



Vermont Criminal Justice Council

TRAINING ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Minutes

February 24, 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
Chief Derrick Tienken, Winhall Police
Sheriff Jennifer Harlow, Orleans CSD
Sgt. Adam Murach, Brandon Police
Sgt. Fred Whitcomb, Stowe Police
Maira Tungatarova, Governor Appointee to the CJC
Brian Searles, Governor Appointee to the CJC
Warden Jeremy Schmid, Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife
Inspector John Federico, Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles/VSEA.
Sgt. Andrew Bent, Washington CSD
Christopher Louras, Governor Appointee to the CJC

Others Present:

Cindy Taylor-Patch, Director of Training

Absent:

Lt. Robert Giolito, Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles
Sgt. Dan Delgado, Burlington Police
Commissioner Michael Schirling, Vermont Department of Public Safety
Chief Skyler Genest, Vermont Department of Liquor & Lottery

Call to order at 12:40pm by Chair Sgt. Jason Covey.

Approval of Prior Minutes: A motion was made by Warden Schmid, seconded by Sgt. Murach, to accept the meeting minutes of February 10, 2022; All in favor. Motion passed.

Level II Optimization – Preparations for recommendation to VCJC – Chair, Sgt. Jason Covey

Discussions opened with comments about survey results, specifically the number of Level II officers doing “Patrol” work. Council Member Louras offered thoughts about differing models, for example, those who may have a security-only function. Sgt. Covey proposed adding a physical fitness requirement (2000-meter row) to the entrance standards for the Level II program. Chief Merkel agrees but cautioned about potential pushback from members of the VCJC. Council Member Louras questioned whether union contract issues would be involved; Inspector Federico assured the group this would not be an issue. Discussion ensued that demonstrated there might not be consensus on the TAC regarding a physical fitness requirement. Council



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Member Searles recommended the proposal go in the first draft of the recommendation and be voted upon by the TAC, if necessary.

Sgt. Covey asked for any other training topics that TAC members feel should be included in the draft recommendation. Sgt. Covey said de-escalation training had been discussed in prior meetings and would be mentioned in the draft. Council Member Louras recommended mental health wellness training for law enforcement officers, as well as a Fair & Impartial Policing focus. Council Member Searles suggested highlighting differences in the scope of practice between Level II and Level III.

Motion made by Council Member Searles, to adjourn at 1:35; seconded by Chief Merkel. All in favor. Motion passed.

Next meeting is scheduled for March 10, 2022, at 12:30.