



Vermont Criminal Justice Council

TRAINING ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Minutes

January 13, 2022

Location: Physical Location – VT Police Academy, Pittsford, Vermont
and Online Meeting (via Teams)

Committee Members Present:

Chair: Sgt. Jason Covey, Middlebury Police
Vice-Chair: Chief George Merkel, Vergennes Police
Lt. Robert Giolito, Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles
Christopher Louras, Governor Appointee to the CJC
Warden Jeremy Schmid, Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife
Sgt. Fred Whitcomb, Stowe Police
Sheriff Jennifer Harlow, Orleans CSD
Inspector John Federico, Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles/VSEA.
Sgt. Adam Murach, Brandon Police
Sgt. Andrew Bent, Washington CSD

Others Present:

Cindy Taylor-Patch, Director of Training
Ken Hawkins, Academy LECTC
Lt. Jeremy Desjardins, Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles

Absent:

Chief Derrick Tienken, Winhall Police
Brian Searles, Governor Appointee to the CJC
Commissioner Michael Schirling, Vermont Department of Public Safety
Sgt. Dan Delgado, Burlington Police
Chief Skyler Genest, Vermont Department of Liquor & Lottery
Maira Tungatarova, Governor Appointee to the CJC

Call to order at 12:31pm by Chair Sgt. Jason Covey.

Approval of Prior Minutes: A motion was made by Chief Merkel, seconded by Sheriff Harlow, to accept the meeting minutes of December 30, 2021; All in favor. Motion passed.

Level II Basic Training (Competencies discussion continued):

Motor Vehicle Law syllabus for Level II & III Basic Training

Lt. Jeremy Desjardins, instructor for the Level II Motor Vehicle Law program discussed the training he delivers. He stated that the program for Level II is eight (8) hours versus forty-four hours provided in the Level III program. Therefore, he focuses heavily on navigating Title 23. He reported that he typically pushes class 30 minutes beyond the scheduled time to allow for questions and answers. Scenarios are verbally presented, and students are asked to verbally discuss a response, but no live scenarios are conducted due to time constraints. Further, Lt. Desjardins noted that the Level III class experiences a traffic court field trip (or at least a mock court during COVID) where a judge provides significant information and direction. Overall



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content not currently addressed in detail includes e-ticket, CAD, Valcour, and he suggested attention be given to including an overview at both levels.

Overview of Discussion with Executive Director Simons:

Chair Covey relayed messaging from the Executive Director regarding staying competency-focused and a general agreement regarding de-escalation training for all. They also discussed instructor recruiting and development, and possible needs for consultants to do in depth work.

Level II & III Basic Training generally:

Vice Chair Merkel asked for focus on critical information and hands on training in the residential portion of Level II Basic Training and for alternatives to be considered for other components. Lt. Giolito further emphasized interest in a focus on experiential learning while at the Academy and the benefits of the residential model programming. Inspector Federico asked about available data that may assist in illustrating problem areas within the two levels. Discussion ensued. Council Member Louras will reach out to the Vermont League of Cities & Towns to assess any existing data points they may be able to share, especially involving the identification of liability points.

Final review of stakeholder survey:

LECTC Hawkins reviewed the final draft. A motion was made by Chief Merkel, seconded by Sheriff Harlow, to accept the final draft as written. Discussion occurred around a preamble to the survey including language explaining this effort to optimize the use of, and training for, Level II officers. All in favor. Motion passed.

Additional Comments:

Council Member Louras proposed a future discussion regarding training of dispatchers in triaging mental health calls.

Motion made by Council Member Louras to adjourn at 1:55; seconded by Chief Merkel. All in favor. Motion passed.

Next meeting is scheduled for January 27, 2022, at 12:30.