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**Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission Special Meeting  
Monday, August 16, 2021, 10:00 a.m. - Cafeteria  
Held at the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy**

**Minutes – August 16, 2021**

**A. Opening**

**Call to Order**

**Chair Stanforth** good morning, the meeting was called to order at 10:07 a.m.  
Sheriff Heldman lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Long called the roll.

**Commissioners Present:**

Chair, Sheriff Vernon Stanforth  
Vice-Chair, Chief Clayton Harris  
Ms. Leah Amstutz  
Ms. Wynette Carter-Smith  
Colonel Richard Fambro  
Lieutenant James Fitsko  
Sheriff Michael Heldman  
Chief George Kral  
Ms. Carol O'Brien  
S.A.C. Eric Smith

**Commissioners Absent:**

Colonel Richard Fambro – Major John Alman attendee on his behalf  
Lt. James Fitsko  
Chief Clayton Harris

**Ms. Long** confirmed there was a quorum with 7-Present, 3-Absent.

**Staff in Attendance:**

Mr. Dwight Holcomb, Executive Director, OPOTC/A  
Mr. Richard Hardy, Director Professional Standards and Education – OPOTC  
Ms. Brittany Brashears, OPOTC Staff  
Mr. Dan Ozbolt, Director Advanced Training – OPOTA  
Ms. Deana Leffler, OPOTC Staff  
Mr. Michael Walton, Associate Assistant Attorney General – AGO

### **Guest in Attendance:**

Major John Altman, Ohio State Highway Patrol  
Commander Chuck Crosby, Sinclair Community College  
Lt. Robert Curren, Delaware County Sheriff's Office  
Mr. Matt Fletcher, Delaware County Sheriff's Office  
Commander Mark Lang, Columbus Police Department  
Ms. Kellie Lenhardt, Toledo Police

### **B. Chair Report**

**Chair Vernon Stanforth** explained due to issues with equipment, the microphones are sitting in the center of the tables. They are recording this meeting. Commissioners are asked to speak up, so the microphones can capture your statements and be transcribed later. Any guest who wants to speak are asked to go the corner of the tables, so the microphones will pick up your comments.

**Chair Vernon Stanforth** explained this was a Special Meeting, with a very tight agenda. But, a very important agenda item that needs to be discussed by the Commission. The Chair turned this portion of the meeting over to Sheriff Heldman, Chairman of the Continuing Professional Training Committee.

### **C. Continuing Professional Training (CPT) Report**

**Curriculum Chair, Sheriff Heldman** thanked the Chair and proceeded with the report from the July 27th Special CPT meeting, reading the report to assure everything from the meeting was covered. The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m. and Chief Harris, Ms. Wynette Carter-Smith, and I were present from the Commission along with the following CPT Special Committee representatives, Lieutenant Colonel Jones, Ohio State Highway Patrol; Charles Chandler, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police; Jeffrey Ehasz, Small Chiefs Association; and Sheriff Keith Everhart, Buckeye State Sheriff Association. Also present were Chuck Crosby, Sinclair Community College and David Justice, Columbus Police Administration.

We began the discussion with what the committee was tasked with, which was establishing the topics of the 24 hours of Continuing Professional Training for the Ohio Law Enforcement Officers for 2022. After much discussion, Chief Clayton Harris made the motion for the following topics: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion - 4 hours mandatory; Use of Force with scenarios - 4 hours; Responding to Sexual Assaults - 4 hours; Responding to Mental Health - 4 hours; Officer Personal Wellness - 4 hours; Domestic Violence, and with that encouraged the CPO, TPO - 4 four hours; Legal Updates - 4 hours. The motion was seconded by Ms. Carter-Smith. The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

After some further discussion, a second motion was made by Chief Harris that an agency can use the topics to complete the 24 hours of CPT, or 16 hours of CPT, along with eight hours of local agency needs, but the eight hours needed to be in compliance

with the Ohio Collaborative topics. Ms. Carter-Smith seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously. With no further business, the meeting was Adjourned.

As you can see, the topics are more than the 24 hours, there are 28 hours. But, the Committee did give the ability for agencies to select from that list of topics the 24 hours they would likely utilize for their agency.

**Chair Vernon Stanforth** asked if the legal updates needed to be included?

**Curriculum Chair, Sheriff Heldman** stated the legal updates were discussed with the attorneys in the room that day. There were a lot of topics, with a lot of changes happening, and it was encouraged that the legal updates be made available.

**Chair Vernon Stanforth** asked if the content of those topic hours were discussed? What would go into each topic; example, the Officer Personal Wellness, have you decided what that would entail?

**Curriculum Chair, Sheriff Heldman** we talked about the topics and looked to the Executive Director to find that information.

**Dwight Holcomb, Executive Director** said based on the topics this Commission approves, we will be reaching out to find subject matter experts who know the curriculum and have them ready by January 1st.

**Chair Vernon Stanforth** is there anything else you'd like to see or don't think we need to see on the topics?

**Chief Kral** if we want to do this the right way, what is good for the larger agencies, will not necessarily be beneficial to the smaller agencies. I know that we can use eight hours at the agency's local discretion. What if, one agency is seeing a trend with x y z, but that's not on the Ohio Collaborative list? Is there a way that they can petition the Commission to see if we can waive that and then do whatever they think is necessary for their specific needs?

**Dwight Holcomb, Executive Director** said one of the concepts we've talked about had been the hours of using time for each agency, because what's needed in Northern Ohio may be different from what's needed in Southern Ohio. So, when the committee came together, they looked at how an agency could use 8 hours out of any of the remaining topics on the provided list, since there's 28 hours there. Then the Committee looked at how we could vocalize what the training was, and try to make sure that some law enforcement related curriculum was used, they came up with the topics that were within the Collaboratives Jurisdiction of the Policies and Procedures. So, it gave the committee a system in place to say this is the type of law enforcement training needed. Now there's something that is not on that list unless it's approved by this Commission through the Executive Director. Because this Commission would then approve these topics based upon this and then for law enforcement agencies it would be the sticking point to them.

**Chair Vernon Stanforth** and, I think it is our goal to get a unified training across the State of Ohio, that our topics are relevant across the board, not just regionalized. Agencies can visualize whatever training they want, they can go beyond the 24 hours, if they choose to do additional training. They can do that now but getting a unified training across Ohio should be the goal, for it to be CPT.

**Dwight Holcomb, Executive Director** I think in the Committees discussion, where it came down to that 8 hours and the discretion of the agency, coming back to the topics proven at the top list of that 4-hour block or something related to establishment of the Collaboratives, keeping it in law enforcement, and specific to general leads around the state.

**Ms. Carol O'Brien** the small departments are in a different position then some of the larger ones, it's harder for smaller agencies to do regional training because they don't have the resources. The collaborative, the topics: mass protest, vehicle pursuit, investigation of employee misconduct, bias, leasing, law enforcement telecommunications, telecommunicators training, body worn cameras, use of force, use of deadly force, employee recruitment and hiring, community engagement, agency wellness, are the ones she recalled.

**Ms. Wynette Carter-Smith** stated that was part of the discussion for smaller agencies. There was representation for the smaller agencies at the meeting, and the difference between the larger agencies and the smaller agencies and working to allow time and flexibility for the training was discussed.

**Chair Vernon Stanforth** but, you tied their hands by saying it has to be a qualified topic from the topics list or from the Collaborative list, by making them choose from a list. We are saying the agency has 8 hours to utilize topics specific to their agency, but then, we are requiring them to be topics of either the list of the 28 topics selected or by the Collaborative list. We have put speculations on their training. What if they don't want to do anything from that list for their last 8 hours. You are basically saying all the topics have to be part of the Collaborative list.

**Curriculum Chair, Sheriff Heldman** yes, basically when the motion was made.

**Dwight Holcomb, Executive Director** replied there's 28 topic hours presented, sufficient to cover the required 24 hours.

**Chief Kral** I can see a smaller agency saying, we don't have body worn camera's, so I don't want to do that training. Maybe there's some issue with dealing with immigration issues in rural farming areas, and they want to do some training for their officers on how to handle immigration issues. That isn't on our list, nor is it on the collaborative list. So, I think you would be kind of stuck.

**Chair Vernon Stanforth** I don't have drones, but I'm going to get drones; but I want to train my people. I can't use CPT monies that doesn't meet the criteria to train them on being drone operators.

**Mark Lane, Columbus Police** I just want to offer our perspective on this; there are also topics we are required to teach from CALEA, things like ultimate weapons, batons, and etc. So, in addition to these 24 hours, we have more additional hours. We would use those eight hours if they were given to us to teach those other things that we're required to teach in places outside of OPOTA. The other issue we have is how does these 24 hours translate into a working day? So, is it 3, just 8 hour working days or is it hours spent on these topics, because if it's on these topic hours, and I give people a lunch then we're talking about three and a half working days in addition to these other topics that are mandated by other places. So, all things to consider how does that work in the real world for us.

**SAC Eric Smith, Commissioner** is that classroom-based training or is that defensive tactics scenario-based training, because it seems like it might lead with respect into legal updates law. I know when we do our mandatory legal training with use of force scenario-based updates.

**Curriculum Chair, Sheriff Heldman** we discussed that, and it was one reason we came up with the use of force with scenarios and a separate legal update block as well.

**Ms. Carol O'Brien** if these are approved, then we will put SME panels together and provide the curriculum to the law enforcement agencies for the training.

**Chair Vernon Stanforth** will the agencies have to notify and get the approval of the Executive Director to do the 8 hours they want to do?

**Dwight Holcomb, Executive Director** replied there is no approval needed if they stay within the documented topics. The Attorney General is establishing the new rules, and I am not sure where they are in the process.

**Chair Vernon Stanforth** we're going to give them 8 hours of local discretion. But, we're also saying, you can only use this block of instruction that's approved by the Ohio Collaborative Group.

**Dwight Holcomb, Executive Director** as long as they use and document the training topics they used.

**Chair Vernon Stanforth** so, you would come into play, if the agency were to go outside of the listed topics for those 8 hours and choose their own topic? Would that be an option?

**Dwight Holcomb, Executive Director** I think that's always an option, if that's the direction the agency would like to go. It would be submitted to OPOTC for approval. If, the topic has an established curriculum and a good base, then we could probably do that with the approval from the Executive Director.

**Ms. Carol O'Brien** what is the impact on the staff of OPOTC if that was to come into play?

**Dwight Holcomb, Executive Director** there would be an impact on the staff. Director Hardy's staff and possibly other staff sections would need to have a review process in place for the submitted curriculum; which will add to their work load. If each of the 960 agencies wanted to run one block of their particular topic, that could create 960 different courses that are required to be reviewed.

**Richard Hardy, Director** the last year late CPT was open, and the agencies have the opportunity to submit those. The OPOTC staff received some 40 pages on a spreadsheet, with thirty lines each of classes and request for review. So, that is a huge impact coming into staff. With our reduced numbers of staff, that does have a great impact. Some are the topics and some are the academy side of OPOTA and then there's eLearning staff will be working on offerings to put into the topic lines. So, it may not be a full 4-hour block of legal update, but, it could be 4, 1-hour blocks, or a 2-hour block or something along those lines, to help meet those needs.

**Ms. Leah Amstutz** why in the terms of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, which is listed to be a mandatory topic, was the Officer Personnel Well Being not a mandatory topic too?

**Curriculum Chair, Sheriff Heldman** stated it wasn't part of the discussion, it was an option.

**Director Richard Hardy** added in the basic curriculum, there's a lot of personal health and wellness for the new officers. I am aware that a lot of agencies include that in their internal in-service. Sometimes it's contractually obligated.

**Chair Vernon Stanforth** asked if there was any discussion on cybercrimes?

**Curriculum Chair, Sheriff Heldman** there was a brief discussion.

**Director Richard Hardy** replied there were time constraints attached to this legislation. I know the committee was trying to keep it very manageable, but, also attainable and in line for all this. That's where a lot of the discussion centered on the smaller number of topics. But, then the availability for agencies to use the 8 hours, still using the Collaborative topics.

**Ms. Carol O'Brien** our time lines were really quick to provide the curriculum. Classes have to be open January 1, 2022. This is a 1-year project, with one year of funding and we don't know what will happen after that.

**Ms. Leah Amstutz** if it's for one year, are there key topics we would want to keep mandatory for the entire state to ensure the quality of the professional development? Because, from an education standpoint, if you get spread too thin over a short period of time, your quality gets compromised. Is there a person looking at that, where local control and having some flexibility is important? But, when you start looking at the timelines, are there topics that would be important for all police officers to grow in the capacity?

**Ms. Carol O'Brien** stated all the topics are necessary. Response to mental health continues to grow as well as personal wellness.

**Ms. Leah Amstutz** stated mental health is a key topic.

**Chief George Kral** asked is it possible to leave it up to the discretion of the sheriffs and the chiefs, with the caveat out there that all of us know that if you put this training on and it isn't law enforcement related, you're not going to get paid? And then you can be audited in the backside. Can we just trust the executives to make that decision?

**Ms. Carol O'Brien** the agencies are paid in advance. So, we'd be in the situation of trying to claw back that money. The way the law is written, with the cease function if they don't do the required CPT training. If they don't complete the CPT training, we may never know until they don't do it. Then prosecutors are called in.

**SAC Eric Smith, Commissioner** is there any chance to manipulate those 4-hour blocks to what you want? Do they have to stay in that 4-hour block?

**Curriculum Chair, Sheriff Heldman** this was a motion made by the committee, I'm sure, as the Commission, if we want to adjust this. I don't think anybody is going to say anything. These are the topics brought up that day. So, this is the time to talk about this. The Commission is not locked into anything yet.

**Chair Vernon Stanforth** agreed with SAC Smith, every one of these topics will have a legal update component to them. Every one of them, and then we put in another 4-hours on top of that. So, I think 4-hours can be manipulated somewhere else.

**Ms Leah Amstutz** it's definitely a lot easier from the curriculum standpoint to develop something for 1 - 2 hours.

**Director Richard Hardy** like I said earlier, we looked at the topics when we came from the CPT committee meeting as the big umbrella, then putting individual lessons underneath that. So, there's a police response to mental illness a 4-hour block, and another 1-hour block could be child trauma. We can see different things falling under each topic, giving an a la carte type of venue.

**Chair Vernon Stanforth** Ms. O'Brien you made a comment that as a prosecutor you saw domestic violence cases, what did the officer bring to the table? So, they have not handled the domestic violence call properly and now you had to prosecute.

**Ms. Carol O'Brien** But, law enforcement is generally irritated with a woman who complains on a regular basis that she is the victim of domestic violence. Part of that is teaching law enforcement the cycle of domestic violence and the psychology of domestic violence. And it would get short shrift in terms of investing one, and I literally have. Well, she just drops it again. Prosecutors say, well, I'm not going to drop it, so she's just a witness, it is not her case. And it's not just one person, it's society as a whole.

**SAC Eric Smith, Commissioner** Where all that falls out, right? So, you can take a large department inside a small. All those calls for service for one year, the pie charts say. And if you look at the seven items that we've got on the list, 2 are investigative based, 2 are core competency legal based, and 3 are awareness-based training. If that's the balance we're looking for, that's fine. But, if you're not police officers core competency, investigation falls under the things you want to prioritize, I would think, but I don't know where this falls on the other list training that you already did. So, I just want to make sure that we're tracking. Of the seven, only 2 of those are investigative based training. I wouldn't have seen mental health as an investor.

**Ms. Deana Leffler** one thing we also talked about in the context of the mental health conversation was the legal aspect as well as the practical aspect. So, you have dealing with somebody with any mental health crisis. Police get called because the police response and they get there and they have to determine what tactics to use and what follow up to do, if it turns into a situation. Yeah, there's a probate order in that kind of thing. But, the legal aspect that can be combined with that, of course, is, you know, all the recent case law on use of force with mentally ill people, you should know or already know or having a mental health crisis, armed versus unarmed response. How police officers talk to someone who is armed and is a mentally ill person, how they respond to somebody who is unarmed and is mentally ill, not respond.

One thing I did want to talk about a little bit that we had discussed previously and Ms. O'Brien comments about the domestic violence and professional development of these topics currently with the COVID 19 crisis. What we saw with domestic violence is, of course, calls went significantly down. And yet we know that incidents went significantly up. So, I think, what we could be incorporating in the domestic violence training is, the delayed response of people who have been abused over this last year, year and a half are now coming forward to report to police. It's been happening, where this happened a year ago while we were in lockdown, a sexual assault, a child abuse, that kind of stuff that can all be appropriated in it. As well with the protection order issues. The new forms and the confusion, I think that still generally remains when officers don't look at that paperwork every day and there's so many different kinds; it confuses lawyers looking at, a CPO, DTVO, a stay away order, a condition of bond or conditional probation, and how the police need to respond to those and are statutorily obligated to do so in those situations. Also, danger to police when responding to domestic violence calls to see what protection orders as well, and if there is a significant, historical basis for seeing offenders who typically want to violate orders of the court have an increased incidence of violence toward law enforcement, the court system and victims of society.

But there are a lot of combination things that maybe we could incorporate, or maybe you would think would be best incorporated with legal updates into a lot of these other investigative topics for some of the other topics that have been put forward.

**Dwight Holcomb, Executive Director** the commission needs to keep in mind that this is for the 1 year coming up in 2022. We're in a time crunch to get things done. But, let's look beyond that. Let's look on to 2023 and 2024. You're all probably aware this legislative action also put together a committee with long term funding for law



enforcement training. That committee will be getting together early next year and coming up with some sort of process, hopefully finding permanent structure for training that will extend beyond this. Which then comes back for the ability for this Commission in 2-3 years to come up with those other key areas of drones and cyber-crimes, some key training of those years and giving us the time to be able to work toward that kind of training and for future that we get long term funding, the topics become unlimited in what we can accomplish in those later years.

**Chair Vernon Stanforth** asked if there were any questions or comments from our guests?

**MOTION:** Sheriff Heldman made the motion to recommended the Commission recognize the following topics:

- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion - 4 hours mandatory
- Use of Force with Scenarios - 4 hours
- Responding to Sexual Assaults - 4 hours
- Responding to Mental Health - 4 hours
- Officer Personal Wellness - 4 hours
- Domestic Violence, and with that encouraged the CPO, TPO - 4 hours
- Legal Updates - 4 hours

These were put forth by the Committee for the required 2022 CPT, which includes that an agency can use the topics to complete the 24 hours of CPT, or 16 hours of CPT, along with 8 hours of local agency needs, but the eight hours need to be in compliance with the Ohio Collaborative topics. We can revisit in the next year, the possibilities for 2023. Ms. O'Brien, seconded the motion. After a lengthy discussion, a vote was taken and passed unanimously. Yes-7, No-0, Absent-3.

**Discussion of motion:** Ms. Amstutz asked as part of the development of curriculum, if the goal is to get continued funding, we are going to need some sort of impact report to show the value of the developed curriculum.

**Richard Hardy, Director** that's actually in the legislation. It has to be turned in by March 1, 2022.

**Ms. Carol O'Brien** is there a thought on how we evaluate?

**Chair Vernon Stanforth** how do you measure long term? Things change over time. Use of Force calls have changed, the long-term process has already seen a reduction of Use of Force. And you're not going to be able to do that on short term, it's a long-term process.

**Ms. Carol O'Brien** and honestly, one of the concerns that arises is we do not have an accurate method of determining the previous year's incidents.

**Ms. Leah Amstutz** the lack of a national database, that could show this is how many calls in Ohio were domestic violence, this is how many calls were this, so we can track

it over time to compare and to be able to show an impact. I think that's part of this. You've got to be able to put some data to the front end of this to really be able to show the impact of it.

**SAC Eric Smith, Commissioner** I agree. I would recommend that, if these are the topic that we decide on for next year, that we implement some sort of threat-based training, where, we've mentioned where we're actually looking at what the data shows in terms of how officers are doing with data bases. And it's all different sizes of departments. And then look at what the threats are moving forward for 2022 and 2023.

**Chair Vernon Stanforth** does anyone need to be reminded of the motion says? The Chair asked if it was fully understood what the motion said. All those in favor of the motion say I. Those opposed, hearing none the motion passes.

**Sheriff Heldman** stated that concluded his report.

**Chair Vernon Stanforth** asked if there was anything else to be brought before the Commission.

**Sheriff Heldman** believed that Columbus and his question regarding the eight hours of training, they give breaks and so forth. There's always a break in between things, how do we want to answer their question? In the eight hours.

**Chair Vernon Stanforth** asked for the question again

**Mark Lane, Columbus Police** so, Sheriff, I'll say it this way. I can't teach two 4-hour blocks of training in one eight-hour day and still let people go to lunch. So, if I'm going to teach a 4-hour block in the morning and then I give them an hour for lunch, I have three hours left in the afternoon. So, if that eight hours a day doesn't count towards 8 of my 24-hours of training, that means not only am I doing three days of training, but I have to do extra training the next day.

**Chair Vernon Stanforth** to ensure you get your classroom training in.

**Mark Lane, Columbus Police** Yes, sir.

**Dwight Holcomb, Executive Director** and I'm not exactly sure how that's going to work. I really don't either. 4-Four-hour blocks, like Mr. Hardy was saying, so the instruction may be broken down in 1 or multiple hours. Legal updates may not be an entire 4-hour block, it may be 4, 1-hour blocks.

**Mark Lane, Columbus Police** so, I mean, we're joking about it, but the reality is either they get a lunch or we teach a fourth day.

**Richard Hardy, Director** 100 Minutes would be one hundred twenty minutes. So, for every 50 minutes of instruction, 10-minute break right now. That's one hour of instruction. That's how we've done it with the basic curriculum.

**Mark Lane, Columbus Police** so, I have no breaks between topics and just take a lunch?

**Chuck Crosby, Sinclair Community College** isn't the burden being created by the plan. That's why so, here is the burden of a lunchbreak being created by the plan. Is this something that everybody needs to address, or is it the way that you've decided to implement for that decision for the plan?

**Mark Lane, Columbus Police** but, I guess I'm trying to figure out what are we intending three and a half days of training?

**Chuck Crosby, Sinclair Community College** my thing is that they're broken down in four blocks. It's just my thought that is flexibility. If you decide to incorporate two into one day. That's your flexibility on how you implement the plan to achieve the training. I'm not saying it's easy, or that it doesn't create other challenges for your agency, but I don't know if that's a challenge for everybody that's created by the training.

**Dwight Holcomb, Executive Director** Commander, we've got an academy, but we've also got a lot of this training that will be on OPOTA On-Line.

**Mark Lane, Columbus Police** but even sitting there watching it online.

**Dwight Holcomb, Executive Director** and truly, there's so many things that we're still trying to work out, were still trying to work on rules. This is coming at a fast pace as we're trying to accommodate it. Now, that we've got these topics, we've got the hours, we will be getting the Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) together and get the curriculum developed.

**Ms. Leah Amstutz** gives some flexibility in training format.

**Dwight Holcomb, Executive Director** we're trying to obviously develop something that works from the three-member agency, up to nineteen hundred. And it works for everybody as a State-wide basis.

**Ms. Carol O'Brien** maybe we talk about adjustments, if new legislation is purposed.

**Mark Lane, Columbus Police** if all 24 hours are going to be available online in one-hour blocks, we can do that. But, I don't know that I've heard that was going to be the case. If that's going to be the case, I'm sure we can work with that.

**Chair Vernon Stanforth** but the legal aspect of it could be on-line. Is there anything else, then the Chair entertains a motion to adjourn?

**D. Adjournment**

**MOTION:** Motion to Adjourn moved by Sheriff Heldman. The motion was seconded by Ms. O'Brien. A vote was taken and passed unanimously. Yes-7, No-0, Absent-3. The meeting stands Adjourned.

**Time:** 11:02 a.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vernon P. Stanforth", written over a horizontal line.

**Chair Vernon P. Stanforth**

**These transcripts are not verbatim. Audio recordings are available upon receipt.**