



Vermont Criminal Justice Council

Council Meeting Minutes

July 21, 2021

10:00 AM

Teams Meeting and 93 Davison Drive Pittsford

Members in Attendance:

William Sorrell, Chair – Governor Appointed
Sheriff Mark Anderson, Vice-Chair – VT Sheriff's Association
Xusana Davis, Vice-Chair – E.D. Racial Equity
Major Justin Stedman - Proxy for Commissioner Louis Porter, VT Fish & Wildlife
Anthony Facos – Proxy for Wanda Minoli, Dept of Motor Vehicles
Chief Christopher Brickell – Vermont Chiefs' Association
Christopher Louras – Governor Appointed
Brian Searles – Governor Appointed
Karim Chapman – Governor Appointed
Shawn Pratt – Governor Appointed
Kevin Lane – Proxy for Michael Schirling – Commissioner of Public Safety
Michael Major – VT Police Association
Karen Tronsgard-Scott – ED VT Network DOMV Sexual Violence
John Federico – VT State Employees Association
David Scherr – Proxy for TJ Donovan, Attorney General's Office
Glen Boyde – Proxy for James Baker, Dept of Corrections
Cassandra Burdyshaw – Proxy for Bor Yang, Human Rights Commission
Sadie Donovan – Proxy for Carol Brochu, Center for Crime Victim Services
Evan Meenan – Proxy for John Campbell, States Attorney & Sheriff's
Michael O'Neil – Proxy for Erin Hodges, Vermont Troopers Association

Other Attendees:

Heather Simons – Executive Director Vermont Police Academy
Lindsay Thivierge – Vermont Police Academy
Cindy Taylor-Patch – Vermont Police Academy
Gail Williams – Vermont Police Academy
Jon Murad – Burlington Police Dept
Steve Coote – Vermont State Police
Teresa Randall – Vermont State Police
Julie Scribner – Vermont State Police
Jacob Humbert – Assistant Attorney General
Marcia Daoudi - Guest
Ann Schroeder - Guest
Ian Louras - Guest



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Call to Order: VCJC Chair Bill Sorrell 10:06

Approval of prior minutes: Correction to the list of attendees for the July 14th prior minutes for approval, to include Evan Meenan as in attendance. _____ made a motion to accept the minutes from the July 14th meeting with the attendance correction. Second by Chief Brickell. All in favor. Motion passed.

New Council Member Introduction: Executive Director Simons welcomed and introduced Sadie Donovan to the Council. Sadie is the proxy for Carol Brochu, the Interim Administrator for the Center for Crime Victims Services.

Strategies for Law Enforcement: Acting Chief Jon Murad from Burlington Police Dept. is now the chair for the Entrance Test working group. Chief Murad updated the Council members on work being done. He brought forth the following two action item requests for the Council to vote on.

The subcommittee recommends that the Vermont Criminal Justice Council recognize the purpose of the Vermont Police Academy's written entrance exam is to ascertain the ability of a candidate to complete the academy. Each law-enforcement agency is responsible for ascertaining each candidate's character and professional suitability, in accordance with the State of Vermont's needs.

The subcommittee recommends that the Vermont Criminal Justice Council eliminate the current written entrance test as it is on this date (7/21/2021) owing to concerns about its validity.

Lengthy discussion followed these two requests.

Chief Brickell made a motion to accept the first request by the working group, second by Sheriff Anderson. All in favor. Motion Passed.

Chief Brickell made a motion to suspend the current written entrance test, second by Christopher Louras.

This motion was followed by a lengthy discussion. Questions and concerns were raised in the discussion to include the validity of the test, how will the elimination of the test affect hiring, how quickly can a new test be made available, will desperate agencies screen their candidates well enough?

An amendment to the motion was made to allow individual law enforcement agencies to make their own decisions about who is qualified for admission to the Academy in lieu of an academic test for the Feb 2022, 112th class. Louras retracted his second and the motion was withdrawn. Sheriff Anderson made a new motion to eliminate the current written entrance test for entrance to the 112th Academy or until June 30, 2022, second by Brickell.

This amendment brought up more discussion on how the elimination of the test would affect the 113th class, Level II class, and when a written test would be required again.



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Chair Sorrell said agencies need to put forward the best candidates to succeed in the Academy until there is a qualifying written exam adopted and approved by the Council.

Roll call for eliminating the current written entrance test was taken and passed by a vote of 14 yes, 3 no.

Discussion:

Council members were invited to the Academy for lunch and a tour.

Plan on the next regularly scheduled meeting to have more of the same discussion or another meeting may be necessary.

Chair Sorrell will not be available for the next regularly scheduled meeting. The two co-vice chairs will be in charge.

Motion to adjourn: Evan Meenan moved, second by Sheriff Anderson. All in favor

Meeting adjourned: 11:58