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**Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission Meeting  
was held on Thursday, May 13, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. at  
the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy-Cafeteria  
1650 State Rte 56 S.W., London, Ohio 43140**

**Minutes – May 13, 2021**

**A. Opening**

**Call to Order**

**Chair Stanforth** called the meeting to order at 10:13 a.m. Thanking everybody in attendance and asking that they stand as Sheriff Heldman lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Long took the roll call. There were 7 present and 3 was absent. There was a quorum.

**Commission members present**

Sheriff Vernon Stanforth, Chair  
Chief Clayton Harris, Vice-Chair  
Ms. Leah Amstutz  
Colonel Richard Fambro  
Sheriff Michael Heldman  
Chief George Kral  
Ms. Carol O'Brien

**Commission members absent**

Ms. Wynette Carter-Smith  
Lieutenant James Fitsko  
SAC Eric Smith

**Staff Attendees**

Ms. Jill Cury-OPOTC  
Ms. Courtney Delong-OPOTC  
Mr. Richard Hardy-Director of Professional Standards and Education-OPOTC  
Mr. Dwight Holcomb-Executive Director-OPOTC/A  
Mr. Zachary Holscher-Assistant Attorney/AGO

Ms. Donna Long-OPOTC Staff / Secretary to Commission  
Ms. Sharon Montgomery-OSU Risk Institute Distracted Driving Initiative  
Mr. Dan Ozbolt-Director of Advanced Training-OPOTA  
Mr. Michael Walton-Associate Assistant Attorney/AGO

### **Guest Attendees**

Chuck Jones-Ohio State Highway Patrol

## **B. Chairperson Report**

### **Chair Vernon Stanforth**

**Chair Stanforth** thanked the Commission members for their efforts to be present. The Chair had nothing to report.

**Chair Stanforth** welcomed the guests who joined the meeting. The minutes for March 13, 2021 are still in the process and will be voted on at the next meeting

**Chair Stanforth** reported the Chair had nothing to report, concluding the Chairperson Report.

## **C. Curriculum Committee Report**

### **Sheriff Michael Heldman, Committee Chair**

**Curriculum Chair Heldman** stated they met this morning and Mr. Hardy gave a brief overview of the hours and the changes that need to take place.

**Mr. Hardy** brought before the Curriculum Committee the basic peace officer training curriculum and the refresher training curriculum. There were requirements based on legislative changes and some Supreme Court rulings. These affected 6 curriculums in the basic peace officer basic training and 2 in the refresher training. We've also clarified some language in the testing of push-ups to match the current video that OPOTC has put out. And that's really on the count of the push-ups, how they're counted. The Supreme Court ruling or decision on Torres versus Madrid, on what constitutes a seizure caused us to have to address some curriculum, as well as the House Bill 1, regarding pregnant or postpartum women, which passed at the end of 2020. There were no changes in hours or in student performance objectives that were necessitated by legislative action.

**Sheriff Heldman** stated the Curriculum Committee reviewed this with Mr. Hardy and a motion was passed to support the changes.

**Chair Stanforth** stated he was concerned with the timing, it was his understanding that changes were already on the Governor's desk. We are making these changes and other changes are coming and will be signed as emergency legislation soon.

**Chief Kral** responded that is what he heard as well.

**Chair Stanforth** stated which means we may just get this done and there will be changes again. You are ready for the potential changes, you know what those are going to be?

**Richard Hardy** stated they were aware and ready for it. It's going to be a matter of bringing it back before the Curriculum Committee and the full Commission again.

**Ms. O'Brien** believes that some of the changes that were proposed in the curriculum will still be in effect even with the emergency legislation, correct? It's not a full wash yet.

**Richard Hardy** stated correct it will be in the basic curriculum.

**Chair Stanforth** responded it'll be in the basic, but I'm thinking about the 34,000 people already out there that need to be updated with this.

**Richard Hardy** stated he was sure they would be working on a new video to distribute to address the update.

**Chair Stanforth** said people have the potential of making an arrest a year, the one arrest they make could be somebody with these challenges. We appreciate that you are on top of it.

The changes upon approval would take effect on Sunday, March 15, 2021. It would then change the basic peace officer curriculum code to BAS041b and refresher code would change to REF032b. If approved, these would go to the full Commission and if it's approved, would become effective March 15, 2021.

**Curriculum Chair Heldman** thanked Director Hardy and the Curriculum Committee moved to approve the changes made under the emergency update.

**MOTION:**

**Sheriff Heldman recommended to approve the changes made in the emergency curriculum update. The motion was seconded by Chief Harris. Hearing no discussion, a vote was taken and passed unanimously. Yes-7, No-0 and Absent-3.**

**Committee Chair Heldman** thanked **Director Hardy** for the update. That concluded the Curriculum Report.

#### **D. House Committee Report**

**Colonel Fambro, Committee Chair**

Committee Chair Fambro stated the House Committee had nothing to report. That concluded the House Committee Report.

#### **E. Legislative Committee Report**

**Lt. James Fitsko, Committee Chair**

**Chair Stanforth** asked without Lt. Fitsko is there any legislative issues that need to be brought to the attention of the Commission? There was nothing to report for the Legislative Committee Report.

#### **F. Continuing Professional Training (CPT) Committee Report**

**Sheriff Michael Heldman, Committee Chair**

**Committee Chair Heldman** stated the Continuing Professional Training had nothing to report. Thank concluded the Continuing Professional Training Report.

### **Staff Reports**

#### **G. Commission and Academy Updates**

**Dwight Holcomb, Executive Director**

**Executive Director Holcomb** said good morning everyone. Thank you for coming out. I'm glad we are able to meet in person and to hold the May Commission meeting. First off, I'd like to announce a couple of our staff members who have been brought on since our last meeting. Ms. Carol Simon joined us as one of our new certification officers, and Mr. Deano McNeil came aboard as one of our new curriculum development staff. We're also in the process right now of offering a new attorney position to assist Cindy Peterson. We hope to have our new attorney on board coming up in June. And we're also looking right now for and conducting interviews next week for the position of Director of Curriculum Development. Right now, Director of Curriculum Development is Mr. Hardy. All of that staff falls underneath his domain. We're going to be breaking that staff down under the new section, the new Director and then also bring over from our Advanced Training side, our new e-learning curriculum development person, so all curriculum development is going to be underneath a new house. So hopefully that'll be up and running here by the middle of summer, hopefully in July meeting we will be able to introduce you to that new person.

**Chair Stanforth**, asked if that would be under Mr. Hardy?

**Dwight Holcomb** stated that'll be a completely new section, and that person will report directly to me. So, we'll have, in a sense, three directors. They would be Mr. Hardy,

Mr Ozbolt, and then the new person. So, it will be a whole new division. One of the things that is unfortunate in the sense of spanning control, Mr. Hardy has one of the largest numbers of staff that works for him. So, this is also going to help span out control and supervision of all the staff.

**Dwight Holcomb** stated the State certification exams continued on into March, with 52 and in April there were 116. In May we're doing 112, in April for our last full month of Pearson Vue testing, we did 74 cadets. So, in the last three months we've had 354 cadets take the state certification exam. So, that continues well. We'll be fully invested in Pearson Vue as we get into the summer. Then our testing center here at the academy will be closed up because everything will be done by Pearson Vue at that point.

**Dwight Holcomb** state advanced training continues to add classes. On July 6th they will start adding more seats to classes. We've been maintaining everything since last August in a covid environment. This is our largest classroom. We can only have 30 people in here at one time with covid seating. Come July, we're hoping to increase that to 60 in this room, we're going to go from 6-foot distance to a 3-foot distance for all of our seats and all of our classes. So, we're hoping that we'll continue to add more seats to continue to add on to professional training.

**Dwight Holcomb** stated there was 1 other thing we've been working on, and the attorney general was really interested in. We've been able to be successful in getting out the regional training. Most all classes from 2019 and before were held either here or at Richfield. We are now in 26 different locations that we've identified around the state that we've put on classes or we are putting on classes later this year. So, that continues to grow as we find good locations, with the right facilities, with the right instructors that we can reach out to teach in those areas.

**Dwight Holcomb** stated this goes a long way in helping to cut down costs for agencies. Because if an agency can send somebody to something local, they may not have all the per-diems, the housing, the meals that they have to put in towards training and focus on getting training. And then hopefully they can go home at night and return the next day for training. Like I said, more than 26 different locations now.

**Dwight Holcomb** said the other thing that we're looking at and we continue to grow is our adjunct instructors. We've had over 80 different names now that we've been using since August to assist us in instructional skills and all the different classes that we put on. Again, that becomes very specific because, we're putting something on in the Toledo area and we don't want to have an adjunct coming from Cincinnati. So, there's a lot of balancing there that Mr. Ozbolt and his staff are doing to find the right instructors and the right location.

**Dwight Holcomb** stated that's 80 different names from a number of different things and his group continues to grow the list names, and they are adjunct instructors. So, we utilize a lot of good people from a lot of different fields to help us with all of instruction courses that we put on.

**Dwight Holcomb** stated eOPOTA is changing. It's been around for a very, very long time. It's been a great location for agency and officers to go online to get training. But, a year ago, we started looking at a new format and new platform, and we're moving forward on that with some great success. We've upgraded from what was known as inquisitive to inquisitive pro, and this is going to allow officers to no longer need to basically go through OHLEG to access this. They'll be able to go straight into the new OPOTA online. They'll be able to set their own passwords, make those changes and be able to get some great training right there.

**Dwight Holcomb** stated we are looking to shut down, and this notice has been out on many different platforms to close down eOPOTA on Monday, May 31st at 11:59 p.m., our I.T. division will then be taking all the records that officers have in eOPOTA and migrating those over to the new system. So, it's going to be very seamless. It's going to take about a week or so to get all that done, and we will do some testing. And then hopefully by mid-June, the attorney general will be announcing the new platform and that we're up and operational and live. A lot of people have been involved in this. Our IT department has been just fabulous on this. One of our staff attorneys, Doug Dumolt, has been right there from the very beginning, helping to make sure that we're now in the right direction. So, a lot of time, a lot of effort to upgrade this to a new platform. When we launched the new platform, we have been recording what we're calling many roll call briefings, snippets of information and training that be 8 to maybe 12 minutes in length, so that peace officers, when they get onto their computer or they get on to their phone, can pull something up and maybe in a very short time get some refresher training on all kinds of different topics. We've taken this to a new level. If you've seen the old eOPOTA where you get onto a class and it is a PowerPoint presentation and a monotone voice that was behind it, these are all being recorded very professionally. We've got some great talking heads and great subject matter experts that are providing us with this educational material and that will then be getting placed onto the new OPOTA Online. We will most likely launch with a number of these courses and then over the next several weeks following that, we will launch some new ones, so that we can get people to come back and continue to be attracted with the new OPOTA Online. We're working with one of our staff attorneys to do one of our first online training live sessions coming up towards the end of June. Bridget Coontz, one of our staff attorneys, a section head, who is just fabulous in public records, has offered to do a 1/2 - 3-hour Online session on public records. And we're putting that on as a live broadcast on the new OPOTA Online, sometime towards the end of June. More information coming out on that. That's going to be very exciting to peace officers,

deputies and troopers over to this new format to see what it looks like and how it works. So, we're very excited about where that is heading for us.

**Dwight Holcomb** responded last week and this week, we've been celebrating National Police Week, and it was just a week that we were out here on this venue honoring the fallen officers, deputies of 2019 and 2020. The celebration of the service that law enforcement provides to the country continued. Last Monday night, there was the light up blue police caravan that staged here on our grounds. Attorney general spoke to the group, before they started a 4 ½ hour journey from here over to our transportation to our tactical training center. We went around the track. The group then went down through the town of London, went over to Groveport, from there they went into downtown Columbus and then ended up over at the National Veterans Memorial. About 85 different cruisers from agencies from the Great Lakes down to the Ohio River were all here. It was a wonderful showing. But I'll tell you, one of the things that I found very impressive that I was not expecting, and this kind of brought tears to my eyes as we drove down to the town of London, just down the street as we went through there, the number of people that were standing out along the edge of the street with signs of support, law enforcement. It was fabulous. As we went down Route 665 into the rural part of the county, the people that were standing in their front yards with the children, the signs were amazing. As we went through Groveport, which was the hometown for Chief Ralph Quartier, who was retired recently with the signs of support for his agency and law enforcement was tremendous. It was just a very good showing of support for law enforcement from the rural counties into the big cities and people were there supporting law enforcement.

**Dwight Holcomb.** Stated 1 of the things I'd like to do I close out. I'd like to read into today's minutes the names of the fallen officers that we honored here recently. If you would all stand for this. The fallen officers that we honored last week were.

- Officer Dale J. Woods, Colerain Township Police Department. End of watch: January 7, 2019.
- Detective William L. Brewer, Clermont County Sheriff's Office. End of watch: February 2, 2019.
- Detective Jorge R. Del Rio, Dayton Police Department. End of watch: November 7, 2019.
- Police Officer Kaia Grant, Springdale Police Department. End of watch: March 21, 2020.
- Police Officer, Anthony Dia, Toledo Police Department. End of watch: July 4, 2020.
- Detective James M. Skernivitz, Cleveland Division of Police. End of watch: September 3, 2020.
- Corporal Adam McMillan, Hamilton County Sheriff's Office. End of watch: October 23, 2020.

All of these law enforcement officers have been inscribed outside on our wall of honor and are to be remembered in Ohio law enforcement history. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, that ends my report.

**Chair Stanforth** remembered 1 of the first meetings I attended, remote learning was a discussion and it was said it would never happen on my watch type thing; they need to be sitting in a classroom to learn. Reynoldsburg Police Chief, Jean Miller was Chair and Betty Montgomery was Attorney General. The commission was like, that's never going to happen. Chair Miller was on top. She wanted it to happen and Attorney General Montgomery had the vision of it happening as well. I think it's ironic that today, 20 years later, that system is now antiquated. We're looking at a next generation with our law enforcement training. We have to provide training that's current and relevant. And even the method in which we deliver it has to be more relevant. We can't do it the old way all the time. There're some things the old way helps. But still, we have to be aggressive and be aggressive in our training. So, it's good to hear we're moving forward.

**Dwight Holcomb** said the one thing that our I.T. department is really looking at and trying to make sure that works as well today, the formats are so different. You're not sitting at a desk top all the time, now sitting at laptops. This becomes a platform. And we're trying to make sure that as much as we can, that any device that law enforcement officers are using, they're going to be able to see the strength because they may be in a rural area and they may not have great connectivity and they're using their phones if they can get by this. And that's what we're trying to strive for.

**Executive Director Holcomb** responded that concluded the Commission and Staff Updates Report.

**Chair Stanforth** thanked Director Holcomb.

## **H. New Business**

### **Chair Vernon Stanforth**

The Chair asked if there was any new business to discuss? After Ms. O'Brien's comments below, that concluded the New Business report.

**Carol O'Brien** commented, I don't know how closely legislation is followed, but, House Bill 110, amendment, proposed by Representative Cindy Abrams is providing 15 million dollars for training, one year of CPT mandatory with reimbursement at 50 percent of the law enforcement officers, deputy or troopers salaries, is currently in the budget. If it passes, OPOTA will be taking on the Administration of that and we are getting a total of \$25,000 to get that together, so we've had some conversations with Senior Director of Law Enforcement, Mr. Doug Dumolt, legislative folks in the office



have been having conversations, trying to make sure people understand the \$25,000 to administer a \$15,000,000 process is probably not enough and let them know some of the issues with House Bill 110, you might want to look at it. And if there's any questions you should call the OACP or BSSA because they're the ones who have been involved with all the conversations.

**I. Old Business**

**Chair Vernon Stanforth**

The Chair asked if there was any old business to discuss, hearing none, Chair Stanforth moved to the guest forum.

**J. Guest Forum**

**Chair Vernon Stanforth**

**Chair Stanforth** asked if there were any guests that may be interested in participating in the discussion. Hearing nothing, Chair Stanforth asked if there was anything for the good of the order? Hearing none, the Chair entertained to adjourn. That concluded the guest forum report.

**K. Adjournment Chair**

**Vernon Stanforth**

Hearing nothing further the Chair entertained a motion to adjourn.

**MOTION:**

**Sheriff Heldman made the motion to adjourn. Chief Kral seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned. Yes-7, No-0, Absent-3.**

Time: 11:13 a.m.

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

**Chair Vernon P. Stanforth**

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