

COMMISSION ON LAW ENFORCEMENT STANDARDS AND TRAINING

COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

January 9, 2020

ARKANSAS LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING ACADEMY

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 A. M. Commissioners present:

Chairman Bob Harrison
Vice Chairman Percy Wilburn
Lt. Stacie Rhoads
Mr. Barry Phillips
Mr. Thomas Marsh
Mr. Richard Wingard
Dr. Jim Golden
Mr. Doc Holladay
Sheriff Ron Brown
Sheriff Lafayette Woods

Others present:

Jami Cook, Director
Fred Weatherspoon, Deputy Director, Training
Brad King, Deputy Director, Standards
Amanda Yarbrough, CLEST Attorney
Jim Brader, Hearing Officer
Trish Hendrix Court Reporter
Sue Albritton, CLEST Admin. Assist.
Jonathan Lewis, Marion Police Department
Christopher Condery, Marion Police Department
Jacob Bradley Metro-Railroad Police
Nancy Anderson, Cutter Morning Star School District
Chief Bob Dunn, Hampton PD
John Couch, Crittenden County
Chief Kelvin Sergeant, Pine Bluff Police Department
De Marqus Jermon, Pine Bluff Police Department
State Senator Trent Garner
Steve Shults, BRTC-LETA
Charles Ellis, El Dorado
Linda Ellis, El Dorado

Commission Meeting Minutes

January 9, 2020

Page 2

The meeting was called to order at 10:00. A resolution was read by Director Cook granting Mr. Charles Ellis his service weapon upon his retirement. A motion was made by Commissioner Phillips to adopt the resolution and was seconded by Commissioner Holladay. An additional resolution was read by Senator Garner honoring Mr. Ellis as well as those from Governor Hutchinson and Director Cook. A motion to accept the minutes of the last meeting was unanimously granted.

Item I: Item one was to give approval of the Board and Commission Expenses. Commissioner Marsh made to motion to accept and was seconded by Commissioner Wilburn. Motion carried.

Item II: Item two was a request from the Cutter Morning Star School District requesting to establish its own police department. Commissioner Holladay made a motion to grant the request and was seconded by Commissioner Rhoads. Motion carried.

Item III: Item three was a request from the Hempstead County Sheriff's Department for decertification of former Deputy Joseph Bradford. Commissioner Rhoads made a motion to go forward and was seconded by Commissioner Wingard. Motion carried.

Item IV: Item four was a request from the Rogers Police Department for decertification of former Officer Alaric Busbee. A motion to go forward was made by Commissioner Holladay and was seconded by Commissioner Marsh. Motion passed.

Item V: Item five was a request from the Greene County Sheriff's Office for decertification of former Officer Scott Pillow. Commissioner Phillips made the motion to go forward and was seconded by Commissioner Marsh. Motion carried.

Item VI: Item six was a request from the Randolph County Sheriff's Office for decertification of former Deputy Paul Prevo. Commissioner Wilburn made a motion to go forward and was seconded by Commissioner Phillips. Motion carried.

Item VII: Item seven was a request from the Camden Police Department requesting decertification of former Officer Benjamin Opelt. Commissioner Brown made a motion to go forward with decertification and was seconded by Commissioner Rhoads. Motion carried.

Item VIII: Item eight was a request from the Centerton Police Department requesting decertification of former Officer Kristopher Arthur. A motion to go forward was made by Commissioner Brown and was seconded by Commissioner Phillips. Motion carried.

Commission Meeting Minutes

January 9, 2020

Page 3

Item IX: Item nine was a request from the Arkansas State Police requesting decertification of former ASP Cpl. Mark Holland. Commissioner Holladay made the motion to go forward and was seconded by Commissioner Wilburn. Motion carried.

Item X: Item ten was a request from the Poinsett County Sheriff's Office for decertification of former Deputy Tanner Hazelton. A motion to go forward was made by Commissioner Holladay and was seconded by Commissioner Phillips. Motion carried.

Item XI: Item eleven was a request from the De Queen Police Department for decertification of former Officer Jamario Ervin. Commissioner Brown made the motion to go forward and was seconded by Commissioner Marsh. Motion carried.

Item XII: Item Twelve was a request from the Pine Bluff Police Department requesting a waiver of the two year waiting period required by CLEST Rule after the dismissal of Demarqus Jermon from Basic Class 2019-C. The department presented evidence of remedial training provided to Demarqus Jermon following his dismissal from the academy. Commissioner Rhoads made the motion to waive the two year waiting period but require Demarqus Jermon to attend the full basic class. After a discussion it was agreed to allow him to enter the second week of class. Commissioner Phillips seconded the motion and motion carried.

Item XIII: Item thirteen was a request from the Marion Police Department requesting a waiver of the two year waiting period required by CLEST Rule after the dismissal of Officer Christopher Condery from Black River Technical College Law Enforcement Academy for testing positive for alcohol during training. A motion to deny the request was made by Commissioner Brown and was seconded by Commissioner Rhoads. Motion carried.

Item XIV: Item fourteen was a request from the Metropolitan Railroad Police to establish its own police department in the State of Arkansas. Having met all requirements, Commissioner Holladay made a motion to grant the request. Commissioner Marsh seconded and motion carried.

Item XV: Item fifteen was a request from the El Dorado Police Department requesting decertification of Officer James Robert Snow. Commissioner Holladay made the motion to go forward with decertification and was seconded by Commissioner Wilburn. Motion carried.

At the conclusion of the regular meeting, three uncontested hearings were held for **Jean Rodriguez, Matthew Guthrie and Randall McElroy**. Commissioner Wilburn made the motion to decertify those in the uncontested hearings and Commissioner Marsh seconded. Motion carried. A contested hearing was held for **John Couch**. After hearing the testimonies and evidence presented, John Couch was

Commission Meeting Minutes

January 9, 2020

Page 4

decertified by a motion from Commissioner Brown and a second from Commissioner Rhoads. Motion carried. Hearings were presided over by Attorney Jim Brader and Trish Hendrix recording.

Director's Report:

Director Cook presented the retirement plaque that was prepared for and will be delivered to former Commissioner Barney Reeves. Director Cook attended the second meeting of the National Symposium for the Prevention of Law Enforcement Suicide in October. DPS hosted the first ever Law Enforcement Executive Forum on Suicide Awareness. The Forum was co-hosted by the U. S. Attorney's Office and the Arkansas State Police on December 17th and was well attended. Director Cook reported that NW ALETA is currently exploring fencing options for its campus and that ALETA will be discontinuing its probation/parole classes this year as a result of the Department of Community Correction's acquisition of space to conduct its own in-house training. Director Cook reported on the status of the jailer program and the staffing changes at CLEST and ALETA. Director Cook attended the funeral of Officer Stephen Carr and presented the Commission's check to the family at that time. Director Cook discussed some of the changes to CLEST and ALETA as a result of transformation, specifically the improvements made to the auto shop at ALETA in Camden. Director Cook reported on the funeral of former ALETA Supervisor Bernie Mosley and presented the proclamation to the Commission awarding Supervisor Mosley's service weapon to his surviving spouse. A motion was made and seconded to approve the proclamation. Motion carried.