

Commission Meeting Number 362

State of New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety
Division of Criminal Justice

POLICE TRAINING COMMISSION

Minutes of Commission Meeting

October 2, 2024

Location: **Monmouth County Sheriff's Office**
2500 Kozloski Rd. Freehold, NJ 07728

Commission Members Present

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Attendee(s)/Representative(s)</u>
Office of the Attorney General, State of New Jersey	John F. Cunningham
New Jersey State Policemen's Benevolent Association	Kevin Lyons
New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police	James Abbott Lou Brodi
New Jersey State Lodge, Fraternal Order of Police NJSTFA	James Sharrock Wayne Blanchard
County Prosecutors' Association of New Jersey	Esther Suarez
Sheriffs' Association of New Jersey	Absent
Police Academy Director's Association	Daniel Colucci
Commissioner-Department of Education	James Scaringelli
Commissioner-Department of Corrections	Dave Richards
Federal Bureau of Investigation	Michael A. Ratta
New Jersey Juvenile Detention Association	Jorge Sandoval

New Jersey State Parole Board	Samuel Plumeri
National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives	Edward Steed
Citizen Member—Governor’s Appointment	James Polos
Citizen Member—Governor’s Appointment	Alexander Shalom
New Jersey League of Municipalities	Ray Heck
New Jersey Jail Wardens Association	Oscar Aviles
New Jersey State Police	Jay Mandziuk
FOP	Jim Sharrock James Sepp
Newark Police Dept.	Kenyatta Stewart
Newark Police Dept.	Tariah Wilkins
Ocean County Jail	Justice Wilson
Ocean County Department of Corrections	Michael D.
Ocean County Department of Corrections	Joseph Valenti
Ocean County Department of Corrections	Terrance Clendenin
Ocean County Department of Corrections	Gregory Edgecomb
Ocean County Department of Corrections	Michael A.
Ocean County Department of Corrections	John DeMarco
Newark NJ Police Division	James George
OLEPS-OAG	Krysten Russell
NJSP NJSP	Amber Hart Dwayne Golding

Division of Criminal Justice Staff Present

Deputy Attorney General Rbrey D. Singleton, Office of Public Integrity & Accountability

Deputy Attorney General Stephen Wenger, Chief, Office of Public Integrity & Accountability

Deputy Attorney General Marie , Office of Public Integrity & Accountability

Academy Coordinator Pat Jones, Police Training Commission

Academy Coordinator Forest Kairos, Police Training Commission

Academy Coordinator Allison Gosley, Police Training Commission

Academy Coordinator Elizabeth Pellegrino, Police Training Commission

Analyst, Tykeria T. Lockhart, Police Training Commission

Academy Coordinator Unit Supervisor, Kathleen McSorley, Police Training Commission

Chief Investigator, James Byrd, Police Training Commission

Field Representative, John Janowiak, Police Training Commission

Field Representative, Dion Feltri, Police Training Commission

Field Representative, Kim Arroyo, Police Training Commission

Field Representative, Rae Coles, Police Training Commission

Field Representative, Daniel Brown, Police Training Commission

Field Representative, Aaron Erven, Police Training Commission

Curriculum Unit Supervisor, Tyeka Knight, Police Training Commission

Management Assistant, Dajhonna Collins, Police Training Commission

Police Training Commission Meeting Minutes for October 2, 2024

Administrator John F. Cunningham called the 362nd meeting of the Commission to order at 12:16 pm.

Administrator Cunningham led the Commissioners in the flag salute. Commissioner Cunningham asked for a moment of silence in remembrance of the Law Enforcement and military personnel who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

Management Assistant, Dajhonna Collins announced that “notice of the Commission meeting has been publicized in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Law by notification to the Secretary of State and five newspapers. The notifications included a copy of the meeting agenda.”

Administrator Cunningham read correspondence from Ocean County Sheriff Office advising effective, September 9, 2024, Thomas J. Dellane has been appointed as Undersheriff and is assigned to be the Director of the Ocean County Police Academy.

Administrator Cunningham asked the Commissioners to consider the minutes of the August 7, 2024 Commission meeting. Commissioner Sharrock made a motion to accept the minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Abbott. The motion was passed.

Administrator Cunningham asked Chairperson Kevin Lyons to report on the business of the Appeals and Legislation Committee.

1. Commissioner Lyons reported the following appeals were received since the August 7, 2024 meeting:

2A. Jeffrey Parker, Jr v. John H. Stamler Police Academy

Recruit appeals their dismissal from Essex County Police Academy on July 24, 2024 due to a positive drug test result.

2B. Miguel Clermont v. Essex County Police Academy

Recruit appeals their dismissal from Essex County Police Academy on July 30, 2024 due to results of a secondary background check. - Letter to counsel stating no basis for appeal with PTC

2C. Jean Milfort v. Essex County Police Academy

Recruit appeals their dismissal from Essex County Police Academy on August 1, 2024 due to late application submittal - Letter to counsel stating no basis for appeal with PTC

2D. Christopher Demetriou v. Essex County Police Academy

Recruit appeals their dismissal from Essex County Police Academy on August 5, 2024 for providing false statements and violation of standard of conduct. - Hearing Date: October 16th, 2024

2E. Cole Goswick v. Camden County College Police Academy

Recruit appeals their dismissal from Camden County College Police Academy on August 7, 2024 for violating residency rules. - Hearing Date: October 9th, 2024

2F. Wilson Rosa v. Hudson County Public Safety Training Center

Recruit appeals their dismissal from Hudson County Public Safety Training Center on August 7, 2024 for failure to complete 90% of the academic portion of the BCPO. - Hearing Date: October 16th, 2024

Commissioner Lyons, on behalf of the Appeals Committee, stated no action will be taken at this time agenda on items 2A through 2F.

Appeals Withdrawn by Petitioner at Office of Administrative Law or PTC

2G. Antwain Auletta v. JJC Academy

Commissioner Lyons, on behalf of the Appeals Committee, stated no action will be taken at this time agenda on 2G.

2. Commissioner Lyons, reported that **Agenda Item 3A NJPTC Law Enforcement License Denials**

3A. Tariah Wilkins

City of Newark is appealing the denial of her law enforcement license application due to criminal history.

Commissioner Lyons, on the behalf of the Appeals Committee moved and seconded motion to deny License.

3B. Terrance Clendenin

Ocean County DOC is appealing the denial of his law enforcement license application due to criminal history.

Commissioner Lyons, on the behalf of the Appeals Committee moved and seconded to overturn staff denial and issue a Twelve-month conditional license with staff conditions. Motion passed to grant a conditional License.

3C. Justice Wilson

Ocean County DOC is appealing the denial of his law enforcement license application on the basis of acts committed that display a lack of good moral character and lack of candor.

Commissioner Lyons, on the behalf of the Appeals Committee moved and seconded motion to uphold staff decision to Deny License. Commissioner Blachard abstained. Motion was Denied.

NJPTC Law Enforcement License Revocations

3D. Richard L. Dow Jr., North Plainfield Police Department

Appealing revocation of his law enforcement license due to final restraining order entered on or about April 17, 2024.

Commissioner Scaringelli, on the behalf of the Appeals committee moved and second to uphold the staff decision to suspend License. Commissioners Lyons and Surez abstained.

3E. Argenis Betanco, NJ State Police

Appealing revocation of his law enforcement license on the basis of being currently listed in the National Decertification Index (hearing date: October 23rd, 2024).

Commissioner Scaringelli, on the behalf of the Appeals committee, moved and seconded to uphold the staff decision to suspend License. Commissioner Blachard abstained.

3F. Commissioner Lyons on the behalf of the Appeals Committee moved and seconded to uphold Ten revocations.

3G. Commissioner Lyons on the behalf of the Appeals Committee moved and seconded to uphold suspensions. Commissioner Blanchard abstained on the suspensions concerning Ramel McIntosh and Richard Mercier.

3. Commissioner Lyons reported that **Agenda Item 4A was a Consideration of Extensions of Training Time** for Juvenile Detention Officers and County Investigators

4A. Consideration of a Request for an Extension for Training Time for Two Juvenile Detention Officers (Morris County Juvenile Department Center)

4B. Consideration of a Request for an Extension for Training Time for Two Juvenile Detention Officers (Bergen County Juvenile Detention Center)

Commissioner Lyons, on behalf of the Appeals Committee, moved and seconded a motion to approve all of the extension requests for Agenda items 4A and 4B. Commissioner Sandoval abstained. The motion was approved.

4C. Consideration of a Request for and Extension of Training
Time for Eight Juvenile Detention Officers (Essex County Juvenile
Detention Center)

Commissioner Lyons, on behalf of the Appeals Committee, moved and seconded a motion to approve Agenda item 4C, with the exception they must be enrolled in the next JJC class. Commissioner Sandoval abstained. The motion was approved.

**Commissioner Lyons concluded the Appeals and Legislation Committee
Report**

Administrator Cunningham asked Commissioner Sharrock to report on the business of the Standards Committee.

1. Commissioner Sharrock indicated that **Agenda Item 5A** was Resiliency Peer Mentor Program

The Resiliency Mentor Program, developed by the Rutgers University, Miller Center for Policing and Community Resilience. The program is designed by subject matter experts to give the Resiliency Officers, embedded at each law enforcement agency, additional tools to assist officers in continuing successful law enforcement careers. The course would educate the Resiliency Mentor on best practices for referring officers to quality resources, available to assist with their concerns. If the Commission were to adopt and approve as a PTC Course, it would be considered a continuing education course, similar to the School Resource Officer Course. Administrator Cunningham has referred this matter to the full Commission the review.

Commissioner Sharrock made a motion to make the Resiliency Peer Mentor Program a recommended In-Service program. Commissioner Lyons stated he had hesitation with the program and stated that an IA Officer should not be acting as a Resiliency Mentor. Commissioner Lyons abstained. Motion was passed.

2. Commissioner Sharrock indicated that **Agenda Item 5B** was Physical Conditioning Assessment Pilot Program

The Commissioners reviewed a chart in reference to a Pilot Program for the Pre-Academy Fitness Standard. The program would adjust the Pre-Academy Standard to 80% of the

current entry mandates, expanding the eligible group. In addition, it would create a pass/paid, Mid-Term and Final Assessment, which does not currently exist. The implementation of the Pilot Program would further enhance the importance of an officers continued physical fitness and health, as they move out of the academy, toward a career in law enforcement.

Based on numerous conversations with the academy directors, and some agency leadership, we have gleaned that some recruits are participating at a minimal level in the Physical Conditioning Program, once they have met the Pre-Academy Entrance Standard. In addition, some are struggling to meet the entry standard once they begin the academy, which could be as much as twelve weeks after the administration of the initial assessment. The Pilot Program will add a required standard, not unlike any other Functional Area of the academy.

Recruits will be required to meet the modified 80% assessment for entry into the academy. In week six of the academy the recruits will be administered the Mid-Term Assessment, they must meet 100% of the current entry standard, failure to meet the standard will result in dismissal from the training program. The Graduation Assessment will be administered in the final week of the academy, and will represent a 10% increase from the Mid-Term Assessment, passing the final assessment will be a requirement to receive Commission Certification. The implementation of the pilot program will set realistic goals for the recruits, adding an additional motivation for the recruits to fully participate in the Physical Conditioning Program. The addition of the final graduation standard will not be unique to New Jersey, it is a common practice in other POST States.

After a lengthy discussion, Commissioner Sharrock, on behalf of the Standards Committee to approve the pilot program, which will go into effect January 1, 2025. Commissioner Lyons opposed. Motion was passed.

3. Commissioner Sharrock indicated that **Agenda Item 5C** was Mandatory In-Service Training 2025.

The 2025 Mandated In-Service Training Requirements, inclusive of the In-Service Defensive Tactics Manual. The In-Service Defensive Tactics will be a minimum of four hours of hands on instruction. The manual describes the techniques and the mandatory equipment required. The course details basic techniques, which will be covered over the four hour program, this will be the minimum, agencies can add additional instructional hours.

On the behalf of the Standards Committee, Commissioner Sharrock moved and seconded motion to approve the In-Service training. Motion passed.

- 4 . Commissioner Sharrock indicated that **Agenda Item 6A** was the Consideration for a **Physical Training Waiver** for Rachel Adams

Officer Rachel Adams began her tenure with Mercer County Correction Center on December 5, 2016. She attended the Monmouth County Police Academy and successfully completed the

Basic Course for County Correction Officers on April 27, 2017. She worked as officer from December 2016 to May 7, 2021.

Because of health issues surrounding Officer Adams and her child, on or about March of 2020, Officer Adams sought medical leave of absence. These leaves were continued for many months. When the granted leaves of absence totaled one year, the County informed Officer Adams that the County would not grant any further leaves of absence. County policy, except in dire circumstances, does not grant leaves of absence for more than one year. Officer Adams was directed to report for a return to work evaluation. She failed to appear. As a result, the County pursued removal from public employment. After a department level hearing, Officer Adams was removed from her employment in February of 2022, with an effective date of May 7, 2021.

Officer Adams appealed her removal to the Civil Service Commission. Civil Service Commission referred the appeal to the Office of Administrative Law. On the eve of plenary hearing, based on the equities of this matter, the County and the Appellant reached an agreement whereby Officer Adams would resume her employment. During the course of negotiations, the parties learned that, because Officer Adams had not served as a county correction police officer for a period exceeding thirty six (36) months, Officer Adams would have to re-apply to the Training Academy and successfully meet those requirements.

To that end, the County seeks to re-engage Officer Adams to active duty. It has come to the County's attention that, because three years have passed since she was on active duty, Officer Adams would have to attend a training academy. Officer Adams has already attended and successfully completed the Monmouth County Police Academy. Because of the staff shortages at the Mercer County Correction Center, requiring Officer Adams to re-attend the academy would constitute a waste of time. During her entire time as a county correction police officer, Officer Adams performed in a satisfactory manner. The County anticipates Officer Adams resuming her duties in a positive fashion.

As such, the County requests that Officer Adams be excused from having to attend another training academy in order to resume her position as a county correction police officer.

On the behalf of the Standards Committee, Commissioner Sharrock moved and seconded the motion to approve PT waiver for Rachel Adams.

Commissioner Sharrock concluded the Standards Committee report

Administrator Cunningham reported that **Agenda Item 8A was a Report** of the Law Enforcement Officers Training and Equipment Fund (LEOTEF).

1. Commissioner Colucci reported that Quarterly expense reports for the 4th Quarter of State Fiscal Year 2024 have been reviewed and processed. All 16 SFY 2024 grants have been closed. Technical assistance in preparing quarterly expense reports has been

provided. Supplemental academy requests for LEOTEF purchases have been reviewed and approved. The 1st quarter of SFY 2025 will end on September 30, 2024. Quarterly reports for the 1st quarter will be due on October 15th. We are working on calculating the funding amounts for the 36th LEOTEF distribution and should have those numbers out sometime next month.

Administrator Cunningham reported that **Agenda Item 10A was Good and Welfare**

Administrator Cunningham announced that Alessandra Baldini will be leaving the PTC for a promotional opportunity.

Administrator Cunningham gave some follow up information about the psychological testing. Received great information from a source, following a productive discussion with one psychologist, it was highlighted that face-to-face psychological assessments are preferred over virtual ones due to concerns about potential cheating and numerous complaints.

Administrator Cunningham announced that the PTC-7 medical questionnaire has been revised.

Administrator Cunningham notified the Commission that the renewal Licensing applications deadline has been extended to November 1, 2024.

Administrator Cunningham welcomed and introduced PTC new staff, Academy Coordinator, Elizabeth Pellegrino and DAG, Rbrey Singleton.

Administrator Cunningham asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:08pm.

Commissioner Sharrock voted to approve the motion. Commissioner Colucci seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned.

Administrator Cunningham announced the next meeting is Wednesday, December 4, 2024