

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

**Approved Minutes of the August 13, 2020 Meeting**

**Members Present**

Francis Peitz Jr., Vice-Chair, Allegheny Co.  
Craig Westover, Constable, Venango Co.  
John Bruno, Chair, Dauphin Co.  
Thomas Brletic, MDJ, Allegheny Co.  
Capt. Joanne Reed, PSP

**Commission Staff Present**

Sherry Leffler, Constables' Program  
Tracy Beaver, Constables' Program  
Nicholas Hartman, Constables' Program  
Sally Barry, PCCD  
John Pfau, PCCD  
Megan Staub, PCCD  
Debra Sandifer, PCCD  
Beth Romero, PCCD  
Yvonne Murray, PCCD  
Michael Pennington, PCCD

**Members Absent**

**Visitors**

Michael Marcantino, IUP  
Deidre Beiter, Temple University  
Anthony Luongo, Temple University

Constable Ralph Jennings, Fayette  
Constable John Vaccaro, Lackawanna  
Constable Bryan Davenport, Lycoming

**I. Call to Order:**

The Constables' Education and Training Board (Board) meeting was held at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, August 13, 2020 via Skype. The Board Meeting could not be held at the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), 3101 N. Front Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania due to meeting restrictions set forth by the Governor to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Ms. Sherry Leffler began the meeting by doing a virtual roll call with the names that were visible in the Skype participant panel. Ms. Leffler then asked the additional callers to identify themselves so that attendance could be recorded. After attendance had been established, Ms. Leffler provided the flow of the meeting, and provided basic housekeeping rules to help ensure the quality of the recorded Board Meeting. Ms. Leffler also explained how items would be introduced, discussed, and how the voting process would occur.

**II. Action Items:**

Ms. Leffler introduced the first Action Item: Extension of Firearms Training Certification for 2021. This can be found on page 2 of the Board packet. Ms. Leffler offered to read the Action Item to the Board. The Board did not request the item be read and did not offer any discussion. Ms. Leffler then asked for a

motion to approve the Firearms Training Certification. This motion was made by Vice-Chair Bud Peitz and seconded by Chair John Bruno. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Leffler introduced the second Action Item: Change to 2020 Certification Training Requirement. This can be found on page 3 of the Board packet. The Board did not offer any discussion. Ms. Leffler then asked for a motion to approve the Change to 2020 Certification Training Requirement. This motion was made by Chair John Bruno and seconded by Constable Craig Westover. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Leffler introduced the third Action Item: Training Class Reimbursement Process. This can be found on page 4 of the Board packet. Ms. Leffler also explained that the Bureau of Training has been requested by constables to reimburse training classes that were cancelled due to COVID-19. Mr. John Pfau did voice his support of this item, as currently there is no process, also echoing the concerns regarding COVID -19. The Board did not offer any discussion. Ms. Leffler then asked for a motion to approve the Training Class Reimbursement Process. This motion was made by Chair John Bruno and seconded by Judge Thomas Brletic. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Leffler announced that the next set of actions items would be the approval of previous draft unapproved Board Meeting Minutes.

Ms. Leffler introduced the unapproved draft minutes for November 7, 2019, found on page 6 of the Board packet. There was no discussion. Motion for approval by Vice-Chair Bud Peitz and seconded by Chair John Bruno. The approval of the minutes was unanimous.

Ms. Leffler introduced the unapproved draft minutes for February 13, 2020, found on page 15 of the Board packet. There was no discussion. Motion for approval by Chair John Bruno and seconded by Vice-Chair Bud Peitz. The approval of the minutes was unanimous.

Ms. Leffler introduced the unapproved draft minutes for June 23, 2020, found on page 19 of the Board packet. There was no discussion. Motion for approval by Constable Craig Westover and seconded by Chair John Bruno. The approval of the minutes was unanimous.

Ms. Leffler announced that the next set of actions items would be the approval of previous unapproved Financial Reports.

Ms. Leffler introduced the unapproved Financial Report for November 7, 2019, found on page 24 of the Board packet. There was no discussion. Motion for approval by Chair John Bruno and seconded by Constable Craig Westover. The approval of the minutes was unanimous.

Ms. Leffler introduced the unapproved Financial Report for February 13, 2020, found on page 29 of the Board packet. There was no discussion. Motion for approval by Judge Thomas Brletic and seconded by Vice-Chair Bud Peitz. The approval of the minutes was unanimous.

Ms. Leffler introduced the unapproved Financial Report for June 23, 2020, found on page 35 of the Board packet. There was no discussion. Motion for approval by Vice Chair Bud Peitz and seconded by Chair John Bruno. The approval of the minutes was unanimous.

Ms. Leffler introduced the unapproved Financial Report for August 13, 2020, found on pages 41 thru 46 of the Board packet. Ms. Leffler asked Ms. Yvonne Murray, of PCCD Fiscal Staff, to review the unapproved financial report.

Ms. Murray reviewed the balance from the previous year as \$1,792,024.50, reported that from fee collections for July 1, 2019 thru June 30, 2020 as \$1,599,176.42 which leaves a total funds available ending June 30, 2020 of \$3,391,200.32. Ms. Murray explained that both the financial expenditures and financial commitments totaled \$1,230,124.77, and \$1,477,456.32, respectfully as of June 30, 2020 for a grand total of \$2,707,594.09. Ms. Murray stated that the uncommitted balance as of June 30, 202 was \$683,606.83. Ms. Murray stated that the explained fiscal numbers, and break downs could be found on pages 41-43 of the Board packet.

Constable Bud Peitz asked how the current amount of uncommitted money compares to last year's amount of uncommitted money. Ms. Murray was not able to answer the question because she was not at PCCD last year during the time period in question and would need to look at fiscal reports from the previous year to provide an accurate answer.

Mr. John Pfau explained that expenditures were low to canceling classroom trainings due to COVID 19. Revenues were also down Mr. Pfau explained due to courts being closed which has impacted courts assigning work to constables. Ms. Leffler also explained that majority of the classes were cancelled. Chair John Bruno made the motion to accept the Financial Report as is, with Judge Thomas Brletic seconding the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.

PCCD staff had no additional discussion items, nor did the Board.

#### **IV. Informational Items:**

Ms. Tracy Beaver provided an online training update that could be found on page 47 of the Board packet. Ms. Beaver updated the Board on the number of Keystone Login Migration logins with 1,035 out of 1,194 having registered. Ms. Beaver also provided the number of CANVAS enrollments, 1,194 constables, number of constables that have started the online training hosted by Temple, 603 constables, and provided the total number of constables who have completed the training, 310 constables.

No discussion occurred.

#### **V. Public Voice:**

Temple did not have any comments for the Board. IUP did not have any comments for the Board.

Ms. Leffler then introduced how Public Voice would operate and reminded all in attendance to please limit their comments to two minutes. Ms. Leffler then asked Ms. Beaver to please go thru the list of those who registered to speak during Public Voice.

Constable Ralph Jennings of Fayette County had a question regarding Firearms Certification, due to the distance that was needed to travel to the certification courses. Constable Jennings then asked if it were possible if constables could be certified by a private instructor, or through the police. Constable Jennings also thanked PCCD for providing classes, and for the work that they do with the constables. Ms. Leffler

answered Constable Jennings question about the use of another provider by explaining that the classes were scheduled at the most convenient location from what the schools could find. Ms. Leffler also explained that there were 36 constables whose Firearms Certifications expired on December 31, 2019 and were enrolled into a 2020 Firearms Certification. These 36 individuals were the focus audience for the three firearms classes that were held by the schools this year. Ms. Leffler encouraged that Constable Jennings enroll early when the next set of courses would be made available.

Mr. Pfau also explained that many training facilities are not willing to commit to host trainings due to COVID 19, and the uncertainties associated to the virus.

Mr. Mike Marcantino from IUP also mirrored Mr. Pfau's explanation by providing that he had contacted several sites to host firearm certifications but was also coming across difficulties. Mr. Marcantino also explained that consideration would be provided to those who are travelling a longer distance.

Constable John Vaccaro of Lackawanna County wanted to let the Board know that the Board of Elections in Lackawanna County did not pay an additional \$100 from COVID funding. Constable Vaccaro also had contacted the Election Board to voice his concerns. It was also mentioned that this also occurred in Washington County. Ms. Leffler explained that this is a county issue, and that the Board has no control over the decision to pay the \$100.

Constable Bryan Davenport of Lycoming County asked if Constables are contractors, why are they not able to outsource to other law enforcement firearm courses to be certified. Ms. Leffler explained that the training and certification comes from the Board. The decision came from the Board, and that the Board does not recognize any other training entities as the equivalent to our training for firearms.

Mr. Pfau explained that the Board did accept waivers if Act 120 Certifications until 2008/2009. MPOETC has a recommended training but it was not mandatory. A Police Chief determined the amount of training that was provided. However, the Board did away with accepting the waiver, and constables were required to attend the Board certified Firearms Certification. It was found that half of the constables had failed the PCCD Firearms Certification yet had passed at their police departments. The Board has concerns about the quality of the training. As a result, the Board has shied away from accepting other certifications since this is a state standard for firearms. This is the only state standard when it comes to Firearms Mr. Pfau also explained.

Constable Craig Westover asked Mr. Pfau if there will be any additional Firearms courses this year. Mr. Pfau provided the results of the last training Firearms Certifications. Constable Westover explained that a question was asked of him that would a constable who fails the qualification, would the constable have to repay to become firearms qualified. Mr. Pfau, and Ms. Leffler said according the regulations, the answer would be yes.

Constable Westover also explained preparations such as eye exams, and proper gun maintenance can also impact a constables' ability to pass the qualification. Constable Westover also explained that masks could be a hinderance, but at the qualification in question, anti-fog spray was provided to the constables to use. Constable Westover recommended that constables be reminded of preparatory actions they can complete prior to the firearms qualification to reduce factors that could impact a constable's ability to pass the firearms qualification.

Constable Westover also addressed his concern about Firearms Certifications occurring outside of the firearms qualifications held by schools contracted with PCCD. Constable Westover's concern was not knowing the qualification course being used to test the shooters, or having an instructor sign off on a certification. Constable Westover reinforced what was discussed earlier regarding the concerns of having a nonapproved PCCD Firearms Certification.

Mr. Pfau also explained that firearms instructors can teach multiple firearms curriculum, and that some of the instructors needs to focus on remembering that they are calling the right course during firearms qualifications. Mr. Pfau also explained that the firearms qualification is often the first time that many constables receive formal training.

Constable Westover also explained that Laser Shot was successful at the qualification he was running laser shot. Constables were able to run the scenarios individually, and as a pair. Constable Westover spoke about how about how it had a positive impact on those in attendance with more exposure to Laser Shot.

## **VI. Adjournment:**

Ms. Leffler asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:49 a.m. A motion was made by Chair John Bruno to adjourn the meeting and the motion was second by Judge Thomas Brletic.

VOTING AYE: Peitz, Bruno, Westover, Brletic

VOTING NAY: None

ABSTAINING: None

The next Board meeting will be held on November 19, 2020 at 9am via Skype.