

PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY
CONSTABLES' EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD

Thursday, November 7, 2024

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Approved Meeting Minutes

Members in Attendance	PCCD Staff
Chair, Craig Westover, Constable, Venango County	Sally Barry, Director, Office of Justice Programs
Vice-Chair Patricia Norwood-Foden, Court Administration, Chester County	Deborah Sandifer, Chief Counsel
Major William Cawley, Pennsylvania State Police	Allison Gantz, Communications Director
Joshua Stouch, Constable, Montgomery County	John Pfau, Manager, Bureau of Training Services
Honorable Wilden Davis, Magisterial District Judge, Delaware County	Michael Vaughn, Supervisor, Constable's Program
	Tracy Beaver, Constables' Program
Guests	Nicholas Hartman, Constable's Program
Anthony Luongo, Temple University	Deborah Williams, Bureau of Training Services
Michael Marcantino, Temple University	Theresa Ford, Manager
Stephen Shelow, PSU-JASI	Dorthey Jacobelli
Tony Mucha, PSU-JASI	Ekaterina Shull

I. Call to Order

Chairman Westover welcomed the group and call the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was established. Chair Westover reminded those in attendance that the meeting was being recorded, to mute their phones when not speaking, to speak loudly, and to limit their comments to two minutes or less.

II. Introductions

Mr. Michael Vaughn introduced PCCD staff in attendance and the Training Delivery School staff.

III. Action Items

- **Approval of Minutes from August 8, 2024**

A motion to approve the August 8, 2024 minutes, was made by Mr. Joshua Stouch and seconded by Ms. Patricia Norwood-Foden. Motion passed unanimously.

- **Fiscal Report for August 8, 2024**

Ms. Ekaterina Shull reported that the balance from the previous year was \$3,737,882.74, with fee collections from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, totaling \$400,998.20. This brings the total available balance as of September 30, 2024, to \$4,138,880.94. The total financial expenditures and commitments as of September 30, 2024, were \$163,406.61 and \$4,076,063.77, respectively, for a combined total of \$4,239,470.38. The uncommitted balance as of September 30, 2024, was -\$100,589.44. The total of class payments received to date is \$36,684.25.

A discussion followed about the factors that affect the balances and how projections are calculated. Further clarification was given on these factors and their influence on the calculations.

The Board tasked program staff to explore the possibility of implementing a certification fee for constables who do not complete work that generates Constables Education Training Act (CETA) fees. An update was given on the status of electronic payments, noting that a certification fee would affect staff processes related to payments. Concerns were raised about the potential misuse of training and training funds. The question of how the fee would be calculated was also raised. The topic was moved to the Discussion Item section for further consideration.

A motion for the approval of the Fiscal Report for August 8, 2024 was made by Mr. Joshua Stouch and seconded by Judge Wilden Davis. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Basic Training Hours Reallocation**

Mr. Mike Vaughn, Supervisor, Constables Program, explained that time at Basic Training was freed up by moving the "Role of the Constable" course online, allowing those hours to be reallocated to more complex subjects within Basic Training. This change will take effect in 2025. Chair Westover clarified the intent behind making the "Role of the Constable" an online course, emphasizing the benefits for all parties involved. The Board supported reallocating additional hours to the Civil Law and "Every Constable's Worst Nightmare" subjects, given the complexity of the materials covered in those topics.

A motion for the approval of the Basic Training Hours Reallocation was made by Mr. Joshua Stouch and seconded by Judge Davis. Motion passed unanimously.

- **Instructor Certifications**

Mr. Nicholas Hartman introduced Temple instructors, Philip Carlo (Firearms), Scott Fogel (General, Communications, and Physical Skills), Jason Hall (Firearms), and Donald Tressler (Firearms) for Board approval. All instructor candidates met the requirements for Board certification to teach their respective topics.

A motion to approve the instructor applications was made by Judge Wilden Davis and seconded by Ms. Patricia Norwood-Foden. The motion passed unanimously.

- **2025 Board Schedule**

A discussion took place regarding Election Day in November 2025. The question was raised about when the Program would begin to see an increase in constables requesting Basic Training, and it was clarified that the Program would see a rise in requests starting in 2026.

A motion to approve the 2025 Board Dates was made by Ms. Norwood-Foden and seconded by Chair Westover. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Discussion Items

Mr. Vaughn presented the Supervisor's Report, providing training statistics on the number of constables who had completed all required training. This prompted a discussion about constables who have not yet completed their training. Clarification was given on the requirements for recertification and the process involved. The Board's decision-making process regarding recertification requirements was also discussed. Additionally, the use of Canvas to make training materials available was explored, with discussions on which materials should be accessible. It was noted that the Annual Firearms training will be extended to an 8-hour day starting in 2025.

Mr. John Pfau re-introduced the Consolidating Board Policies and explained that additional information regarding iron sights and the use of optics had been included. He outlined how the policy changes were developed and the reasoning behind adding these updates to the draft of the Consolidating Board Policies. The Board discussed the increasing use of optics, raising concerns about their impact on training hours, firearms qualifications, and the training population. It was noted that optics are becoming more common, but the Board cannot mandate specific weapons or equipment. A discussion also took place regarding Advanced Firearms training, the requirements for the course, and its benefits.

V. Informational Items

Mr. Pfau provided an update on the Role of the Constable pilot program and shared the feedback received. Ms. Deb Williams then gave an update on the 2025 Basic Training, highlighting how the increase in training hours will benefit incoming constables. Chair Westover further supported this increase, emphasizing the complexity of topics such as levies and liens. Ms. Williams also outlined the Continuing Education courses for 2025, including the description of the new 8-hour Annual Firearms course.

Ms. Norwood-Foden inquired whether Trauma-Informed Care is covered in the courses, and Ms. Williams confirmed that it is. Judge Davis contributed an additional resource that could be used in curriculum development. Finally, Ms. Williams explained that the option to waive participation was removed from subjects that require participation.

Mr. Stouch inquired about how subjects are determined for training. Ms. Williams explained that Program staff considers feedback from course evaluations, constable input, and the constable demographic survey to decide on subjects. Mr. Pfau further clarified that staff tracks when subjects are taught and revisits them on a set timeline.

Mr. Stouch then asked if the Board would offer training on OCAT (Oleoresin Capsicum Aerosol Training) and Baton, noting that both are referenced in Continuing Education. Mr. Pfau explained that although the Board had previously offered recertification courses for OCAT and Baton, constables did not utilize these courses, and as a result, constables fell into different recertification cycles. Chair Westover added that the trainings provided to instructors are not controlled by the Board, and the quality can be different. Mr. Pfau also explained the Board's past decision to not offer Taser training, detailing the history behind that decision.

Mr. Hartman provided a summary and resolutions regarding Training Grievances filed during the 2024 Training Year. The Training Delivery Contractors then shared updates as they closed out the current training year and prepared for the start of the 2025 Training Year. Temple gave a summary of the issues constables faced while using Canvas for online courses and provided an update on the status of curriculum development.

Mr. Michael Marcantino discussed various training locations, including potential additional training sites and firearms ranges, as well as training schedules during the week and specific dates in the Eastern region. Chair Westover expressed gratitude to Temple for the work they had completed.

VI. Other Business

Mr. Pfau explained Senate Bill 1267, noting that the proposed fees in the bill are similar to those suggested in Dr. Robert Orth's data analysis. Mr. Stouch emphasized that the Constable Fee Bill has not been increased to account for inflation. Chair Westover also pointed out that Senate Bill 1267 does not include a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) and stated that any future proposed bills should incorporate a COLA.

Mr. Stouch mentioned that the Senate Bill is unlikely to pass since the Senate Session is nearing its end. Ms. Norwood-Foden shared that Chester County passed a resolution allowing constables to charge additional fees to support constables providing services. She explained how attrition had impacted Chester County and how the resolution helped prevent further loss of constables. Mr. Pfau added that other counties are facing similar challenges in retaining and maintaining constables. Mr. Stouch provided additional reasons as to why constables may not be full time constables, and how the pay is a deterring factor. Mr. Pfau also added the start-up costs of being a constable, and equipment may also impact a constable being full time.

Mr. Stouch requested that the Program explore whether all Continuing Education subjects could be offered online. He also asked if the Firearms Qualification written exam could be completed on Canvas, with the goal of freeing up classroom hours for additional firearms training. Chair Westover noted that in the past, the Board had used workgroups to make recommendations on training matters. He also emphasized that certain skills are perishable and that some skills deteriorate over time.

Mr. Stouch clarified that his goal is to shift classroom time toward hands-on skills training, with the classroom components being moved online. Mr. Pfau responded that Program staff has already begun working on making the firearms exam and safety review available on Canvas.

Mr. Pfau announced that the 2025 Training Schedule will be released soon. He also shared that the Program had completed a letter of appreciation and certificate to be presented to Mr. Phil Michael's family. Additionally, Mr. Pfau announced that he will be retiring. He concluded by providing an update on the status of the Program Audit. Judge Davis asked if prior law enforcement could be considered to receive a cost reduction to complete Basic Training.

Mr. Stouch raised a concern about the Rule Changes that will go into effect on January 1, 2025. Ms. Williams explained that the changes are covered in the Continuing Education course, but Mr. Stouch expressed concerns about constables who tend to wait until the end of the year to complete their training. In response, Mr. Pfau suggested that the rule changes could be communicated to the constabulary through a training bulletin. Judge Davis also offered to help disseminate the rule change information.

VII. Public Voice

Constable Abraham Smith, Westmoreland County, provided his feedback regarding Mechanics of Arrest, and OCAT/Baton training courses.

VIII. Executive Session

A motion was made by Mr. Stouch and seconded by Judge Davis to move into Executive Session. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Stouch to return from Executive Session and seconded by Major William Cawley. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Chair Westover and seconded by Major Cawley to extend Constable John Kelly's certification. Motion passed unanimously.

IX. Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn was made by Judge Davis and seconded by Mr. Stouch. The motion passed unanimously.

The next Board meeting will be held on February 13, 2025, at 9 a.m.