

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

Thursday, May 15, 2025

9:00a.m. – 12:00p.m.

Approved Meeting Minutes

Members in Attendance	PCCD Staff
Chairman, Craig Westover, Constable, Venango County	Kirsten Kenyon, Executive Director, PCCD
Vice-Chairperson, Patricia Norwood-Foden, Court Administration, Chester County	Jackie Weaknecht, Director, Office of Justice Programs
Honorable Wilden Davis, Magisterial District Judge, Delaware County	Kathy Clarke, Deputy Director, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Training Services
Joshua Stouch, Constable, Montgomery County	Deborah Sandifer, Chief Counsel
Harry Albert, Constable, Lebanon County	Allison Gantz, Communications Director
Major Gerard B. McShea, PSP Representative	Theresa Ford, Manager, Financial Management & Administration
Guests	Heather Hewitt, Executive Assistant
Anthony Luongo, Temple University	Michael Vaughn, Supervisor, Constables Program
Michael Marcantino, Temple University	Deborah Williams, Curriculum Manager
Stephen Shelow, PSU-JASI	Tracy Beaver, Constables Program
Abraham Smith, Constable, Westmoreland County	Nick Hartman, Constables Program
Alex Farganis, Constable, Lancaster County	Dorthey Jacobelli, Fiscal Staff
Jeffrey J. Cirba, PA State Constable	Ekaterina Shull, Fiscal Staff

I. Call to Order and Introductions

Vice-Chair Norwood-Foden welcomed the members and called the meeting to order at 9:00a.m. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was established. Vice-Chair Norwood-Foden reminded those in attendance that the meeting was being recorded.

Nick Hartman introduced Kirsten Kenyon as the new Executive Director, and Kathy Clarke as the new Deputy Director of OJP. Board members then introduced themselves, followed by introductions of PCCD staff, and training delivery contractors by Constable Supervisor Mike Vaughn.

II. Approval of the Minutes from February 13, 2025

A motion to approve the February 13, 2025, minutes was made by Joshua Stouch and seconded by Judge Davis. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Action Items

- **Financial Report May 15, 2025**

Ekaterina Shull presented the report for the third quarter of SFY 2024-25. Statement of cash receipt expenditures & commitments balance carried over from the previous fiscal year was \$3,737,882.74, fees collected is \$1,193,575.80, total funds available at the end of 3/31/25 is \$4,931,458.54. Total of expenditures and commitments is \$1,197,814.47, and \$3,102,121.09 respectively for a total \$4,299,935.56. This includes \$491,869.88 in administrative expenditures and commitments. A detailed breakdown of these figures is found beginning on page eight of the meeting materials. Total uncommitted funds as of end of quarter is \$631,522.98. Checks deposited for class reimbursements is \$87,728.25.

Judge Davis raised a question about the closeout refunds of \$2,863.00. Ekaterina explained this was a refund from PSU JASI when a purchase order (PO) is liquidated sometimes there are additional funds.

Chairman Westover raised a question asking about Constable Education Training Act (CETA) in meeting packet for constable fee collections. Program staff confirmed the information was prepared; however, a PDF editing discrepancy did not include it in the final packet. Program staff will send the document out separately to members.

A motion to approve the Financial Report was made by Joshua Stouch and seconded by Chairman Westover. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Instructor Applications**

Nick Hartman presented on the Mechanics of Arrest instructors, asking Board to conditionally approve instructors for remainder of 2025 training year. Mechanics of Arrest Con Ed course requires instructors to be certified in defensive tactics. This course does not teach DT but rather handcuffing and searching techniques. Training delivery coordinators reached out to PCCD asking for consideration that any instructor that has a law enforcement background be added to assist as assistant instructors to help facilitate and meet class averages. Action item found on page 12 of meeting packet. All members are currently certified and approved by the Board in the past.

Comment made by Constable Abraham Smith, indicating that only a one-page agenda was sent out. Heather Hewitt confirmed meeting packet was posted to the PCCD website and provided navigation path.

A motion to approve the instructor applications was made by Judge Davis and seconded by Joshua Stouch. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Consolidated Training Policy**

Nick Hartman presented consolidating the training policy from five separate policies into one centralized document.

A motion to approve the consolidated training policy was made by Harry Albert and seconded by Joshua Stouch. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Discussion Items

- **Supervisor's Report**

Mike Vaughn presented status of 2025 training year. We have a total 36 in-person classes scheduled with 18 completed. A total of 84 constables completed in-person training, remaining consistent based on stats over the past few years. One hundred forty-eight constables completed training in online classes; resulting in 16 percent of online classes currently completed. Under human trafficking, 150 constables completed training, resulting in a 17 percent completion rate. There are five first attempt failures for human trafficking training. Under domestic violence training, there were 171 constables that completed online class for a 19 percent completion rate. These numbers run in comparison to numbers that have completed trainings in past years. For annual firearms, there are 38 classes scheduled. Two classes were cancelled, and the seven constables enrolled were dispersed to other classes. Eight annual firearms classes completed so far with a total number of 124 constables, and 14 failures, resulting in a 10 percent failure rate. Failure rate over past few years is 6-10 percent. This year we had one no-show at training, and one returned after malfunction of weapon. Two basic trainings scheduled; first class completed with 19 constables and one withdrawal. Second basic training is scheduled with nine enrolled. Basic firearms training, we had 19 attempted and 5 failures for a 26 percent failure rate. Second basic firearms class there is currently one constable enrolled.

Question raised by Chairman Westover regarding the review of daily range sheets and looking at fundamentals. Are these fundamentals comparable across the board i.e. handling the firearm, draw and grip issues versus hitting the target that are resulting in lower scores. Clarification was made that some issues are due to fundamentals, and instructors are addressing issues, noting when improvements and progress are made.

Mike Vaughn raised a question with PCCD Chief Counsel Deb Sandifer concerning firearms portion of training. Inquired if the Board would be permitted to look into the possibility of creating a standard requiring attendees to have a vision test prior to attending firearms trainings. Deb Sandifer agreed this could be done if phrased appropriately. The Program currently provides a best practices document that is made available before trainings.

Mike Vaughn also raised a question regarding advanced firearms course indicating trainees are either on the high end or low end of spectrum for this course. There seems to

be a need for remedial training versus the basic course. Requested that CETB in coordination with our training instructors and providers consider next year raising the percentage to a 50/50 split to qualify for advanced course. Deb Williams indicated we currently have 20-hour advanced class offered each year. Recommended cutting down the class length to 10 hours.

Tony Luongo made a recommendation if board decides to implement advanced classes, to offer advanced classes in calendar year 2026 as a pilot and gauge curriculum to make sure it is functional based on needs. More classes could be added for 2027 based on needs. Program staff will create a discussion item for the August meeting. As of now the Board is planning on offering the eight-hour class.

- **Constable Certification Fee**

Nick Hartman presented data, comparing certification fees that are relevant to the program and based around Pennsylvania to costs for a constable to be certified. If there were to be a certification fee assessed for a constable to attend Con Ed, the program needs to know the cost of the fee in addition to constables being firearms certified. The program staff will look at collections and create a discussion item for the August meeting on whether a fee should be implemented.

PCCD staff researcher will get an update from AOPC on the number of constables serving the judiciary to assess which constables had work assigned and which had not. An update will be presented at August meeting.

V. Informational Items

- **Training and Delivery Contractor Updates**

Steve Shelow, Director PSU JASI presented that there were several incidents during recent constable training programs. On 4/26/25 a constable experienced a malfunction during qualification with his secondary duty weapon. A firearms instructor discovered the constable had switched out his ammunition. Constable was removed and his score disqualified for that second weapon. On 5/3/25 during an annual written exam, two constables were found talking to each other during the exam and comparing answers. A third constable was discovered using his phone during the exam. All three were given failing grades and sent home. Also on 5/3/25 during a routine ammunition check, an instructor discovered a constable switched to a cheaper ammo that is not reported as the constable's regular ammo. The constable was disqualified and removed from the class.

Going forward, PSU JASI instructors will more closely monitor constables during all phases of training process. Random ammunition checks will occur during official firearms qualifications courses, and anyone in violation will be removed with a failing grade and required to repeat course.

Question raised by Mike Vaughn if there is a ballistics difference between full metal jacket (FMJ) and hollow point (HP) for the purpose in accuracy in shooting a firearm out to 25 yards. If no, Board should not require ammunition fired on the range that is double or triple cost, and possibly change the requirement of being able to switch ammo if it is the same grain. A March 14, 2024 statement on MOPEC website indicates the commission approved a change to firearms qualifying ammunition. Departments may now either use duty or practice ammo, as long as the cartridge is the same bullet weight and manufacture as carry and duty ammunition.

Program staff will review differences and liability statement to present at August meeting. Michael Marcantino, TTDC reported qualifications went better this year as constables had time to practice before qualifying. Con Ed 80-hour basic went well, 19 constables attended: thanks to Chairman Westover for providing an overview of the Board to the class.

Board also thanked for providing extra instructors in basic firearms in Mechanics of Arrest forces. Forty-hour basic firearms participants had better attitude on qualifying.

Tony Luongo, Temple Director updated that during basic training class, students had public service mindset and exemplified dedication. Under curriculum development and online training delivery, there are three online con-ed courses; so far 16-19 percent have completed all three topics. Encouraging constables to get training done early in the year for 2025. Tech support is provided. Working with Deb Williams to develop online courses for 2026, as well as revisiting basic civil law course, and digitizing basic training student resources in Canvas. Resources will be available for Temple and PSU.

Vice-Chair Norwood-Foden inquired as follow-up from last meeting, regarding progress on the system generating completion certificates. No further progress to date. Tony Luongo commented more research needed as it would be an add-on feature. Currently, scores can be printed from a screengrab. Grades are transmitted weekly from Temple to PCCD.

VI. Other Business

None to report.

VII. Public Voice

- **Constable Abraham Smith**

Question to the Board regarding the ban of SIG P320 firearm. Some police departments across the country have banned this firearm due to issues with accidental discharge. Board has no information currently. Mike Vaughn will investigate whether Board should allow this firearm. Recommending in the interim that constables are made aware of issues with the firearm and to have it checked by an armorer prior to using.

Second topic raised relating to municipal police and game commission officers that carry a second firearm. Inquired if having an abbreviated qualification for short-barrel firearms is possible. Board states best practices still qualify with specific yardage. Chairman Westover commented that a second firearm is relied upon as backup and there should be no shortened qualification.

- **Jeffrey J. Cirba (via email)**

Recently took 40-hour basic firearms training in Lancaster from April 4-13. Did not qualify after paying enrollment fee, hotel, gas, etc. Missed time on the range due to local police utilizing range for an entire day. Does not feel training was beneficial; noted passed classroom hours. There were 19 constables in the class: 5 failed. Requesting for a solution to requalify.

- **Alex Farganis**

Addressed concern regarding Serpa holster asking to consider banning due to flaws. This holster is banned from many training facilities, including FLETC (Federal Law Enforcement Training Center) due to accidental discharges, things getting impeded in the weapon, and trigger displacement.

Secondly, addressed standard for gear in basics as subpar; requested a standard for gear should be adopted. Would be beneficial to a constable first coming into training. When creating a standard, we must make sure we are avoiding role of an employer and look at the standard from a safety standpoint. Weigh if it is a safety issue that impacts the standard. Reasonable to do a safety check on gear as well as weapon check.

Deb Williams added that this year we added a line to constable data sheet for firearms, “instructor safety weapons check”, that allows instructors to certify that they checked equipment, and it is safe to go on the range. This line only applies for weapons.

VIII. 2025 Meeting Dates

- August 14, 2025
- November 6, 2025

IX. Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn was made by Joshua Stouch and seconded by Harry Albert. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 10:48 a.m.