

Members:

Larry J. Straitiff, Chairman
Robert Billingsley
Hon. Lawrence F. Clark, Jr.
Marshall R. Davis
William R. Erickson, Jr.
Lieut. David Howells
R. Scott Schlechter
Hon. William F. Ward
Gregory A. Young



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A meeting of the County Probation and Parole Officers' Firearm Education and Training Commission convened at 9:00 AM on May 21, 2002 at Pocono Manor Inn & Golf Resort in Pocono Manor, PA. The following Commission members and guests were present:

Larry J. Straitiff, Chairman	Dan Klarsch, Administrative Officer
R. Scott Schlechter	Linda Laub (PBPP)
Marshall R. Davis	Rusty Duncan (Guest) Westmoreland County
Robert Billingsley	Erik Christensen (Guest) Erie County
William Erickson	Paul Foltz (Guest) Erie County
Hon. William Ward	Mike Neumyer (PBPP)
Gregory A. Young	Conway Bushey (PBPP)
Chester A. Kope, Executive Director	Holly Spotts, Commission Secretary

I. Chairman Straitiff began by leading the Pledge of Allegiance before calling the meeting to order. He asked that a motion be made to accept the March 12, 2002 Commission meeting minutes.

MOTION: Commissioner Schlechter made a motion to accept the March 12, 2002 Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Young seconded the motion. A vote was taken and unanimously approved by the Commission.

II. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Mr. Kope began by presenting three applications from officers wishing to become Commission certified firearms instructors (Mr. Peter Shultz, Lebanon County; Ms. A.J. Anderson, Lebanon County; and Mr. Chad Libby, Dauphin County). The Commission reviewed the applications.

MOTION: Commissioner Billingsley made a motion to approve Ms. Anderson's application to become a Commission certified firearms instructor. Commissioner Schlechter seconded the motion. A vote was taken and unanimously approved.

MOTION: Commissioner Young made a motion to approve Mr. Libby's application. Commissioner Schlechter seconded the motion. A vote was taken and unanimously approved.

MOTION: Commissioner Schlechter made a motion to approve Mr. Shultz's application. Commissioner Erickson seconded the motion. A vote was taken and unanimously approved.

Mr. Kope presented the Commission with a letter he received from Jon Clark in response to financial information he requested regarding the In-Service Firearms training contract.

Mr. Kope presented copies of the summaries for the 23rd Basic Training student evaluations, and explained that the evaluations for the 24th Basic Training Academy have not yet been summarized. He informed the Commission and guests that the Basic Training class scheduled for July is completely full. The classroom training will be held in State College, PA and the range training will be held in Allegheny County. The class to be held at Fort Indiantown Gap in September has several positions still available.

Mr. Kope announced the purchase of a wireless Public Address System and explained how they were struck by lightning at the range portion of the 23rd Basic Firearms Training Academy. They were repaired and back in service for the 24th Basic Firearms Training Academy

Mr. Kope gave the Commission a copy of the Financial Report dated 5/17/02. The available balance is currently \$916,000. Chairman Straitiff asked how much of the contract with Temple has been paid off. Mr. Kope stated that \$19,571 has been paid, and a balance of \$87,000 remains. There were no questions regarding the Financial Report.

III. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Chairman Straitiff began by opening a discussion regarding the Temple contract. He then proceeded to read a portion of a letter he received from John Holt (Crawford County). The letter was extremely favorable toward the recent in-service training conducted in Erie County. Mr. Holt praised the trainers and the Commission for its superior work and achievements.

Chairman Straitiff expressed his appreciation and suggested that we continue to work with Temple for another year or two. Commissioner Schlechter feels it would not be a good idea to allow them to develop any new training programs.

MOTION: Commissioner Davis made a motion to renew the current contract on a limited basis, which would provide the present curriculum on a limited basis. Commissioner Erickson seconded the motion. A vote was taken and unanimously approved.

The Commission discussed developing a new In-Service Firearms Training RFP. Chairman Straitiff recommended that someone make a motion to develop a new RFP.

MOTION: Commissioner Ward made a motion to authorize the Executive Director to begin the RFP process. Commissioner Schlechter seconded the motion. A vote was taken and was unanimously approved.

Chairman Straitiff questioned the length of the RFP process, asking if it began now, would it be completed in time to offer trainings next year. Ms. Laub, Assistant Counsel, feels it is unlikely. The process of developing and completing the current RFP was 17-months.

The Executive Director informed the Commission that it will need to determine what type of curriculum they want in the new RFP.

Commissioner Schlechter discussed a draft of guidelines that certified firearms instructors must meet to present the Commission's Basic Firearms Training Course in the county. The criteria is as follows:

- (1) They must be a Commission certified firearms instructor;
- (2) They must have been evaluated and approved by the Executive Director or his designee;
- (3) They must have previously instructed a Commission classroom training and acted as a range master.

The Executive Director would then submit his report/evaluation to the Commission. The Commission would then approve or deny the instructor to conduct Basic Training in-house. If approved, the new instructor would be known as a Master Instructor.

To clarify the requirements and reasoning behind the potential Master Instructor position, Commissioner Schlechter initiated a lengthy discussion, which Commissioner Davis felt would be better absorbed at another time.

Commissioner Schlechter suggested using the liability video, which was previously used, to cover the legal portion of the Basic Training. The training will consist of a minimum of 40 hours; 14 hours of classroom instruction and 26 hours of range instruction. The stipulation is that the entire Basic Training course must be completed within 30 days. The material used during the trainings will be consistent with the materials used currently. The Master Instructor will be given a copy of the Instructor's Manual and Student Guide, and will have the sole responsibility of making any and all copies needed for the class. The counties and students will be responsible for providing all other material/equipment. The Commission will reimburse the county for ammunition only. Tests and answer sheets will be provided, but must be returned to the Commission by the instructor after grading them. It was decided by the Curriculum Committee that if a neighboring county requests a slot for one of their officers in another county's class, the Commission will not be responsible for reimbursement for food, lodging, or travel. There was a lengthy discussion regarding liability and to what extent the Commission would be responsible. It was decided that the discussion would resume after counsel has an opportunity to research the answer.

B. POLICY COMMITTEE

Chairman Straitiff discussed deadlines for in-service training registration. Commissioner Davis suggested notification should be given, allowing ample time to each county, advising them of their revocation if they fail to meet the course's requirements. It was decided that an additional letter will be sent by the Executive Director informing counties of the time constraints and consequences. The Chairman then suggested changing the specific course requirements to a certain number of hours one must attend training. The suggestion was also made that anyone who does not pass their In-Service training would be required to retake Basic Training.

Mr. Duncan informed the Commission that his Supervisor (Bruno Mediate, Westmoreland County) would be petitioning for an extension of time to accommodate a medical issue. The Chairman announced that one of his officers (Michael Skercavich) would also need to request an extension of time.

MOTION: Commissioner Erickson made a motion to grant the petition for Mr. Skercavich. Commissioner Young seconded the motion. A vote was taken and unanimously approved.

MOTION: Commissioner Young made a motion to approve the extension for Mr. Mediate. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. A vote was taken and unanimously approved.

Mr. Kope stated that he still needs a letter from the county with the proper documentation requesting the extension for Mr. Skercavich and Mr. Mediate.

Next Year's PAPPC Conference will be held in Harrisburg. It was decided by the Commission to have a stand-alone conference, rather than be included in the PAPPC's.

MOTION: Commissioner Davis made a motion to begin structuring the conference, planning to hold it in the spring of 2003. Commissioner Schlechter seconded the motion. A vote was taken and unanimously approved.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The Commission is still waiting to receive information and comment regarding the Interagency Agreement. A second letter requesting comment will be sent to the chiefs. There will be a 15-day deadline (June 15th) for anyone interested in commenting. At that point, a meeting will be arranged at Fort Indiantown Gap.

V. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Davis questioned the Commissioners regarding a specific Chief who has not been certified for several years due to shifts in employment. Commissioner Davis' concern was whether or not the Chief would have to go through Basic Training again. Commissioner Schlechter reminded the group of the current policy, which clearly states that if an officer fails to requalify within a year, that officer must go through Basic Training again. The chief in question will be required to attend a Basic Training Academy in order to be re-certified by the Commission.

VII. LEGAL ISSUES

Ms. Laub discussed the OGC Agreement. She advised the Commissioners that there must be a linking agreement established between the Firearms Commission and Temple. The Board is currently working on this agreement. She informed the Commission that by allowing Temple to link to the Commission's webpage, the Commission inadvertently agreed to Temple's linking policy.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT AND QUESTION

There were no public comments or questions.

IX. ADJOURN MEETING