



Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission Meeting
Thursday, May 11th, 2023 at 10:00am

Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy
1650 State Rt. 56 S.W., London, Ohio 43140
Meeting was held in the cafeteria

Minutes – May 11th, 2023

- A. Opening- Call to Order, Chair Sheriff Vernon Stanforth** called meeting to order at 10:12 a.m.
Chair Vernon Stanforth led Pledge of Allegiance.
Ms. Denise Becerra called the roll call.

Commissioners Present:

Chair, Sheriff Vernon Stanforth
Vice-Chair, Chief Clayton Harris
Sheriff Michael Heldman
Ms. Carol O'Brien
Chief Robert Chabali
Colonel Charles Jones
SAC J. William Rivers

Commissioners Absent:

Lieutenant James Fitsko
Ms. Wynette Carter-Smith
Ms. Leah Amstutz

Ms. Denise Becerra confirmed there was a quorum with 7-Present, 3-Absent

Attorney General Staff in Attendance:

Mr. Dwight Holcomb, Executive Director - OPOTC/A

Michael Walton – Senior Assistant Attorney General - AGO
Cynthia Peterson, Principal Assistant Attorney General – OPOTA/C
Deana Leffler, Senior Assistant Attorney General – OPOTA/C
Scott Spangler, Director of Advanced Training – OPOTA
Courtney Delong, Director of Professional Standards - OPOTC
Denise Becerra - OPOTC Staff
Teresa Coffey - OPOTC Staff
Shelli Brock, Associate AAG- OPOTA/C
Carol Simon, Certification Specialist- OPOTC
Arturo DeLeon, Certification Specialist- OPOTC
Thomas Quinlan, Assistant Executive Director- OPOTA/C
David Durkin, Advance Training Instructor-OPOTA
Jill Cury- Curriculum Development Specialist- OPOTA/C

Guests in Attendance:

Paul R. Weber- Clark State
Commander Bryan Cook- Greene County CJ Academy
Ted Owens- OASIS
Elijah K. Baisden, III- Academy Commander, TRI-C Academy
Steven Hammett- Director, TRI- C Police Academy
Sheriff Kandy Fatheree- Summit County Sheriff
Joe Freyhof, Chief of Police, Russells Point Police Department/OACP
Sharon Montgomery- Ohio Traffic Safety Council
David Coleman- Franklin County Sheriff's Office
Scott Paur- Franklin County Sheriff's Office
Jerry Snay - Stark State
Amber Rose - Columbus Police Department
Chuck Crosby - Sinclair Community College
David Wiseman - Delaware County Sheriff's Office
Lisa DeGeeter - Ohio Domestic Violence Network
David Wiseman- Delaware County Sheriff's Office
Sol Lopez- ODPS, BMV Investigations
Brandon Hammond- OSPS, BMV Investigations
Major John Altman- OSHP

Chair Stanforth announced there was a set of minutes to approve.

Motion: A motion for the approval of the March 9, 2023 minutes by Vice-Chair Harris. Sheriff Heldman seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously. Yes- 7, No- 0, Absent- 3.

B. Chair Report

Chair Stanforth welcome guests, welcome new member of the Commission, Chief Robert Chabali. Chair Stanforth mentioned the Ohio Fallen Peace Officer Memorial was held the week prior here at the academy on May 4th, 2023.

C. Continuing Professional Training Committee Report

Sheriff Heldman stated the CPT Committee meeting was held prior to the Commission meeting. Discussion regarding 2024 CPT survey concerning potential courses and topics. Modules one and two of CPT legal update curriculum have been completed and posted to OPOTA Online. Additional modules are forthcoming.

Director Holcomb added the CPT surveys have a QR code and there are also sheets that officers in attendance can take back with them to their departments. The survey asks two questions: 1) what type of CPT topics are we interested in statewide for 2024, and 2) what type of new in-person training would you like to see OPOTA develop in the next coming year? He stated they are already receiving survey responses. The survey started about a month ago and they are anticipating that by July, OPOTA will have a large number of responses. He advised to have guests take the CPT surveys back to their agencies.

Chair Stanforth asked if there was anything further?

Sheriff Heldman stated there was nothing further.

Chair Stanforth stated to move on to the curriculum committee report.

D. Curriculum Committee Report

Sheriff Heldman reported a curriculum committee meeting was held earlier in the morning. The staff presented the basic academy topics for approval with anticipated release date of July 1, 2023 Sheriff Heldman informed for peace officer basic training there were six lesson plans updated. Private security basic training had four lesson plans updated. There were three lesson plans updated for corrections basic training and jailer basic training also had three updates that added one hour. Lastly, he informed no other hours were added on the other courses. All of this is part of the five-year review, which is either legislation or ORC driven.

Motion: A motion for the approval of the curriculum update by Sheriff Heldman, Ms. Carol O'Brien seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously. Yes- 7, No-0, Absent- 3.

Director Holcomb wanted to bring attention to the full Commission as he did to the curriculum subcommittee, the amount of work that's been going on. He mentioned the mission and guidance AG Yost provided was to thoroughly review all lesson plans. He also acknowledged the curriculum design staff and the legal staff who are doing an excellent job in support of the curriculum review.

Chair Stanforth stated that the work that is being done is not always seen, but it's very important and he appreciates all that the staff does. Chair Stanforth asked if there was anything further on the curriculum committee?

Sheriff Heldman stated there was nothing further.

E. House Committee Report

Chair Stanforth asked Colonel Jones if there was a House Committee report?

Commissioner Colonel Jones stated nothing to report from the House Committee.

F. Legislative Committee Report

Chair Stanforth asked if there is a Legislative report?

Director Holcomb announced that Lt. Fitsko was absent and that there was no update.

G. Commission and Academy Report

Chair Stanforth stated we could move on to the Directors' report.

Director Holcomb welcomed guests and everyone in attendance. He advised there had been staff changes since the last meeting as well as the retirement of the previous Assistant Executive Director. He introduced Thomas Quinlan as the new Assistant Executive Director, who is recognizable as the retired Chief of Police for the City of Columbus. He also introduced Denise Becerra who is the new Administrative Assistant to Director Holcomb and the Commission. Director Holcomb also introduced new Advanced Training instructors, Robert Graziano and Dave Durkin. Director Holcomb advised that OPOTA continues to fill advanced training staff positions, bringing them up to the level we need to maintain our training. He explained there are a couple openings for advanced training and hopefully at the

next meeting they will be filled. Director Holcomb advised about the recent departures of Instructor Kyle Groves and retirement of Kim Buehler who was the State Certification Exam Coordinator. Judy Wilson has transferred into the position of SCE Coordinator and is now responsible for all of those duties.

Director Holcomb explained updates on the OPOTA portal. The portal is the way that OPOTA/C is working with all of our partners out in the field, all 960 agencies. He affirmed that the portal is the place to register for in-person classes and access copies of individual records. He stated it makes it easier for individuals to obtain records that they previously had to make a public record request to obtain.

He mentioned that Sheriff Heldman talked about CPT updates. Of interest, CPT offers 16 hours of agency-elected training. He confirmed that OPOTC has received a large number of agency and 3rd party approval requests. Director Holcomb advised that last year in 2022 OPOTC received 392 applications for 3rd party pre-approvals for the entire year. He confirmed that as of today, OPOTC has received 437 pre-approval requests. Dr. Wilson and her team turn these around very quickly, but they ask for 30 days advance notice to get those reviewed.

Director Holcomb confirmed the Legal Updates video content that Chief Heldman talked about is up and running. The legal updates were challenging because there were so many changes to Senate Bill 288. He stated that the first two sessions are online and the others should be up by the end of this month.

The online video training for the 8 hours of mandated CPT required by the Commission will be fully available on OPOTA online. The written curriculum for those topics is available via OHLEG. Any individual with OHLEG access, who might want to use the OPOTC curriculum for legal updates, search and seizure, as well as school threat safety can go there to get the written curriculum. The 2023 CPT website has been available since January, which now includes the FAQ's as well as the list of the pre-approved OPOTA courses that have been approved for CPT credit.

Director Holcomb reiterated the importance of the surveys to get officers input from the field. He stated that we want the input of the law enforcement community so we can get direction on what Ohio Law Enforcement thinks is good and necessary training for the state of Ohio.

Director Holcomb stated that there is a packet labeled "The IADLEST" Ohio Post Audit. Attorney General Yost wanted to take a look at the OPOTC side of the house to see how things were run and where we could make improvements. This information is provided to everyone now to digest over the next two months so we can have a more in-depth conversation in July. The International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement

Standards and Training “IADLEST” is an excellent organization who did a wonderful job and issued this report for our review.

Lastly, the 2023 Law Enforcement Conference for the Attorney General is coming up on Tuesday and Wednesday, October 24th and 25th at the Hyatt Regency Conference Center. All the workshop submissions were received and the staff will start looking over all the workshops to determine which of them will be presented.

The Gold Star Academy program continues. Attorney General Yost and Director Holcomb attended Toledo Police Academy presenting them with their Gold Star. With the Toledo Police Academy being added, that now makes twenty of our basic peace officer academies that have accomplished the STAR designation. Director Holcomb continues his travels around the state promoting the good things that OPOTA and OPOTC are doing which includes the portal and the SF400/SF401’s electronic submission process.

Director of Professional Standards Courtney DeLong explained that the portal has launched the SF400/SF401 electronic submission. Agency commanding officers, admin staff, etc. will need to contact Courtney to set up the agency roster authority for that agency. As law enforcement agencies know, an SF400 is submitted when you hire somebody new and the SF401 is submitted when a person leaves your agency. Those forms previously came to OPOTC by fax or by e-mail, and were entered by Courtney’s staff by hand which is a very archaic way of doing things. Now the forms are submitted electronically and will update the officer’s records, as well as agency records automatically. This helps to streamline all the work. Annual rosters will be done through the portal later this year. Also, CPT completions will be reported through the portal process, allowing agencies to submit for reimbursement. That should be up and running as a component by the end of June. Director Holcomb explained that the portal is the centralized location to communicate with OPOTA and to access all forms.

Advanced Training Director Scott Spangler advised that there has been immense staff turnover with new people coming on that have been an excellent asset to OPOTA, and there are still spots that need to be filled with additional instructors. Robert Graziano is new to OPOTA and brings with him a wealth of knowledge at the state, federal and military level. The driving track repairs have been for the most part completed and the driving facility is booked out through November. The update on the range is still on the schedule to be converted to a completely indoor range. We plan this year to have that process started.

Principal Assistant Attorney General Cynthia Peterson informed that legal has been very busy reviewing lesson plans. Deana and Shelli look at every single lesson plan, whether it is online, basic, advanced, or a refresher. They both look at every word of the law making sure that it’s updated. They look at every case law holding, making sure it is within our jurisdiction and that it is relevant. We look at every fact pattern, holding it up against the law

making sure it is appropriately used. They are working endlessly on that and I thank both of them for what they do with the lesson plans. OPOTA/C continues to receive an enormous amount of public record requests. OPOTA continues to be the leader, compared to all sections in the AG's office, receiving more Public Record Requests than any other AGO sections. Recently, some of those requests have been for lesson plans going back decades. A lot of times it is media related requests, SF400s, and appointment histories. We are very careful to safeguard law enforcement information that should not be given out. We are also careful regarding the curriculum, safeguarding the test and answer keys. Those are two things exempt from public records. There is very little that we can say is exempt from public records, but those two things we can exempt. Director Holcomb added that the curriculum assessment is a key component of what we do here. We continue to get away from the old process and continue with the new process to ensure the quality of training. Mr. Yost allowed us to bring staff attorneys onboard to do more professional work and ensure that everything we do continues to improve. That's what we strive to achieve.

Director Holcomb announced that Lou Agosta will be retiring May 31 and has been a key component to the Ohio Fallen Peace Officer Memorial as well as the CALEA Coordination Manager and thanked him for his work. The Fallen Peace Officer Memorial event recognized eight (8) officers who had been lost in the line of duty over the last several years from 2020 to 2022. There were also seven (7) historical fallen officers (from 1918 to 1945) that were recognized.

Assistant Director Thomas Quinlan informed that the regional training programs close to home approach are more responsive to the different regions around Ohio. Currently, there are a total of five (5) regional providers. He also stated that their MOU's are due to expire, and they are in the process of being reworked and extended for an additional two years. He also mentioned there is currently a request for a 6th regional provider in the Northwest Territory or Northwest Ohio area. Mr. Quinlan also informed that regionals are offering a lot of instructor level classes locally to be able to fit the needs for subject control and firearms and other areas that are important. He added that there is also a first line supervision training for regional and local, which is 32-hour course. The regional programming has the support of the AG and there is a commitment for it to be the model moving forward as well as long-term. Lastly, Mr. Quinlan mentioned there is a virtual reality platform that was started as a pilot to test out, they started out with the "Chet" scenario and built a program on a professional level. The virtual program is more responsive verses sitting in a lecture. The programs would be a total of six which would also include lessons dealing with adults that are in mental distress, teen violence, de-escalation and crisis intervention. He informed that they are working with Ohio University and that there's grant funding from the AG to cover the script writing, production and the post production. He stated he hopes to have them out by the end of the year.

Chairman Stanforth asked if this programming will be available online portal?

Assistant Director Thomas Quinlan responded that it will not be available due to needing to physically wear the goggles. This program will be a 360 degree in-person training where they will be able see everything that is happening in that environment and will be more immersive.

Director Holcomb stated OPOTA continues to build the programs with the regional providers who are doing an excellent job. Director Holcomb believes that the Commission will probably endorse these courses through CPT in several years down the road. He also mentioned that facilities around the state will be able to offer these trainings to peace officers around the entire state.

Chairman Stanforth asked if there were any update for correction officers?

Director Holcomb stated that all that information has gone out for the correction officers. He informed that it is posted and has been available since April. Director Holcomb asked if there was any feedback?

Director of Professional Standards Courtney DeLong stated that courses are being conducted and that they are still receiving applications. She added that a lot of Sheriffs are coming together to get their deputies trained.

Chairman Stanforth stated to move onto new business.

H. New Business

Director Holcomb explained that there is a new form labeled SF401 which is the separation form. This refers back to the portal process where we would like everyone to go to the portal to submit the SF400's and the SF401's. He stated that as of now, the portal doesn't show these separations when you do a public record request. We have been asked from our IT department to take a look at it and see if the Commission is interested in having this information publicly facing and available. We can also make changes to this form if needed. Additionally, this form will be discussed as old business at the next commission meeting.

Chairman Stanforth asked, so it won't be implemented until after the next commission meeting?

Director Holcomb confirmed that it would not be until at least after July if we decided to support this. This form will be under the July agenda under old business. Director Holcomb asked if his staff wanted to add anything?

Director of Professional Standards Courtney DeLong added that it is handy for agencies who are looking to do background checks as they could quickly review all that information versus calling OPOTA and requesting forms, which then goes through public records process

taking additional time. It will be beneficial as you are trying to bring on officers to your department to see more of their work history.

Chairman Stanforth asked if there was more new business?

Clark State Police Academy, Paul Weber stated that he was not aware of anything that OPOTA offered to commanders to verify if people that attend their academy have been kicked out of other academies. He would like to see something to advise them of the reason they were kicked out or if they left on bad terms. He stated he does not want people who have been kicked of his academy trying to attempt to go to another academy without the academy knowing the reason why they were terminated.

Director Holcomb stated that OPOTA is taking baby steps and is continuing to develop the portal. Director Holcomb also mentioned that these are the type of things that we are going to review in future phases. He agreed with Commander Weber and that potentially it would be a very good thing that the portal could offer and could be developed in the future.

Chairman Stanforth asked Mr. Weber if he currently knows if someone was enrolled in another Academy?

Director Holcomb stated that Courtney Delong could probably answer any questions.

Director of Professional Standards Courtney Delong advised that OPOTA does keep track when a student has enrolled in an academy and if they were not successful. There is no process to let other people know that information, but she will check with the OPOTA IT Department to see if there could be a function for that. She also stated that there is potential for it, but it will take time to have that function.

Chairman Stanforth asked if a student registers and then withdraws, does OPOTA get notified?

Director of Professional Standards Courtney DeLong stated that OPOTA does get notified and it could be for various reasons either they dropped out or were dismissed or failed, it all gets noted.

Clark State Police Academy, Paul Weber stated he had a situation with an individual who advised she dropped out from another academy due to a family illness. He explained that information was not true and that he found out that it was due to falsifying documents. He stated that if he knew that information, he would have not accepted that student.

Director of Professional Standards Courtney Delong asked if Mr. Weber asks that information when they apply?

Clark State Police Academy, Paul Weber confirmed that he does ask that information.

Director Holcomb stated that in the future, there will be so many good things in the portal as it continues to expand. He explained that the portal will be the gateway for everything and that Commanders will have access to it, as well as law enforcement agencies.

Commander Bryan Cook stated he is disappointed that as a new commander he was here with his superintendent and talked about VR training and that there was no support and there were no funds. He stated that five months ago all he heard was that there was no support. Commander Cook stated that he appreciates that OPOTA is now working on this. He also mentioned that when people register for OPOTA online classes and if the class is full they're put on a wait list, but there is no follow up or a true wait list. Commander Cook states that he wishes there was something better than what is provided, like an email or notification.

Director Holcomb answered that internally OPOTA is able to see a full class, as well as the wait list of names. Director Holcomb mentioned to Scott Spangler that maybe it is a manual thing where Donna or someone could reach out to the individual. He also mentioned that it is probably not an automatic computer function.

Advanced Training Director Scott Spangler stated that there are numerous reasons why that does not work. He stated that there are situations where the next person on the waitlist will get enrolled due to a spot opening up. Scott Spangler stated that it reflects internally and OPOTA is currently working with the IT Department to have this function work properly.

Director Holcomb stated that with computer systems, that the process continues to be built and we find these types of issues that are being mentioned. We hope something can be done in the future as the portal continues to grow. Director Holcomb stated that there are other things that take priority and this will definitely go on our list.

I. Old Business

Director Holcomb explained the Job Task Analysis which was mentioned at the last Commission meeting continues to be discussed about physical fitness standards and job task duties for entry level peace officers. He stated that the Commission had voted to recommend to the Attorney General to support the completion of a Job Task Analysis which was forwarded downtown, and Mr. Yost was completely and fully behind getting that done. He also stated that there is a meeting next week with key senior staff of the of the Attorney General's Office to get it moving and to start the process in order to have it done.

Chairman Stanforth stated that the goal is to be able to extract a lot of information. He mentioned that this is the future on how training will be developed.

Director Holcomb agreed that the Job Task Analysis will not just be for physical fitness standards, it's also for what is appropriate for cruiser officers, which is typically where they start out at after the academy. He stated as well as what type of physical fitness standards are needed, also of what frontline peace officers do every day, or if that has changed in today's climate from five years ago.

Chief Harris thanked Tom Quinlan for that information on the virtual reality he brought up to the Commission and stated how important this new technology of using mixed, augmented reality and how that relates to advancing law enforcement. He stated that other agencies aside from those that are regionals have been involved in this technology for some time, such as Cuyahoga Community College. He stated that they have been training a lot of police officers throughout that region, including the basic academy and using that as well as utilizing surveys and determining how effective it is. He mentioned that the results have been absolutely amazing.

Chairman Stanforth asked if there was any additional old business? Hearing no response, he advised moving on to the last agenda item, open forum.

J. Open Forum

Executive Director of Oasis, Ted Owens stated that he previously attended the January 10th Commission meeting and gave a brief overview of why there is a need for another firearms course and a semi-automatic rifle course for private investigators and private security. He stated this course is needed for protection, as well as police officers who work for his company and also due to the current political situation in Washington. Mr. Owens stated that they are currently utilizing an AR pistol, which they will be losing at the end of the month on May 31st due to the ATF now reclassifying that as a short-barreled rifle. He also mentioned that DPS and PISG allows them to carry rifles since 2016 as long as their companies come up with a training qualification course to get people qualified. Mr. Owens asks to have OPOTC to allow OPOTA to provide this course to add it to the back of their license to carry a rifle. Currently, on the back of their license its only for a revolver, semi-auto, shotguns, those are the only three categories. If this is offered by OPOTC for a semi-automatic rifle course we can put that fourth category on there. He also mentioned that if they are not qualified and have a textbook shooting, their insurance companies could potentially have a lawsuit due to not being qualified to carry this. He asks that this be available to they can be covered from civil liability.

Chief Harris asked which tools will they be losing?

Ted Owens answered they will be losing an AR Pistol, which now will be reclassified as a short-barreled rifle.

Director Holcomb advised that OPOTA attorneys have been talking with the DPS attorneys who are looking at both sides of this, and is currently being discussed.

Department of Public Safety (BMV Investigations) Sol Lopez stated she is concerned that law enforcement officers are having issues with citizens and not knowing their identity. Ms. Lopez mentioned that the citizens that are being pulled over do not have the needed documentation to register vehicles therefore the vehicle title is registered to an LLC. She is requesting to stop fraudulent LLC's from registering vehicles in the State of Ohio. Ms. Lopez stated that her department receives constant phone calls from police officers not knowing what to do when they have a citizen pulled over and are unable to determine appropriate registration.

Ms. Carol O'Brien stated this Commission might not be the right people to talk to, but that BSSA, Ohio Association of Chief of Police or Director Andy Wilson would be very responsive and be able to help those agents who might be calling for information about this problem.

Director Holcomb stated that a member from the OACP is present and he might be able to help as well.

Advanced Training Director Scott Spangler advised to send him some information and this topic might be a training course that they could offer at OPOTA.

Chief Joe Freyhof OACP stated that discussions have been started in regards to CPT coming up that their committee. He stated that OACP is offering themselves as a partner and will start sending someone to these Commission meetings from here on out. He mentioned that they have six districts for the OACP and have memberships of two or more for each district in the committee. He stated that these members are always willing to answer questions, answer surveys and encourages OPOTC to reach out to them. He informed that their top priority is training and their concerns are still communication with officers coming out of the academy. He stated that he conducted a communication module for the first line supervisors and was shocked at the comments on the evaluations. He referred to the basic communication skills set and the stress that the supervisors are experiencing. He mentioned the officers are not aware of the physiological responses that their bodies go through when they are in the fight or flight response. He also pointed out maintaining the open enrollment which is a valuable tool for agencies. He mentioned the OCJS grant which allowed them to put together for academy cadets, sworn programs, internships which was put together for hiring recruitment and retention. He stated that they are a stepping stone for officers and need to be part of the conversation.

Director Holcomb agreed that he has seen smaller agencies where chiefs and sheriffs are taking day to day calls, and thanked them on doing so.

Chairman Stanforth stated that the open enrollment now needs applicants and that process did not play out like they thought it would 25 years ago. He mentioned that open enrollment has provided training and the opportunity for those who did not before. This now allows them to market themselves and OPOTC needs to be more involved in recruiting those officers with the training to find a place for them. Chairman Stanforth does not believe it will be taken away but mentioned that it does need to be discussed.

K. Adjournment

Motion: A motion to adjourn was made by Chairman Stanforth. The motion was seconded by Ms. Carol O'Brien. A vote was taken and passed unanimously. Yes- 7, No-0, Absent- 3.

The meeting stands Adjourned.

Time: 11:38 a.m.



Chair Vernon Stanforth

These transcripts are not verbatim. Audio recordings are available upon request.