

Members:

Larry J. Straitiff, Chairman
Hon. Lawrence F. Clark, Jr.
Marshall R. Davis.
William R. Erickson, Jr.
R. Scott Schlechter
Hon. Benjamin Martinez
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 March 11, 2003 at the Days Inn, State College, PA. The following Commission members and guests were present:

Larry Straitiff, Chairman
Honorable Lawrence F. Clark, Jr.
R. Scott Schlechter
Marshall Davis
Gregory A. Young
Chester A. Kope, Executive Director
Dan Klarsch, Administrative Officer

Linda Laub, PBPP
Gary Scicchitano, (PBPP)
Conway Bushey, (PBPP)
Paul Foltz, Guest, Erie County
Eric Christensen, Guest, Erie County
Rusty Duncan, Guest, Westmoreland Co.
Eugene Stull, Educational Resource Group
Mary Williams, Commission Secretary

I. Vice Chairman Davis opened the meeting with a review of the January 7, 2003 meeting. Chairman Straitiff arrived shortly afterward to lead the Pledge of Allegiance and asked for a motion to accept the January 7, 2003 minutes.

MOTION: Commissioner Schlechter made a motion to accept the January 7, 2003 meeting minutes. Commissioner Young seconded the motion. A vote was taken and approved by the Commission.

Commissioner Davis pointed out a correction on page 3 of the January 7 minutes. While reviewing the minutes he questioned the sentence "A brief recess was called to discuss the presentation" and said the purpose of the recess was not reflected correctly. Executive Director Kope agreed to amend the minutes to read, "The Commission took a brief recess." Chairman Straitiff asked if there were any other changes/corrections to be made. Executive Director Kope pointed out that MOUNT was incorrect. The correct spelling is MOUT. With the above corrections included, Chairman Straitiff requested a vote on the January 7, 2003 minutes. A vote was taken and the Commission approved January 7, 2003 minutes.

II. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. CURRICULUM SUB-COMMITTEE

Commissioner Schlechter reported on the February 27, 2003 Curriculum Sub-Committee, including the Certified Simunition Instructors, developed a Simunition Training outline and lesson plan. He stated that at this point they are about 95% finished.

Commissioner Schlechter stated that his biggest concern right now is finding a site to do the training. Commissioner Schlechter contacted Lt. Col. Paul Trepani at Fort Indiantown Gap

(FTIG) and asked about the building that the Sub-Committee had previously toured. Lt. Col. Trepani stated that all World War II wood buildings on the base are going to be demolished

Erie County and Cumberland County may have sites available to do the Simmunition Training. However, the Sub-Committee would still like to get something at FTIG. Commissioner Schlechter plans to call Lt. Col. Trepani again, either this week or next week, to discuss training at FTIG. The Northeast Counterdrug Training Center (NCTC), which is located at FTIG, will have a Simunition Training site that is almost finished. However, the problem with the NCTC site is we can only do two scenarios at a time.

Commissioner Schlechter stated that he also spoke to Lt. Col. Trepani about the MOUT site. Sub-Committee members were not happy with this site because there was no roof or back walls on the structures. When asked about the possibility of the Commission doing some renovations, Lt. Col. Trepani said there was absolutely no problem. However, the Commission would need to pay for all the renovations, which was estimated to cost \$15,000. Commissioner Schlechter asked the Commissioners if they would like to discuss spending \$15,000 to improve the MOUT site.

Commissioner Clark suggested that the Commission think on it own terms with their own resources and does not see funding right now for any new projects. He said that we should make some prudent decisions and, unless we have signed documents that are unequivocally ironclad, he does not see funding for this project in the wind. Since this project is not critical to keep the State's government going, he believes that the State government will not be able to fund the project.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the use of other facilities. Chairman Davis suggested the possibility of using other Commonwealth owned land or property. He mentioned that there are several abandoned buildings, both houses and dormitory style structures at Danville State Hospital, Clarks Summit State Hospital, Selinsgrove Center and the Bensalem juvenile facility. Mr. Kope mentioned that you cannot take firearms on any state mental institutions grounds and that all we would probably need to do to use the other State facilities is to get permission from the Department of Public Welfare. Chairman Straitiff stated that these facilities are all under the control of the Department of General Services and that maybe we should start there. Commissioner Clark agreed to make the initial call to the General Counsel to the Governor, Leslie M. Moore, and asked Linda Laub to follow up with the Board's Chief Counsel. Ms. Laub asked Commissioner Clark to notify her as soon as possible following his call to the General Counsel's office. Commissioner Clark said that he would open his conversation with the General Counsel by saying that we need some assistance from the Commonwealth to carry out our statutory mandated responsibility and identify areas where the Governor's Office could help.

Chairman Straitiff asked Commissioner Schlechter if he would be offering Simunition training this year. Commissioner Schlechter replied that the goal is to get a pilot program and one or two actual trainings off the ground this year.

Commissioner Young said that we could also ask DGS if there are other locations around the state with buildings or facilities that are not being utilized. We could look into the regional issue. With at least four sites to choose from, we could eliminate the travel issue.

Commissioner Schlechter reported that there were a couple of other issues presented at the Committee's meeting. Terry Davis (Dauphin County Chief Adult Probation Officer) mentioned the stance that we are presently using for single hand shooting requires the non-shooting hand be

placed against the torso (anywhere from the belt line to the chest). The reason is to avoid the free hand from getting in front of the muzzle and being shot. It was recommended that they be allowed to place their hand in their belt and/or back pocket. When the suggestion was brought before the Curriculum Committee, committee members concurred that the stance requirements would remain as is. Mr. Jim Gunderman, the Deputy Chief Probation Officer in Dauphin County, who was present at the meeting, also agreed to let the stance remain as it is. Chairman Straitiff requested that the minutes reflect that the topic was brought forth and discussed and the Commission agreed to let the stance remain as is.

Commissioner Schlechter raised another issue brought to the Curriculum Committee by Mr. Gunderman regarding the B-27 targets that are currently used for basic training and requalifications. Commissioner Schlechter showed the Commissioners the two different types of targets Mr. Gunderman would like the Commission to use. Commissioner Schlechter reported that the problem with the targets recommended by Mr. Gunderman is that a large section of the target is cut off, but the manufacturer would have to be willing to add seven or eight inches to the bottom of the target. Commissioner Schlechter confirmed that the information he presented to the Committee was for information only and that the Curriculum Committee was not making any recommendations for changes that would require a vote. After another lengthy discussion, it was decided that it is not necessary to expose officers to targets with faces and informed Mr. Gunderman that if he wanted to use targets with faces for training within your department (other than requalification or basic training) that was acceptable.

B. POLICY SUB-COMMITTEE

Chairman Straitiff stated that the Policy Committee did not meet.

C. RANGE ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

Mr. Kope mentioned that Mr. Klarsch received a telephone call from Staff Sgt. Snesavage FTIG regarding the Range 5-B specifications he was developing. Since Commissioner Young attended the NRA Range Development School, Mr. Klarsch asked Staff Sgt. Snesavage to contact him.

Commissioner Young said that Staff Sgt. Snesavage did contact him and he said that the FTIG range development personnel would be completing their study and send the information to us last week. He said that Staff Sgt. Snesavage told him that there are no danger zone conflicts and said station spacing would be to NRA specifications, which will allow up to have 30 positions with no problem. Staff Sgt. Snesavage also talked about the different numeric targets available. They are waiting to get another bid/pricing back from another company. Commissioner Young told Staff Sgt. Snesavage to send the information directly to the Executive Director

Chairman Straitiff said that the January 24, 2003 meeting with FTIG was positive. He said that in addition to Colonel Hulings and his staff, the attorney from JAG was present.

Ms. Linda Laub said the agreement with FTIG was being delayed because of the number of deployments leaving from FTIG. She is waiting for Col. Hulings to get back to her with his comments about the agreement. There were no further comments.

III. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Mr. Kope mentioned that they met with ERG February 10, 2000 to discuss the In-Service Firearms Training Programs and the Basic Firearms Training. They also met on March 5, 2003 to discuss a list

of questions that ERG had regarding the draft Work Statements. Mr Kope gave the Commissioners copies of the File Notes that he prepared for each of those meetings. Mr. Kope gave the Commissioners copies of the ERG cost proposal and the three draft Work Statements that he prepared.

Commissioner Clark stated that the sum of money being considered for this project makes it a landmark or threshold event for the Commission. He said that the Commission should be given the opportunity to digest the information for at least 10 days or two weeks and suggested that they hold a special meeting in Harrisburg before making a decision to spend one-third of a million dollars. He stated that he wants to make sure what the Commission is getting from ERG for the money. He felt that there are some serious fiscal issues and although we have money now, we would be taking a semi-irrevocable course of action by dismantling what we have done ourselves and handing it over to another organization. The start up cost is astronomical. He agreed that this is something we need to do because we cannot continue like a mom and pop grocery store. The Commissioners need to look down the road and see what is going on, in a budgetary sense, based upon realistic income and expenditures so that we know that we can meet our obligations. If we can't, we need to find another source of funding or we have to scale back and live within our budget. He said the Commission bears a perfunctory responsibility to all of the probation and parole officers in the Commonwealth and to the citizens to make sure we make a good decision. He said he doesn't think that we have thought this through, nor have the necessary administrative input.

Ms. Linda Laub said the Schedules could be figured out and negotiated at a separate time. There is another issue regarding signing the MOU and we need to decide if Chairman Straitiff should sign the MOU so that it can go through the approval process. Commissioner Clark asked if the MOU binds us to anything other than creating this working relationship? Ms Laub said it would not. Commissioner Clark said that he does not have a problem with signing the MOU. Linda Laub commented that the negotiation of the schedules does not have to go through an extensive approval process.

MOTION: Commissioner Davis made a motion to authorize Chairman Straitiff to sign the MOU on behalf of the Commission and to develop a schedule to provide the three training sessions as described by ERG. Commissioner Schlechter seconded the motion. A vote was taken and approved by the Commission. Chairman Straitiff signed the MOU.

MOTION: Commissioner Clark made a motion that the Commission table the decision about the expenditure of funds until we get a full fiscal report as to its impact and that Chairman Straitiff schedule a meeting in Harrisburg within 30 days. Commissioner Schlechter seconded the motion. A vote was taken and approved by the Commission.

Mr. Kope wanted to know what we should do regarding the 14 officers that were given an extension to complete the In-Service Firearms Training by June 30, 2003. The Commissioners briefly discussed the need to conduct the In-Service Firearms Training for these officers.

Commissioner Clark suggestion that we bring ERG's representative into the meeting. Mr. Kope introduced Mr. Eugene Stull, ERG's representative, to the Commission.

Chairman Straitiff opened the discussion by bringing Mr. Stull up to speed about what the Committee had discussed regarding the MOU, schedules and trying to figure out where we want to go with regards to our relationship with ERG. He stated that the Commission is under some pressure to provide the In-Service Training that does not exist currently. He said we have 14 officers that need to be trained before June 30, 2003 and would like to know if ERG would be willing to consider to do this. The Commission would

like ERG to commence by providing three In-Service Training classes between now and June 30, 2003. The Commission would like two of the classes to be held before our May 20, 2003 Commission meeting.

Chairman Straitiff stated that the Commission would like ERG to use our Certified Firearms Instructors to be in charge of conducting the three In-Service Training classes. ERG would have some leeway to provide some of their instructors to assist with the training. He asked Mr. Stull that if ERG could do this, would the Commission pay for the training at the rate that was quoted in the cost proposal? Mr. Stull said that ERG planned to use the current In-Service Firearms training course as is and as far as the time frames, ERG is a crisis outfit and used to working with short deadlines. He said that if we were scheduled to do a course next week, we would work overtime to get it done if necessary. He has no problems with material acquisition and using the existing instructors or using everything, from basic instructors and administrators. He did mention that he is not the Director, however, and is not authorized to make certain decisions.

MOTION: Chairman Straitiff made a motion that the Commission develop a Schedule with ERG to provide three In-Service Firearms courses based on the Temple curriculum to be provided by June 30, 2003 and two courses would be provided by May 20, 2003. The number of participants will be governed by the range size and the class size should not exceed twenty students. ERG would also utilize the instructors determined by the Commission for the purpose of these three trainings based on ERG's cost proposal. Commissioner Schlechter seconded the motion. A vote was taken and approved by the Commission.

Commissioner Schlechter wanted to know how they would pay the instructors. Mr. Stull said that ERG would probably write a contract for the instructors the Commission submitted and pay the instructors based on their contract. He said they could either do this on a long-term contract or as adjunct instructors. As adjunct instructors, they can drive a state car and are state employees and come under certain regulations and requirements. Sometimes we just go for a contract, which is a lot simpler. Mr. Stull said their vision is to use our instructors almost exclusively, only to be filled in by outside people or specialty training when ERG runs out of people. So, I don't see us adding to the pool of instructors if you have responsive and good instructors. They will either be adjunct or signed up as contractors. There were no further questions so Commissioner Straitiff called for a break.

Mr. Kope said that he received permission to purchase plaques for the former Commissioners. He showed the Commissioners a plaque that they purchased for some of the previous Commissioners. He said that they could purchase similar plaques for a cost of \$24 per plaque. Mr. Kope asked the Commissioners if they had any other ideas regarding places to purchase the plaques. Chairman Straitiff said he thinks we should have the Commission seal placed on the plaques.

Commissioner Clark described the judicial service award plaques that they recently presented to several district justices. He said he would design the plaques and asked Mr. Kope to electronically send him a copy of the Commission seal. When he finished the design, he would send it to Mr. Kope.

MOTION: Commissioner Davis made a motion to authorize the Executive Director to spend \$100.00 for each plaque based on Commissioner Carls design. Commissioner Young seconded the motion. A vote was taken and approved by the Commission.

Chairman Straitiff said that he would like to present the plaques to the former Commissioners at the Commission meeting that we are going to hold at the PAPPC on May 19, 2003. Chairman Straitiff asked if the Commission could pay their lodging and other expenses. Mr. Kope stated that the Commission could not pay for any of the former Commissioners' travel or meal expenses to attend the meeting.

Mr. Kope gave the Commissioners a brief summary of the Consolidated Training Academy or Criminal Justice Institute meeting that he attended on February 11, 2003. He said that the PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency gave Booze, Allen and Hamilton a \$130,000 grant to perform a feasibility study. The study will include the cost, training needs, and benefits. They believe it will take approximately four months to complete the study. There is another meeting scheduled at the end of this month. Mr. Kope reported that the plan is to consolidate all of the firearms training into one training unit at FTIG. Commissioner Clark asked Mr. Kope if he would be speaking on behalf of the Commission. He replied that he plans to present our plan and explain what we do.

Commissioner Schlechter asked what has been done about filling former Commissioners Howells and Billingsley vacant spots. Mr. Kope said he asked the Executive Director of the County Commissioners' Association to provide him with a list of County Commissioners that could possibly fill the one position and he contacted MPOETC regarding the other position. Mr. Kope said the Mr. Jim Fox from HACC was interested in the one position and sent his resume to him. He planned to send Mr Fox's resume to the Governors Office.

Chairman Straitiff asked Mr. Kope if he plans to contact everyone on the list. Mr. Kope said that he would. Commissioner Clark said perhaps the Commission needs to look at the list and we could then advise Mr. Kope whom to contact. Director Kope said he would e-mail the list to the Commissioners.

Mr. Kope asked the Commissioners if they had any comments regarding the 2001-2002 Annual Report that was sent to them for review. There were no comments so Mr. Kope said that he would send it to DGS for publication.

Mr Kope presented the Commissioners with the applications he received from officers that want to become Commission Certified Firearms Instructors.

MOTION: Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve Officer David McClelland, Lehigh County, to become a Commission Certified Firearms Instructor. Commissioner Young seconded the motion. Commissioner Schlechter abstained. A vote was taken and the motion was approved.

MOTION: Commissioner Schlechter made a motion to approve Officer Jonathan Flynn, Dauphin County, to become a Commission Certified Firearms Instructor. Commissioner Young seconded the motion. A vote was taken and approved unanimously.

MOTION: Commissioner Schlechter made a motion to approve Officer Kelly Waltman-Spreha, Dauphin County, to become a Commission Certified Firearms Instructor. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion was approved.

MOTION: Commissioner Schlechter made a motion to approve Officer Thomas Shepherd, Somerset County, to become a Commission Certified Firearms Instructor. Commissioner Young seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion was approved.

MOTION: Commissioner Schlechter made a motion to approve Officer Michael Smith, Cumberland County, to become a Commission Certified Firearms Instructor. Commissioner Young seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion was approved.

MOTION: Commissioner Schlechter made a motion to approve Officer Nicole Gutshall, Cumberland County, to become a Commission Certified Firearms Instructor. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion was approved.

MOTION: Commissioner Schlechter made a motion to approve Officer David Christian, Dauphin County, to become a Commission Certified Firearms Instructor. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion was approved.

Commissioner Davis asked about the process of maintaining the firearms instructor's certification, and if the Commission is monitoring that list to see if people doing what they need to do to stay on the list. Mr. Kope said that he assigns each new instructor a Certified Firearms Instructor (CFI). The number indicates the date that they are approved by the Commission. Every CFI is certified for three years and in their third year he plans to send them a letter requesting documentation that they have met the Commissions requirements.

Mr. Kope presented the Commissioners with a list of Commission Certified Firearms Instructors that qualified to become Master Instructors.

Commissioner Young said that Commissioner Erickson taught the classroom portion of one Basic Firearms Training Academy and was the Range Master for a Train the Trainer class and should be added to the list to become a Master Instructor.

MOTION: Commissioner Young made a motion to have Commissioner Erickson's name added to the list of Master Instructors. Judge Clark seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion was unanimously carried.

MOTION: Commissioner Clark made a motion to accept the list of Master Instructors. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion was carried with Commissioner Schlechter abstaining.

Mr. Kope gave the Commissioners copies of the evaluation forms that will be used to evaluate all future instructors that want to become Master Instructors. After a brief review Commissioner Clark made a motion to accept the forms.

MOTION: Commissioner Clark made a motion to accept the Master Instructor classroom and range evaluation forms. Commissioner Schlechter seconded the motion, a vote was taken the motion was approved.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

V. NEW BUSINESS

There were no new business issues.

VI. LEGAL ISSUES

There were no legal issues.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT AND QUESTION

There were no public comments or questions.

VIII. ADJOURN MEETING

MOTION: Commissioner Schlechter made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Young seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion to adjourn was approved.