



Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission Meeting

Thursday, Feb. 1st, 2024, at 10:00am

Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy

1650 State Rt. 56 S.W., London, Ohio 43140

The meeting was held in the cafeteria.

Minutes – February 1st, 2024

- A. Opening- Call to Order, Chair Sheriff Vernon Stanforth** called meeting to order at 10:08a.m.

Chair Vernon Stanforth led the Pledge of Allegiance.
Ms. Denise Becerra called the roll call.

Commissioners Present:

Chair, Sheriff Vernon Stanforth
Sheriff Michael Heldman
Chief Robert Chabali
Colonel Charles Jones
Lieutenant James Fitsko
Ms. Wynette Carter-Smith

Commissioners Absent:

Vice-Chair, Chief Clayton Harris
Ms. Carol O'Brien
Ms. Leah Amstutz

Ms. Denise Becerra confirmed there was a quorum with 6-Present, 3-Absent

Attorney General Staff in Attendance:

Cynthia Peterson, Principal Assistant Attorney General- OPOTA/C
Nicole Hendrix, Law Clerk- OPOTA/C
Dr. Erica Wilson- Director of Curriculum and Development- OPOTA
Courtney Delong, Assistant Executive Director of Professional Standards – OPOTA/C
Scott Spangler, Director of Advanced Training – OPOTA
Alexis Miller, Deputy Director of Curriculum- OPOTC
Art DeLeon, Deputy Director of Professional Standards-OPOTA/C
Brittany Brashears, CPT Manager- OPOTA/C
Elizabeth Fulton, OPOTC Staff
Judith Wilson, OPOTC Staff
Denise Becerra - OPOTC Staff
Heather Cloutier, OPOTC Staff
Kristen Samworth, OPOTC Staff
Reverend Eddie Parker III, Community Engagement Liaison- OPOTA/C
Teresa Coffey - OPOTC Staff
Arienne Fauber, Certification Specialist- OPOTA/C
Carol Simon, Certification Specialist- OPOTA/C
Barbara Cain, OPOTC Staff
Susan Boggs, Project Coordinator- OPOTA/C
Richard Butsko, Assistant Executive Director of Advance Training- OPOTA/C
Deana Leffler, Senior Assistant Attorney General – OPOTA/C
Shelli Brock, Associate Attorney General- OPOTA/C
Robert Strausbaugh, Regional Provider Program Manager
Jill Curry, Curriculum Design Specialist, OPOTA/C
Michael Walton – Senior Assistant Attorney General - AGO
Thomas Quinlan, Assistant Executive Director- OPOTA/C

Guests in Attendance:

Commander Bryan Cook- Greene County Academy
Captain Jeff Davis- Ohio State Highway Patrol Academy
Major Mike Kemmer- Ohio State Highway Patrol Academy
Deputy Scott Paur- Franklin County Sheriff's Office
Sgt. David Coleman- Franklin County Sheriff's Office
Officer Justin Hibbitt- Professional Development Office- Westerville Division of Police

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

Motion: A motion for the approval of the November 9th, 2023, minutes by Sheriff Michael Heldman. Ms. Wynette Carter- Smith seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously. Yes- 6, No- 0, Absent- 3.

B. Chair Report

Chair Stanforth welcomed guests and asked everyone to identify themselves to know who was in attendance. He stated he did not have anything to report.

C. Continuing Professional Training Committee Report

Sheriff Heldman stated there was not a CPT meeting held today, however there were updates on lesson plans that needed to be communicated.

Director of Curriculum Dr. Erica Wilson stated that the written lesson plans are now available on OHLEG. The Crisis Intervention Lesson Plan is missing, it's currently being worked on, and it's anticipated to be released next week. The OPOTA ONLINE courses are not online yet due to the E-Learning Design Specialist position still being vacant. Interviews have been scheduled for next week. She requested everyone to be patient with the ONLINE platform however, the written lesson plans are available for CPT. Departments can submit their pre-approval to facilitate their own CPT courses as well.

Chair Stanforth asked how that process has functioned so far.

Director of Curriculum Dr. Erica Wilson stated the process is going very well and the turnaround time is approximately a week. If they must go through a legal review it can take up to two weeks, which is the reason why we ask agencies to submit the information 30 days ahead of time before they facilitate their courses.

Chair Stanforth asked if the 2023 CPT class number was still valid for the 2024 calendar year, or will it have to be resubmitted.

Director of Curriculum Dr. Erica Wilson confirmed that they will have to resubmit for the current year based upon the OAC. There is a new expedited form where the lesson plan can be resubmitted. Once the form and the information are reviewed you will then be issued a 2024 class number. This form is only one page long versus the old version which was several pages long.

Chair Stanforth agreed that she makes a good point. He states that agencies think that once they receive a CPT class number that is continuous.

Director of Curriculum Dr. Erica Wilson stated that is incorrect. Every year they need to resubmit, therefore they can be provided with the class number. If they are resubmitting information, she does recommend for each agency review statutes and case law as well and have it updated.

Robert Chabali informed that his agency submitted three pre-approvals, which were reviewed and returned quickly.

Director of Curriculum Dr. Erica Wilson wanted to thank Alexis Miller, the Deputy Director of Curriculum who is handling the CPT pre-approvals.

Sheriff Heldman stated that was all on CPT.

D. Curriculum Committee Report

Sheriff Heldman confirmed there wasn't a curriculum meet held today. However, there are updates that's need to be communicated.

Director of Curriculum Dr. Erica Wilson stated that they are currently working on emergency updates for the year 2023. They were working on CPT for 2023 and the emergency updates did delay everything else. She anticipates having the emergency updates done within the next couple of months. They are currently working on House Bill 33, Senate Bill 16, and House Bill 191. If any other emergency updates occur, they will be included in this release as well.

Sheriff Heldman stated that at the end of last year there was an enormous number of agencies filing their officers CPT hours during the last weeks of the year. He asked if that created a backlog for the staff.

Assistant Executive Director of Standards and Curriculum Courtney DeLong stated that due to the agency's late filing it did create a backlog on OPOTA. Her staff did work with those agencies to submit the information. She confirmed that last year was phenomenal. Due to being able to submit the information via online, as of January 1st they were able to compile that information and know that there were 1000 officers out of compliance.

CPT Manager Brittany Brashears reiterated that 2023 was a phenomenal year. Due to reporting being a new process, it was a learning experience for both sides. There were 1,081 officers that were non-compliant, 91 approved extensions, 38 agencies who did not enter any information into the CPT Portal. As of Jan. 31st, 2024, there are 771 officers that are non-compliant, however, these numbers continue to decrease daily.

Director Quinlan stated that he will be introducing new staff shortly. Brittany Brashears is a long-term staff member, however, has a new position. There was a new position created, CPT Manager, which we now have once point of contact. She will be primarily responsible for handling everything that involves CPT.

CPT Manager Brittany Brashears stated that in prior years OPOTA had no knowledge of who was in cease functioning until staff entered all the information one by one. As well as cease functioning letters being sent mid-year versus now, the cease functioning letters were sent out the second week of January. Therefore, those agencies who did not report their CPT hours were now reporting them. This new method has been more efficient and accurate with CPT reporting.

Chair Stanforth reiterated that those agencies are not reporting CPT hours. He asked how many agencies have not reported any CPT hours for 2023.

CPT Manager Brittany Brashears advised that there were 38 agencies that did not enter any information in the portal. It seemed as if there was a misunderstanding with the agency, stating that the agencies claimed they did not have any knowledge about this new system of reporting.

Chair Stanforth asked if the 38 agencies included the 1081 officers who were non-compliant.

CPT Manager Brittany Brashears confirmed. She stated as of Jan. 1st, 2024, the system has shut down and agencies can no longer submit the CPT hours for 2023. After that date staff need to enter information manually. She confirmed that agencies are still working on sending in information for their agency. Another reason we have officers in cease functioning status is due to no longer being with an agency and that agency never submitted their SF401 or small details like that.

Director Quinlan added that in 2023 OPOTA implemented a new process of sending out 30-day, 60 days, and 90-day notices prior to the end of the year. These letters advised them that they were non-compliant, therefore they had plenty of notice. Our staff made numerous amounts of phone calls and kept up with extension requests. As of December 15th, staff no longer accept extensions. There were 125 requests received, 110 of those requests were approved. Of the 1081 officers who were in cease functioning status, approximately 324 of those officers were full time officers and the rest were part time or reserved. Some of those officers were in cease functioning from 2022 and 2023 therefore, he doesn't believe they're active at this point. He stated that the number of active officers that had not reported for the year was very low, and the majority of agencies did a really great job entering information.

Sheriff Heldman asked how OPOTA was going to make sure those 38 agencies report on time for this oncoming year. He asked if staff will be sent out to make sure these agencies report on time.

Director Quinlan confirmed that OPOTA is informing agencies regarding reporting. They are communicating that hours can be reported throughout the year instead of waiting late in the year. He stated the earlier in the year they report the earlier in the year they can receive their reimbursement. He communicated that the reimbursements are sent out quarterly.

CPT Manager Brittany Brashears stated that 38 agencies in all is not terrible. She confirmed in prior years that number was higher, even in the hundreds.

Chair Stanforth stated that his concern is trying to make those agencies more responsive.

Assistant Executive Director of Standards and Curriculum Courtney DeLong confirmed there has been a lot of changes over the past couple years with the portal. These changes bring an educational portion to this new process. There have been many turnovers in agencies, therefore training in this new process continues. OPOTA is taking full advantage of the outreach team which will visit agencies and sit down with certain individuals and walk them through on how this new process of reporting works. OPOTA is working very closely with all agencies to show them all the changes that are occurring at OPOTA. She is currently working on a bulletin that will highlight some of the changes that are occurring.

Chair Stanforth stated that those agencies are submitting SF400's which means that they know that OPOTA exists. He asked if these agencies might be confused about the roster versus the CPT reporting.

Assistant Executive Director of Standards and Curriculum Courtney DeLong stated that there are two different agency rosters. One reflects everyone in your agency and the CPT roster reflects the officers that agency is responsible for CPT hours. There have been notices sent out as well as a guide that details the difference between both rosters. We are no longer receiving appointments or terminations via paper submission; this is all done electronically.

Director Quinlan stated that even if the officer carries multiple commissions, and will show up on multiple rosters, only one agency is responsible for reporting. When an officer leaves an agency, the agency must confirm that the CPT hours have been submitted prior to submitting the SF401 which the officer no longer appears on that agency roster. He reiterated the importance of each agency needing to process CPT hours prior to taking an officer off their roster.

Chair Stanforth can the officer still use the training if the first agency never reported his CPT hours.

Assistant Executive Director of Standards and Curriculum Courtney DeLong stated that the officer will still be able to use that training.

Director Quinlan confirmed that neither agency would get reimbursed for the training.

Assistant Executive Director of Standards and Curriculum Courtney DeLong stated the CPT instructional video as completed for agencies to follow. She would like to continue to complete these videos to provide more instructions for the new processes for all agencies.

Chair Stanforth asked if there was anything else to address for curriculum.

Sheriff Heldman confirmed there wasn't anything further.

E. House Committee Report

Coronel Charles Jones stated that the House Committee met on January 11th, 2024, and considered recommendations for 2024 OPOTC chair and vice chair, 2024 OPOTC calendar as well as the 2024 quorum guideline. The committee recommended Vernon Stanforth as the OPOTC Chair for 2024.

Motion: A motion for the approval of the recommendation for Sheriff Vernon Stanforth as the OPOTC Chair for 2024 by Coronel Charles Jones. Sheriff Heldman seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously. Yes- 5, No- 0, Absent- 2, Sustained- 1.

Coronel Charles Jones moved on to the 2024 recommendation for vice chair. The recommendation for the 2024 Vice Chair is Chief Clayton Harris.

Motion: A motion for the approval of the recommendation for Chief Clayton Harris as the OPOTC Vice Chair for 2024 by Coronel Charles Jones. Ms. Wynette Carter- Smith seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously. Yes- 6, No- 0, Absent- 3.

Coronel Charles Jones moved on to the 2024 OPTC schedule recommendation. He stated that last year the commission met every other month. The meeting requirement is four meetings per year, and it was previously scheduled that way prior to 2023. The meetings were scheduled every other month due to there being numerous business that needed to be done last year for OPOTC. The recommendation is to return to quarterly meetings for the 2024 calendar year. A total of four meetings a year conducted on the second Thursday of that quarterly month. Coronel Charles Jones asked if there was any more discussion.

Chair Stanforth asked if there the house committee identified the dates for the meetings.

Coronel Charles Jones stated that the dates for the meetings were not identified.

Chair Stanforth asked how that recommended schedule could impact the volume of work that OPOTC may have this year.

Coronel Charles Jones stated that he believes that the volume of work has slowed down from the previous year. His recommendation is to meet quarterly and if necessary, the commission can add an additional meeting for topics that would fall out of the quarterly scheduled meetings. He stated that this meeting Thursday, February 1st, 2024, would be defined as the first quarter meeting. The second quarter meeting would be Thursday, May 9th, 2024, the third quarter meeting would be Thursday, August 8th, 2024, the fourth quarter meeting would be Thursday, November 14th, 2024. Those meeting dates would cover all the four meeting requirements for the 2024 calendar year. Coronel Charles Jones asked if there was any further discussion.

Motion: A motion for the approval of the 2024 OPOTC Quarterly Meeting recommendation dates, Thursday, February 1st, 2024, Thursday, May 9th, 2024, Thursday, August 8th, 2024, Thursday, November 14th, 2024, by Coronel Charles Jones. Chief Chabali seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously. Yes- 6, No- 0, Absent- 3.

Director of Curriculum Dr. Erica Wilson stated there needs to be discussions about the CPT Topics for 2025 and that cannot wait until May's meeting to be discussed. That would mean that the topics would be taken into effect until August, which would give OPOTA less time to get the lesson plans completed. This also applies to emergency updates and basic lesson plans. She is requesting additional meetings outside of those dates to have those discussions if needed.

Chair Stanforth stated that if there are updates that need to be addressed prior to any quarterly meeting, the commission can convene and have any additional meetings. The commission has the capacity to meet if there is an urgency to do so.

Lieutenant James Fitsko asked when the 2025 CPT Topics would be ready.

Director of Curriculum Dr. Erica Wilson confirmed the topics are ready now.

Chair Stanforth asked if the 2025 CPT Topics must be published by October of this year.

Director of Curriculum Dr. Erica Wilson confirmed. She also confirmed that the quicker the topics can be determined the quicker the curriculum can be created. We will be reaching out to new subject matter experts for the topics are selected.

Chief Robert Chabali suggested going back to meetings every other month, therefore it would avoid any until the May meeting.

Director of Curriculum Dr. Erica Wilson suggested that the commission discuss the 2025 CPT Topics today and select the topics at the May meeting. That would provide them with more time to complete this.

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan stated that OPOTA also provides a CPT survey that is offered throughout the year asking for input. Those results will be reviewed, and the most consistent topics will be reviewed. Currently, we don't have enough information to review those results.

Lieutenant James Fitsko asked how long we will be allowing those surveys to be completed before we can review the topics. He confirmed it needs to be done quickly to have enough time to release the information in October.

Director of Curriculum Dr. Erica Wilson stated she checked the survey results, and they are very minimal. As of today, there are 4 completed surveys. This time last year there were approximately 300 surveys completed.

Chair Stanforth stated that as administrators they are still focused on 2024.

Director of Curriculum Dr. Erica Wilson confirmed that legal updates are always a topic that is needed and renewed every year.

Sheriff Heldman suggested allowing the CPT committee to review the results prior to the May meeting, therefore providing those results to the full commission in May. That would allow ample time to review the recommendations.

Director of Curriculum Dr. Erica Wilson agreed. She stated that anything would work other than waiting until May to present the recommended topics. As stated before, they must find subject matter experts for the curriculum.

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan agrees that the sub-committee should meet prior to the May meeting and have those recommendations ready to present to the full commission.

Director of Curriculum Dr. Erica Wilson agreed as well as recommending sending out an email blast to inform them that the survey is still available and waiting for input.

Coronel Charles Jones stated the last topic on the agenda is the quorum protocol. Currently there are ten commissioners that sit on the commission. The current quorum protocol is to have at least 6 members, fifty percent plus one. There was discussion and the recommendation is to keep the current quorum protocol of fifty percent, plus one. The quorum protocol will be based on how many commissioners there are. Therefore, if there are ten commissioners it would be five plus one, making it a total of six to hold a quorum.

Senior Assistant Attorney General Michael Walton stated that he wasn't sure what the rule starts. However, he stated it would be worth looking into. He stated it could be based on the number of commissioners that are currently appointed at that time. Therefore, if there were nine commissioners it would be four plus one. The total to hold a quorum would be five (fifty plus one majority).

Chair Stanforth confirmed that the body can set its own quorum. He also asked if a vacancy would change the quorum parameters.

Senior Assistant Attorney General Michael Walton stated that the official number is 6, however there isn't a hard copy of the rules stating its 6. He believes the protocol is fifty percent plus one. He confirmed that the commissions statute allows them to set their own quorum. OPOTA's statute states that the quorum must be a majority. Therefore, if there is a vacancy, then that would be removed from the equation.

Chair Stanforth confirmed that he believes that the commission is the one who decides those guidelines. It would be up to the house committee to give the recommendation on what we would like to set the quorum.

Lieutenant James Fitsko agreed that it would preferably better to have the guideline to be fifty percent plus one, in case there is a vacant seat.

Chair Stanforth he stated that would work currently due to there being one vacant seat.

Senior Assistant Attorney General Michael Walton stated that case law clearly states that majority is the terminology used, therefore you do not have to count. There have been cases where there has been more than one vacant seat and if you have a majority then that would constitute as a quorum.

Coronel Charles Jones confirms that the commission is currently operating with a quorum of six commissioners. Therefore, if we go with a quorum that is a majority it wouldn't leave them in a predicament in the future where we wouldn't have enough commissioners present. It provides the commission plenty of flexibility.

Chair Stanforth it wouldn't be the number of commissioners present; it would be the number of commissioners appointed.

Senior Assistant Attorney General Michael Walton confirmed that. He wants to clarify if a quorum means six commissioners or is six just the majority.

Coronel Charles Jones asked for guidance.

Chair Stanforth recommends fifty percent plus one of the appointed commissioners. Therefore, the commission can still function even with a vacant seat or multiple vacant seats. That would provide a safeguard for the commission.

Motion: A motion for the approval of the OPOTC Quorum be fifty percent plus one of the appointed commissioners by Lieutenant James Fitsko. Ms. Wynette Carter- Smith seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously. Yes- 6, No- 0, Absent- 3.

Chair Stanforth advised updates on the current committee assignments which consist of the new FBI appointee's paperwork still being processed. He will fill the position on the committee for the designated previous commissioner.

F. Legislative Committee Report

Lieutenant James Fitsko advised that he will be visiting the state house on April 10th, 2024 where is will be participating in a lobby day. He asked if there was any topic that needs to be brought forward to be placed on the agenda. He will also be in Washington, D.C. in March also attending a lobby event with elected officials.

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan wanted to address private security and how the commission would want to provide guidance on unused CPT funds. Last year of the budgeted 40 million dollars for CPT training, approximately 28 million dollars was paid through reimbursement. Therefore, he is considering going to the legislature to allow an adjustment which would allow unused funds to be used for actual training and not for the administration of it. He will allow the legal department to detail that later as well as the reciprocity application. There soon will be a policy in place to address reciprocity and how to accept reciprocity under the new law. As written, it does not require any training, only testing. That recommendation will come later for those out-of-state applicants.

Principal Assistant Attorney General Cynthia Peterson stated that the statute is very general on what the funds can be used for. There will be discussion with legislature, where Corey Jordan and Doug Dumolt will be the ones to lead that discussion. Previously they were only allowed to use it specifically for training. The hope is that the left-over funds have a broader ability to be used, for example training equipment to train with. If the commission has ideas on where the funds should be used for, that input is welcome.

Chair Stanforth asked what the current funds can be used for.

Principal Assistant Attorney General Cynthia Peterson it current reads is that it can come from a variety of funding sources, the funding sources can change over time and the requirement may change to reflect the focus of the funding source, and no later than October 15th of each year the executive director shall notify the appointing authorities in writing the training requirements for the upcoming year. That is how the code reads, it doesn't give any direction on what can happen.

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan stated he has been advised that the funds can only go towards reimbursement to agencies for hours completed. However, we would like to make it available for training or equipment. The commission could weigh in on what they believe the funds should be used for. We don't want to potentially lose the possibility to use all 13 million dollars for additional training.

Principal Assistant Attorney General Cynthia Peterson stated that they have received a lot of questions from law enforcement agencies regarding using the left-over funds to purchase certain training equipment, materials, VR equipment. All those things would be purchased for their agency that would be used to facilitate their training. Currently they can only use it to reimburse their officers for training.

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan stated that he hopes to have programs where the funds could be used to pay a vendor to create content for training officers and agencies in lieu of reimbursing officers for training.

Sheriff Michael Heldman requested to clarify this information. He asked if the funds that are being questioned are funds left over after the officers have been reimbursed and the state has not paid out.

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan clarified that the code states that officers can be reimbursed up to forty hours of training. There are still unallocated funds, our effort is to use those funds to create change and pay agencies to perpetuate training platforms that we are trying to move away from. We would like to have control of those what those training platforms as we continue forward.

Sheriff Michael Heldman is surprised that after going through the CPT the first of the year they realized that a numerous number of agencies thought the cut off was twenty-four hours. They were advised it was forty hours of reimbursement. He stated he does not know if there are still agencies throughout the state that don't know that they can get reimbursement for additional hours.

Principal Assistant Attorney General Cynthia Peterson stated the additional language for how the code reads is that the funds can be used to cover costs associated with developing, delivering, or attending training for appointed police officer. That language does not include equipment or materials that agencies may want.

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan clarifies that he is identifying unused funds of the forty million that were allotted for training but are still unspent. There are programs that we would like to use those funds for training purposes.

Chair Stanforth stated that is what the director is requesting, however those are two different pots of money. He asked if the agency would have to decide if that is allowed per their agency as well as the state auditor.

Principal Assistant Attorney General Cynthia Peterson confirmed. It is not a decision that OPOTA makes for them. Each agency will have to decide how that can take the statutory language and apply it to my agency and for example purchase equipment and figure out how that falls within the statute. We would like the language to be more specific, however it is

not. If it could give the agency the right to allow agencies to purchase equipment if that is what they need?

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan is currently working with Corey Jordan to make changes that we would like to see in the administrative code earmarks how those dollars can be spent. This would not be on the reimbursement side; it would be on the initial state funding side.

Sheriff Michael Heldman asked if that money was there every year.

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan stated that what is currently being submitted in the budget is that it become a permanent funding source that has not been passed. There is currently a bill that has been submitted that would allow that, subject to passage.

Chair Stanforth confirmed that the commissioners do not have to make a recommendation for those unallocated funds.

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan confirmed. He stated it was just advisory, to let the commissioners know that their monies cannot be utilized. We have identified an issue and are currently trying to resolve it.

Chair Stanforth stated that those funds potentially can't go anywhere.

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan stated it can't be used otherwise. It will be returned to the general fund. That is part of the concern if we have forty million dollars and have only spent twenty-eight million dollars. If that continues to happen, then they could adjust to a lower amount. We could potentially use those funds to update the shooting range. The shooting range is used for providing training that we can provide, therefore those funds would be used in lieu of capital dollars.

Advanced Training Director Scott Spangler the range will be used year around which will be used to train instructors who are needed in basic academies as well as agencies. The range will have a direct correlation to the commission and basic academy curriculum. We are looking for having a state-of-the-art shooting range where all officers in Ohio can come and utilize. These funds would help expedite the process. The status is it will be broken into cycles to get it completed.

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan wanted to mention private security again. There currently are two regulatory bodies who are the Ohio Department of Public Safety and OPOTA who weigh in the different aspects of that training. One factor is staffing, in which there is a delay in having officers actively certified on the street. That is taking time away from our limited staff to address private security and its impacting OPOTA negatively.

Assistant Director Courtney DeLong stated 3 certification specialists review paperwork for all programs including private security. OPOTA is in between for private security. They are licensed by DPS and private investigator security guard services. However, to get that license you must have OPOTA's certificate. We have provided DPS information on what it would look like if they took over the certification process. We are in the beginning stages of transitioning to give the program to them.

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan the issue is the web check. Currently they only do one web check at the end, however they are completing 20 hours of firearms training. Due to the web check being one of the last steps, some of these individuals are prohibited from carrying a firearm.

Assistant Director Courtney DeLong stated that years ago they used to require a web check at the beginning, however it would no longer be valid after 45 days. It would be much easier to have them take over the program and over see it.

Chair Stanforth asked what the commissions involvement be.

Assistant Director Courtney DeLong as of right now, no involvement. OPOTA is currently writing the curriculum for them, however they provide online training. Removing private security from OPOTA's responsibilities gives OPOTA more time to focus on basic training and peace officer training.

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan stated that if the program transitions to DPS that means it will take the power away from the commission. He wanted to make it aware to the commission due to the commission still having to regulate that currently.

Chair Stanforth asked if there was any discussion.

Lieutenant James Fitsko asked if the power to regulate private security has been given up already. He hopes there will be more discussion in the future before that happens.

Assistant Director Courtney DeLong there will be updates from Corey and Doug by the next May meeting.

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

G. Commission and Academy Report

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan wanted to reiterate that one of the first things he did as director was to slip the academy into Professional Standards and Curriculum and Training and Operation sections. Therefore, he created two assistant executive director positions for this change, which he would introduce later. There are new staff, James Cummings and

Robert Parsons both in General Services. Eddie Parker is new as well; he is our Community Engagement Liaison.

Community Engagement Liaison Eddie Parker stated he has been meeting with community groups, faith leaders, youth activists to give them a voice and to get some input. He wants to make sure the community know that they have a voice and that we care about their input.

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan states that bringing him to OPOTA has allowed us to include a community perspective in the lesson plans. He included that as officers take training, they learn that decision they make have an impact on communities. He also introduced Brittany Brashears who was promoted to CPT Manager as well as Arturo DeLeon who was promoted to Deputy Director of Professional Standards. Courtney DeLong was promoted to Assistant Executive Director for Standards and Curriculum. Richard Butsko was also hired as Assistant Executive Director of Training and Operations. He advised that they have a new employee starting soon as the CALEA Manager. He also informed us that an extension has been requested and approved.

Advanced Training Director Scott Spangler stated that the range currently isn't being used due to it being winter. That is part of the problem, the range has an open roof design. Therefore, due to the weather in Ohio there is a limit to the use of the range. It's not utilized year around, which could be used year around if enclosed. There was a class held a week ago and it was too cold, and the students were not pleased. He informed that they have hired their final instructor position who will be starting in a month once their background check is completed. He stated there is a need for academy instructors at the basic academies which they are working to get those courses completed and released. Those classes include, Human Trafficking, Domestic Violence, Hazmat, Weapons of Mass Destruction. They are basic academy curriculums which require instructors which Advance Training provides instructors for those trainings. Those courses were distance learning course however were not producing what OPOTA wanted. Therefore, the course was brought back to in class courses.

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan stated that there has been a lot of turnovers and there is a need for instructors.

Advanced Training Director Scott Spangler informed us that they had just finalized six Virtual Reality videos. They are getting ready to start distributing those videos with the headsets. The Virtual Reality will be for scenario-based training which will include a variety of topics.

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan stated that Scott and Erica are working together to create new material with new topics that will be released for training.

Principal Assistant Attorney General Cynthia Peterson stated the public records continues to be a high volume. The media continues to be extremely interested in everything that is going on in law enforcement. Requests are made daily from the media interested in curriculum and what it has been historically. Any time an officer gets into trouble there is always a request from the media for that officer's records. Legal is supporting every topic that has been spoken about today. Agencies believe once they receive their CPT number for a course is valid forever. Therefore, there is language in the statute that states curriculum that has legal content needs to be reviewed. If they have legal content, the case law may have changed, or the statute may have changed. On the other hand, there are courses that will not need an annual legal review due to it not fitting that category. There is currently a 119-Hearing pending. The 119-Hearing will need to be scheduled on the next commission meeting date. She suggested that if a special meeting is scheduled it should be used to address Curriculum, CPT and 119-Hearings.

Chair Stanforth stated that he does understand the 119- Hearing is pending. However, he asked how long the commission must address this. He also wanted to know if it's a time sensitive issue.

Principal Assistant Attorney General Cynthia Peterson she clarified it is an instructor denial issue. There is a 10-day period however, there is statutory ability to move a hearing to a time that is conducive to conduct business for the commission.

Senior Assistant Attorney General Michael Walton confirmed the information mentioned by Cynthia. There is a period that the hearing needs to be scheduled, however it's well within the commission's statutory rights to continue it to a later date. That is standard practice, everyone would agree, even the respondent. He doesn't believe all parties would be fully prepared within ten days. Additionally, for consideration the 119-Hearing although it must be open it is not necessary a meeting. The full commission doesn't necessarily have to be at the 119-Hearing. The commission can assign an individual or a hearing officer to hear the 119-Hearing. Then the hearing officer would then provide a recommendation to the full commission. If it will continue to be the same process, then it should be scheduled at the next commission hearing.

Chair Stanforth asked if the commission has the right to designate a hearing officer. He asked if the designated hearing officer could meet outside of the commission meetings.

Senior Assistant Attorney General Michael Walton confirmed. He stated there would be a designated hearing officer or examiner. The requirement would be that he or she would have to be an attorney and possess any qualifications that the commission deems necessary to fulfill that. It would be someone who has law enforcement knowledge as well as properly qualified. They would conduct the full hearing and are granted full power that otherwise the commission would have to conduct the hearing. They would then write a report and recommendation that would be received by the commission as well as the respondent of the

119-Hearing. There is a short window where the respondent must file an objection they might have. The hearing officer or examiner can only give a recommendation. Therefore, the commission will have the final say on the decision.

Chair Stanforth advised that the advantage to having a hearing officer or examiner would be to only schedule one person versus the full commission.

Lieutenant James Fitsko suggested having a sub-committee of three commissioners versus a hearing officer or the full commission.

Chair Stanforth confirmed that the commission has the right to choose that or a hearing officer.

Senior Assistant Attorney General Michael Walton confirmed he as well stated that has been done in the past. Regardless of that the full commission will still vote on the decision. The final vote must be done at the full open commission meeting.

Chair Stanforth asked if there were any time restraints for this 119-Hearing.

Principal Assistant Attorney General Cynthia Peterson stated, not at this time. She mentioned that the 119-Hearing respondent has made various public records request for the hearing. Therefore, she believes there isn't a rush to the hearing due to all the public records that the respondent would like to have and review prior to the hearing. She confirmed that the hearing is scheduled for a 10-day period. However, the letter that is sent out will say that statutorily the commission has the right to move the hearing to a conducive time and date to conduct business.

Chair Stanforth asked that nothing needs to be done by commissioners prior to the May meeting.

Principal Assistant Attorney General Cynthia Peterson stated not unless the respondent to the 119-Hearing contacts someone from the commission requesting a closer date that already scheduled. If the recommendation is to have a designated hearing officer or examiner, then the 119-Hearing could be done sooner. Therefore, the final vote and decision could be done at the May meeting.

Chair Stanforth asked what would need to be done to pick a hearing officer or examiner.

Senior Assistant Attorney General Michael Walton advised he would need to check to see if it would be something the commission would need to vote on or not.

Principal Assistant Attorney General Cynthia Peterson asked if the designated person would need to agree with being assigned as the hearing officer or examiner.

Senior Assistant Attorney General Michael Walton stated the commission has the full power to appoint anyone if the requirements are fulfilled. He will check to make sure it

doesn't need to be voted on and be conducted at a formal meeting. He will need to contact the section that deals with 119-Hearings to see what they recommend. It could be just an administrative notice that needs to be done versus a vote.

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan advised the Executive Order 2019-11-D signed by Governor DeWine requires annual Ethics Training for boards and commissions. He spoke to the Ohio Ethics Commission, and he had arranged for the training be provided to all the commissioners at the next scheduled meeting. He wanted to advise the commissioners that it will be a full agenda due to having the commission meeting, followed by the 119-Hearing, and ending with the Ethics Training.

Chair Stanforth stated that he is inclined to have a hearing examiner. Therefore, the hearing examiner could conduct the hearing prior to the full commission meeting. Once completed the hearing examiner could then provide the commission with the findings and the recommendation. He wasn't sure if it needed to be voted on or not.

Senior Assistant Attorney General Michael Walton confirmed it is always safe to put in a motion for future reference.

Chief Robert Chabali asked where the hearing examiner would be picked from.

Senior Assistant Attorney General Michael Walton he could check to see if had any recommendations from his office. He could check with his superiors to see if there was someone in mind that had enough experience to be considered. It could also be someone from the OPOTA staff. The only concern with that would be to have that attorney or individual completely walled off from day one. They cannot touch any part of the investigation from start to finish of the 119-Hearing process.

Chief Robert Chabali asked if it would be preferable to be an independent hearing officer outside of this office.

Senior Assistant Attorney General Michael Walton stated that is up to the discretion of the commission. He reiterated that there is more flexibility if you designate a hearing examiner.

Lieutenant James Fitsko wanted to remind the commission that in previous 119-Hearings there was a lot of participation from members of the commission. He is not opposed to a hearing examiner, however there was a large amount of input from the commission.

Ms. Wynette Carter-Smith advised that if the commission decides to have a sub-committee to hear the 119-Hearing could other commissioner members attend if available.

Chair Stanforth stated if that was the situation it could be an issue. He stated if it was a select few, then an additional commission member attends it could be a quorum due to the

amount of commissioners present. If it results in a quorum the meeting will have to be advertised or a public meeting.

Senior Assistant Attorney General Michael Walton advised that the easiest option would be to have the full commission or a hearing examiner. It can be done with a sub-committee; however, you would receive less legal objection if either the full commission or with the hearing examiner. He stated there would be no challenge with a hearing examiner, due to being said that there was only a certain number of commissioners present. The only difference with no commissioners presents and with only a hearing examiner present is that the commissioners will not be able to engage with the respondent or the witnesses. A designated individual does not need to be assigned. It could be placed into a general motion where the 119-Hearing will be heard by a hearing examiner in the future and the Executive Director would assign someone. He stated he would investigate it and advise the commission as soon as possible.

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan requested to have the commission pick the designated hearing officer due to the denial being ultimately his decision.

Senior Assistant Attorney General Michael Walton stated it doesn't seem like the hearing examiner would need to have a decision made by any period. There has been a variety of 119-Hearings that are complex where the decision has taken a longer time to issue the decision. There has also been 119-Hearings that are not so complex, and the decision has been issued within two months.

Chief Robert Chabali asked if the respondent has the right to bring an attorney.

Senior Assistant Attorney General Michael Walton stated they have the right to bring a representative or an attorney to represent them. He mentioned that the commission could always decide at the next scheduled meeting or reschedule a meeting to have enough time to finalize a decision.

Lieutenant James Fitsko suggested having the 119-Hearing with the full commission and the future 119-Hearing maybe have a hearing examiner assigned for future hearings.

Senior Assistant Attorney General Michael Walton stated that he and Bryan Lee could look at a candidate that would fit the criteria for the 119-Hearings in the future.

Chair Stanforth stated that if he understands correctly, we will be having the full commission hear the 119-Hearing and consider a hearing examiner for future 119-Hearings.

Deputy Director of Professional Standards Art DeLeon stated there are currently two certification officers that are responsible for the entire state of Ohio. Their responsibilities include processing SF400's/SF401's, Certifications, Canine Evaluations and Private

Security. There is currently a two-week turnaround time on the certifications. Administrative professionals are currently being cross trained to help with this responsibility.

Chair Stanforth stated that the issue that is being brought up is the turnaround time on certifications. He believes there needs to be a dialogue with agencies to let them know what the process is and how much time it takes to complete it.

Deputy Director of Professional Standards Art DeLeon stated that they are doing their best and completing certifications in in the order received with the limited amount of people. He states that the commission needs to push the message that it will be a while due to the situation. He is trying his best to make the process more efficient. He also mentioned that they are still processing cease functioning removals to get those officers back on the road simultaneously while processing all other certificates.

Chair Stanforth asked if the SF400 needs to be submitted once the individual has completed the academy.

Deputy Director of Professional Standards Art DeLeon stated that is correct however it is contingent on them passing the state test. Once the individual passes the state test, Pearson Vue sends our test coordinator notice. Those are not received until Wednesday. Then the administrative professionals will then process that certificate and distribute the certificate.

Assistant Director Courtney DeLong advised that they are short staffed and that it will take time to get caught up. The priority is to remove officers from cease functioning then to process certificates therefore officers can get back on the road.

Chair Stanforth asked if the only automated part of this process is Pearson Vue.

Assistant Director Courtney DeLong stated that is not automated. She stated that the information is collected from the website by Judith Wilson, and she manipulates the information therefore everyone can read it. Her staff still needs to review all that information, which takes time. Ultimately, at the end of the day they want to get all the officers back on the road. Letters are sent out after they have completed their test as well as advising they have two years to get an appointment. The process is detailed in the student handbook.

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan stated that once the individual passes the test the agency then needs to submit the SF400 once the SF400 has been processed the officer can now act in the capacity of an officer.

Colonel Charles Jones stated it seems like a staff issue. Are there plans to hire more employees.

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan advised they have hired a new certification specialist however hasn't started yet. He will be submitting a proposal to add an additional administrative professional that will help speed up this process.

Chair Stanforth asked how many appointments OPOTA receives on a regular basis.

Deputy Director of Professional Standards Art DeLeon stated he ran the report earlier and currently 51 active academies. Potentially there could be 891 candidates that can graduate.

Chair Stanforth asked that potentially of those 891 graduates, OPOTA prioritizes the SF400's.

Assistant Director Courtney DeLong stated that they prioritize new appointments. As agencies start cleaning their rosters it will become easier. There are automated features that agencies can use on the Portal, however they need to be educated on what those are.

Chief Robert Chabali asked about lateral transfers and if an officer can continue to work.

Assistant Director Courtney DeLong stated that officers don't need OPOTA's blessing. It's incumbent on the officer and the agency. She has been working with the regional outreach team that has been going out a sitting with chiefs to show them how the portal works. The processes will be more automated as time goes by.

Chair Stanforth stated that using those regional outreach teams might make it easier to get those agencies educated on the new features available on the portal. It could alleviate all the calls and emails received for Courtney and Art.

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan informed us that Robert Strausbaugh is also the new Regional Program Manager.

Regional Program Manager Robert Strausbaugh informed that there is a demo for the Virtual Reality headsets that will be provided for the regional providers. He was informed that there were many corrections supervisors that had not attended the Corrections Supervisor course. He was concerned with the information due to his being a big supporter of First Line Supervisor Training. He has identified regional providers that have correction instructors who can provide this training to supervisors. He created a web page for regional providers Close to Home Program specially for branding purposes. The link is on the OPOTA website for those who would like to review it. The link provides various features and information for from all the six regional providers. Any information that is needed is provided on that website.

Project Coordinator Susan Boggs informed that the Law Enforcement Conference dates have been set, they are September 29th through October 1st, 2024. The conference will be held at Kalahari Resort in Sandusky, Ohio. The workshops will be primarily on instructor training and certification. She stated that this year they will be adding a career fair and an

exhibit hall with vendors. The Fallen Officer Memorial is scheduled for May 2nd, 2024. There are currently eight officers that have been approved. One of those officers is historic. The other officers are from 2021, 2022 and 2023. There are two pending officers, one is from Preble County Sheriff's Office who passed last December as well as a historic officer. Each flag has been physically looked at to make sure they are in good condition. She advised that the company that would be responsible for renovating the Memorial Wall has not been responding to any correspondence that has been sent to them. She is not sure if the memorial wall will be completed on time for the Fallen Officer Memorial. Either way, she will keep the commission informed of any update.

Executive Director Thomas Quinlan informed that the Blue-Ribbon Task Force has completed their work and has recommendations ready to be made. They are finishing the recommendation report and hopefully be able to present it to the commission via TEAMS. He was told that if there isn't any voting being conducted the informational meeting can be via TEAMS. Once the commissioners are informed Attorney General Yost will then conduct a public announcement with the Blue-Ribbon Task Force recommendations. There were also six professionally produced scenarios for the Virtual Reality course. A variety of those were presented to the legislatures which they liked the platform and technology being used. He stated that they are looking for support and funding for future use. There is already a contract to provide them with 160 VR Meta Quest Headsets. Once those are received, they will be lending them to regional providers at no cost. The courses would be set to use the VR headset after the cognitive portion of the course is completed. He is anticipating having the headset ready to go by March 2024. This will help Ohio's training move forward in the right direction. OPOTA is trying to move away from your standard class training and move it into a lesson and emersion, panel discussion, scenario-based training.

H. New Business

Chairman Stanforth asked if there was any new business to discuss. Confirming there was none he moved to the next item on the agenda.

I. Old Business

Chairman Stanforth asked if there was any old business to discuss. Confirming there was none he moved to the next item on the agenda.

J. Open Forum

Chairman Stanforth asked if anyone wanted to address the commission in an open forum. Confirming there was none he moved on to the next item on the agenda.

K. Adjournment

Motion: A motion to adjourn was made by Sheriff Michael Heldam. The motion was seconded by Coronel Charles Jones. A vote was taken and passed unanimously. Yes- 6, No-0, Absent- 3.

The meeting stands adjourned.

Time: 12:58 p.m.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Vernon P. Stanforth". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Chair Vernon Stanforth

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