



Vermont Criminal Justice Council

TRAINING ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Minutes

November 18, 2021

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

Committee Members Present:

Chair: Sgt. Jason Covey, Middlebury Police

Vice-Chair: *Vacant*

Sgt. Andrew Bent, Washington CSD

Sgt. Dan Delgado, Burlington Police

Inspector John Federico, Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles/VSEA.

Chief Skyler Genest, Vermont Department of Liquor & Lottery

Lt. Robert Giolito, Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles

Sheriff Jennifer Harlow, Orleans CSD

Christopher Louras, Governor Appointee to the CJC

Sgt. Adam Murach, Brandon Police

Chief George Merkel, Vergennes Police

Brian Searles, Governor Appointee to the CJC

Major Justin Stedman, Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife

Chief Derrick Tienken, Winhall Police

Sgt. Fred Whitcomb, Stowe Police

Others Present:

Cindy Taylor-Patch, LECTC's Ken Hawkins

Absent:

Commissioner Michael Schirling, Vermont Department of Public Safety

Commander Greg Sheldon, Rutland Police

Maira Tungatarova, Governor Appointee to the CJC

Call to order: 1230 hours by Chair Sgt. Jason Covey

Approval of Prior Minutes: A motion was made by Chief Merkel, seconded by Major Stedman, to accept the meeting minutes of October 21, 2021; All in favor. Motion passed.

Nomination of Vice Chair: Chair Covey asked for nominations for the open seat of vice chair. Sgt. Whitcomb nominated Chief Merkel, seconded by Covey; All in favor. Motion passed.

Presentation of Level II curriculum and process: LECTC Ken Hawkins presented information on the three phases of the Level II process. Discussion ensued around the topics covered and not covered in comparison to Level III. Chief Merkel suggested that Field Training be conducted only with a Level III certified FTO (versus the option of having a Level II or III FTO as it stands now). Members asked if one could be an agency head, by law, with Level II certification and Taylor-Patch confirmed that Level III status is not a statutory requirement for an agency head position. Merkel expressed concern over the number of training hours given the scope of authority, specifically noting an interest in adding de-escalation training. Searles confirmed interest in prioritizing de-escalation training. Covey also expressed concern about the amount of



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training required. As an example of how Level II Officers are being used in different areas, Sgt. Bent discussed how Level II officers in his area are often out doing motor vehicle enforcement alone. Further, he expressed concern Level II officers may lack confidence in their skills. Merkel suggested adding another week of training to Phase 1. Murach suggested that the committee focus on training needs versus prioritizing what stakeholders may push back against. Major Stedman suggested that more training is not necessary for his agency given that substantial amount of field training required. Sheriff Harlow expressed concern in getting part-time employees to training given their employment at other jobs (competing schedules). Taylor-Patch offered that members think about the issues in terms of training needs versus in the context of how the schedule or how the mode of training delivery looks now, encouraging creative thinking. Members discussed the idea of whether or not Level II should be an option, then discussed an understanding that some agencies report they must have that option in order to function.

Training topics were discussed. An interest in focusing Academy-based time on scenarios and hands-on skills was expressed by many. Committee members asked staff to bring forth some suggestions for on-line pre-academy learning and a possible revised schedule for on-site training for the TAC's consideration.

Motion made by Searles to adjourn at 2:00; seconded by Murach.