicks asked about voluntary separations at the Holyoke Academy and why there have already been 5 in week 2. Chief of Training Nardone said that the number of voluntary separations so far is not unusual given the class size, though it is somewhat unusual for the Holyoke Academy in particular. Superintendent Baston asked if we could have non-academy staff reach out to students who voluntarily resign. She believes they may be more comfortable speaking to non-academy staff, and we may get more insight into why student officers resign.

Chief Hicks reminded the Committee members that we want them to attend academy graduations.

In-Service and Specialized Training. Chief of Training Andrea Nardone presented an update on In-Service and Specialized training.

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. She noted that, at this point, the officers who are still enrolled in Bridge are mostly just finishing up their 2,400 hours. MPTC staff does not unenroll them until they have met the 2,400-hour requirement.

ASHER. Interim Executive Director Farnsworth presented an update on the ASHER program and the classes that are in session and scheduled. He noted that an Active Shooter Incident Management (ASIM) class, which is a command-level class, was posted in Acadis last week.

Old Business

Working Groups. Chief of Training Nardone reported that the Fitness Working Group identified and rectified an issue with mid-academy testing. The testing was falling after a time when the student officers had two weeks off from PT, which was not ideal. A change in timing is being rolled out now. Chief of Training Nardone also reported that our Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence/Human Trafficking Coordinator, Maura Landry, is putting together a Title IX training for campus officers.

TY26 In-Service Training Topics. Standards & Delivery Division Manager Kathleen Berry presented an updated proposal for TY26 in-service topics. The proposal in the Committee's packet today includes stakeholder input. If the proposal is approved by the Committee, the Curriculum team will reach out to the subject matter experts and hopes to have the content ready by mid-March 2025. In-house review would take place in April and May. Train-the-trainer classes would be rolled out in the summer, and the trainings would be ready for September. Chief of Training Nardone reported that Denise Flagg is working on a training on the new firearms law that will likely be rolled out in the spring.

Chief Hicks asked if all stakeholder feedback could be incorporated into the in-service curriculum. Standards & Delivery Division Manager Berry said she met with the Curriculum team last week, and they believed it would be possible to incorporate all feedback. There are 2 hours of in-service training that have not been finalized yet. Denise Flagg said that in the past we have included a 2-hour training video – POST/Police Reform in TY24 and ALEC in TY25 – that fits into the 40 hours of in-service. That hasn't been flushed out yet for TY26, but we expect to do something similar to what we've done the past couple years.

A motion was made by Chief Clark and seconded by Sheriff Donelan to approve the TY26 in-service topics, as presented with today's updates. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

POST LEA Certification Standards – Update. Chief Hicks reminded the Committee members that POST is moving forward with LEA Certification Standards and is looking for feedback from the Committee. They are moving forward with the use of force standards before the use of force model policy. But whatever is in the standards will have to be incorporated into the policy. If the Committee has concerns about anything in the standards, we need to communicate that to POST as soon as possible.

MPTC General Counsel/Chief-of-Staff Jim O'Brien said the draft use of force standards and draft code of conduct standards from POST are included in today's meeting book. The original draft use of force standards approved by POST are in today's meeting book. MSP, MPTC, and Eric Daigle provided feedback and pushback to POST on that original draft. Over the last 3 months, we have been working closely with POST to address some of those concerns. An updated version of the draft use of force standards that POST, MPTC, and MSP have been working on together is also in today's meeting book. The edits in green in the updated draft are the product of our work with POST. Attorney O'Brien reminded the Committee members that they don't actually have a vote on the use of force standards, so now is the time to speak up if they have concerns.

Secretary Reidy recalled that when we were working on the police reform law, many people voiced complaints after the law had been passed. He emphasized how important it is that people look at this

material now and pass the information on to other stakeholders because this is their opportunity to speak up if they have concerns.

Attorney O'Brien walked through some of the changes that have been made to the draft use of force standards over the last few months as a result of the work that MSP and MPTC have done with POST. For example, in Section 13.03(1)(e), edits were made to move away from including a list of de-escalation tactics that officers would be required to try or consider so that officers are not hesitating in dangerous situations because they have to think about whether they have done everything on the list.

There was extensive discussion about section 13.03(1)(g), which directs 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. Chief Gundersen and Secretary Reidy expressed concern that officers will have to think about all these things while an incident is ongoing, which may cause them to hesitate and create a dangerous situation. There was also concern about how we would implement or train on 13.03(g) as worded. Chief Hicks suggested that it might be more appropriate as part of use-of-force reporting, so that it's after-the-fact rather than during an incident. Denise Flagg suggested the language could be moved to the section of the standards on use-of-force review.

Chief Gundersen also expressed concern about section 13.03(2)(c), which, as edited, requires agencies to establish a protocol for individuals "to follow up on or raise concerns about a use of force incident." Chief Gundersen said she preferred the original language, which required agencies to establish a protocol for individuals to "file a complaint about a use of force incident." There was consensus from the Committee that the original language was preferable, as Chief Gundersen suggested.

The draft code of conduct standards were also discussed. There was consensus among the Committee members that the code of conduct standards were straightforward, and there was no significant feedback for POST on the draft.

MPTC Executive Director Position. Secretary Reidy announced that Rick Rathbun will be the MPTC's new Executive Director. He has served as the Executive Director of MPAC (Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission) since 2021 and is a retired Colonel of the Warwick, RI Police Department. He'll be starting at the MPTC at the end of January 2025. Secretary Reidy also announced that Amy Fanikos, who currently serves as the MPTC's Basic Training Division Manager, has accepted a position as the MPTC's new Deputy Executive Director. She thanked Secretary Reidy, Undersecretary Kwon, and the Search Committee for the opportunity and said she is looking forward to continuing to work with everyone in her new role. Secretary Reidy noted that there were many good candidates for the Executive Director position, and he thanked the members of the Search Committee for their thoughtful work. He also thanked Interim Executive Director Farnsworth for stepping in, hitting the ground running, and keeping things steady during a transitional period.

New Business

OSA Audit of MPTC. Atty. O'Brien reminded the Committee members that OSA (Office of the State Auditor) began an audit of the MPTC in 2023, which was primarily directed at MPTC's compliance with the mandates of police reform in recruit and veteran officer training. The audit is

now mostly complete. MPTC staff received a draft report from OSA and has provided draft responses to the findings. The report has not been finalized or made public yet. Once that happens, more information will be provided to the Committee. Atty. O'Brien noted generally that OSA found that the MPTC has met its statutory training duties, though there are some areas in which we'll work to improve.

Annual Election of the MPTC Chair. Chief Farnsworth asked the Committee members for nominations for the annual election of the Chairperson. Secretary Reidy said that there was no one better suited to lead this Committee than Chief Hicks as far as experience, professionalism, demeanor, and empathy. He praised Chief Hicks for always taking a well-informed and dedicated position and for representing the members of the Massachusetts law enforcement community so well.

A motion was made by Secretary Reidy and seconded by Chief Gundersen to nominate Chief Hicks for the role of MPTC Chair. Chief Hicks accepted the nomination. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously

Chief Hicks thanked the Committee and MPTC staff for all their work and dedication to our mission. He said he looks forward to continuing that work over the next year.

Open Discussion for Items Not on the Agenda

Interim Executive Director Farnsworth discussed the in-service issue involving the completion of online trainings in less than the expected run time. He noted that approximately 150 agencies have at least one officer with a run time discrepancy. There is a meeting scheduled tomorrow with agency heads to provide an update and alert them that MPTC staff will be sending letters to affected agencies. He explained that the role of MPTC staff is just to document the run time discrepancies in TY23, TY24, and TY25 online in-service training, and provide that information to agency heads. It will be up to the agency to determine whether their officer(s) properly completed the online training. Interim Executive Director Farnsworth thanked the MPTC's Data Systems Division for all its work on this issue.

Secretary Reidy said he is concerned about the spread of misinformation surrounding this issue. He has also heard that there has been some finger-pointing at MPTC staff. He asked the Committee members to reach out to him, Atty. O'Brien, or Interim Executive Director Farnsworth if they hear people blaming MPTC staff for this issue.

Announcements

Superintendent Baston told the Committee she is moving to a position in the Boston Police Department Commissioner's Office, and this will likely be her last Committee meeting. She announced that Superintendent Lanita Cullinane will be replacing her on the Committee. Superintendent Baston thanked the Committee for the opportunity and expressed her appreciation for the amount of work done by the Committee members and MPTC staff. She said she believes that the ideas and openness of the Committee make our recruits better, and she is happy to have been a part of it. Chief Hicks recalled Superintendent Baston's first Committee meeting and how she dove in right away. He praised her for never just coming forward with problems but always with ideas and

solutions. Chief Hicks said he believes Commissioner Cox made a wise choice in selecting Superintendent Baston for this new role and he knows she'll continue to have a positive impact.

Next Meeting

MPTC staff will be reaching out to Committee members to confirm the Tuesday, January 21, 2025, meeting date.

Adjournment

At 12:29 p.m., a motion was made by Chief Gundersen and seconded by Superintendent Sullivan to adjourn the meeting. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.