

MINUTES OF ARKANSAS STATE POLICE COMMISSION MEETING

June 10, 2021

The Arkansas State Police Commission met on Thursday, June 10, 2021 at the Arkansas State Police Headquarters, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Commission Chairman Basore called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Commissioner Neff Basore, Chairman  
Commissioner Steve Edwards - Secretary  
Commissioner Jeffery Teague  
Commissioner Jim Hinkle  
Commissioner Murray Benton, Sr.  
Commissioner Ken Reeves

MEMBER ON CONFERENCE CALL:

Commissioner John Allison – Vice-Chairman

STATE POLICE PERSONNEL PRESENT:

Colonel Bill Bryant	Lt. Colonel Shawn Garner
Major Charles Hubbard	Major Forrest Marks
Major Jason Aaron	Major Jeff Drew
Major David Lafferty	Sherry Woods
Jenna Castleberry	Sergeant Robert Middleton
Corporal Ryan Jacks	Captain Chris Goodman
Captain Scott Woodward	Captain Stacie Rhoads
Sergeant Marcus Daniels	Captain David Williams
Gary Glisson	Lieutenant Darran Austin
Corporal Trevor Stevenson	Lieutenant Scott Russell
Lieutenant Bobby Brown	Mary Claire McLaurin
Tess Bradford	Donna Humphries

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jami Cook, Secretary DPS	Cody Hiland, DPS
Jackie Baker, DPS	J. R. Hankins, DPS
Ashley Figueroa, DPS	

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Commission Chairman Basore led the pledge of allegiance.

NOTIFICATION OF MEDIA:

The media was notified of this meeting on June 7, 2021.

MINUTES:

Commissioner Reeves made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 13, 2021 regular monthly commission meeting. Commissioners Hinkle/Benton seconded, and the motion passed.

Commission Chairman Basore stated he would like to introduce DPS Secretary Jami Cook and stated she has an introduction to make.

DPS Secretary Jami Cook stated thank you Mr. Chairman and Commissioners, I am so glad to be here today. I just want to take a brief moment to give you some really great news, we have an exceptional legal team with the Department of Public Safety and if you hear me talking very often, you hear me saying that we have to continuously invest into the men and women of our noble profession. That is exactly what we are doing in our legal team by bringing in as our DPS Chief Legal Counsel, Mr. Cody Hiland and I don't know that he needs much of an introduction because you all know him, but I wanted you guys meet him and Cody if you would come up and say a few things and you all can ask him some questions or whatever. If you read the media or watch the news, you know law enforcement has been under a lot of scrutiny here lately and so we need these resources to help us always do the right thing, we don't always do it right, we always stand for what is right and so Cody is going to help further that mission and we are just thrilled to bring him on our team.

Cody Hiland stated I am just glad to be here. One of the great things about being in law enforcement is the chance to work with law enforcement. As prosecutor, the best times were the times we spent with these guys. So, all I am going to try to bring to the table is defend them, protect them, have their back to the extent that they have the people of Arkansas' back and that is our goal. So, beyond that the mission is pretty simple, so looking forward to doing this, this is one of those missions, these life callings and God has given me the opportunity to extend that for another year and so I am excited about that. So, with that said I will let you all get back to the meeting. Thank you!

#### PROMOTION CERTIFICATES:

Colonel Bill Bryant presented a promotion certificate to Captain David Williams promoting him to Captain in the Highway Patrol Division, Troop E.

#### OFFICIAL COMMENDATIONS:

Sergeant Marcus Daniels gave an overview of the nomination of Corporal Trevor Stevenson for an Official Commendation.

Sergeant Marcus Daniels stated in November 2019 Trooper Trevor Stevenson was dispatched to a possible fight in progress on Interstate 40 stemming from a two-vehicle collision. As Trooper Stevenson arrived on scene, he noticed a male driver covered in blood. Trooper Stevenson requested emergency medical personnel and learned the victim, was struck several times in the head with a tire iron and piece of wood by a male and female that fled the scene prior to his arrival. The victim suffered severe injuries but was able to provide a license plate and description of the suspect vehicle. With this information, Trooper Stevenson devoted the rest of his shift to capturing the suspects responsible for this attack. Trooper Stevenson ran the license plate through ACIC database which returned for a vehicle matching the description provided by the victim. The return also revealed recent electronic citation information issued to a particular driver of that vehicle and Trooper Stevenson ran the name associated with that citation and retrieved a driver's license photo for a female suspect who was positively identified by the victim. Trooper Stevenson contacted the register owner of the vehicle and learned that the female suspect was the ex-girlfriend of the registered owner, and she would probably be in the company of her current boyfriend and provided a name. Trooper Stevenson ran that name in the database as well and ultimately identified both suspects. Rather than stopping there, Trooper Stevenson went to 3 addresses associated with the suspects but yielded no results. Through further investigation, Trooper Stevenson learned the female had emergency contact number ties to the registered owner of the vehicle. Trooper Stevenson contacted the female via cell phone, after several attempts and through clever police tactics, Trooper Stevenson was able to convince her to meet him at the McDonalds in North Little Rock on an unrelated incident. Eventually both suspects arrived at the McDonalds in the suspect vehicle and were taken into custody without incident. The piece of wood containing the victim's blood was collected at the original scene and the tire iron was in the passenger side door. The ASP Criminal Investigation Division was contacted to assist with the case and both suspects were transported to ASP Headquarters for questioning. To provide an update both suspects face Battery 1<sup>st</sup> Degree charges which is a Class B Felony, and they are scheduled for jury trial in August and September of 2021. Trooper Stevenson's work ethic and persistence was evident in this apprehension. Trooper Stevenson went above and beyond to make sure the individuals responsible for the attack were brought to justice.

Colonel Bryant presented an Official Commendation to Corporal Trevor Stevenson.

Captain Stacie Rhoads gave an overview of the nomination of Special Agent Ryan Jacks for an Official Commendation.

Captain Stacie Rhoads stated this morning I am going to present to you two commendations that I wrote for Special Agent Ryan Jacks. To kind of frame this up for you, when Special Agent Jacks came to Company A he had been transferred from our Cyber Crimes Unit and had never worked a homicide. One of the first cases he worked was the one that I am going to tell you about right now. On the evening of August 20, 2017, Company A was called to assist with a missing person's investigation at Pinnacle Mountain State Park. A vehicle registered to a missing female out of Dale County Sheriff's Office in Alabama was located inside the recreational area. Arkansas State Park Rangers located the victim's car unoccupied near the playground and maintained surveillance on the car throughout the day and right at sunset, as the park was about to close, a black male emerged from the mountain alone. When

he was questioned about the female; he gave very vague and deceptive answers. The male had an outstanding warrant and was taken into custody by rangers and ASP CID was called. The male suspect was transported to ASP Headquarters for questioning. A cursory search of the vehicle revealed a large amount of dried blood in the spare tire compartment of the vehicle. Special Agent Ryan Jacks and now retired Special Agent Doug Estes were called to handle the investigation. Special Agents Jacks and Estes in a post Miranda interview of the suspect and he initially told officers that he left the victim in Colorado, and he did not know of her whereabouts. He denied having her phone but knowing that he was the last person to see her they knew that she was likely deceased because of the blood in the vehicle. After over an hour and half of misleading agents, the suspect ultimately admitted to shooting the victim and stuffing her body into a suitcase in Colorado. He admitted that he transported her remains in the suitcase to Arkansas where he disposed of her in the suitcase at Pickthorne Lake just north of Jacksonville, Arkansas. At 2:00 a.m. on this same morning, the suspect directed the agents the location where the suitcase with the decomposed body of human remains was found. Due to the condition of the body, identification of the remains could not readily be determined; however, we were fairly certain it was that of Laramie Cline the missing woman from Alabama. Next of kin notification was made and we had to obtain dental records to make a positive identification. The autopsy revealed the woman was shot behind the left ear and was likely shot with her own gun. Because the suspect admitted to killing her in Colorado, we could not charge him with murder in Arkansas, but we did charge him with Abuse of a Corpse and Tampering with Evidence. So, we were able to hold him in Arkansas. We made contact with Colorado Bureau of Investigation to start coordinating the murder investigation with them. Rather than dismiss the work to detectives in the other state Special Agent Ryan Jacks along with Doug Estes continued to follow up the investigation, conducting interviews, verifying information that was provided about the missing handgun that belonged to the victim. They coordinated searches of Pinnacle Mountain State Park to attempt to find the cell phone and the gun. Ultimately all of the information was passed on to Colorado Bureau of Investigation and after two years because of jurisdictional issues and not being able to exactly identify where she was shot, after two years, he was finally charged with murder. On September 2, 2020, following a plea agreement, the suspect pled guilty to Second Degree Murder and was sentenced to 35 years in the Colorado Department of Corrections. I am happy to report that he is still in the Arkansas Department of Corrections serving 12-year term where he was convicted of Abuse of a Corpse based on Special Agent Ryan Jacks efforts.

Kimberly Cline, Laramie's mother, called me following his conviction out of Colorado and wanted to personally thank me for the work that Special Agent Ryan Jacks and Doug Estes had done on her daughters' case, and it really made an impact on her. She had never been to Arkansas, but she came here during one of the suspects parole hearings and we were able to take her to the location where her daughter was killed. And it pains me to think that a woman that had never been to Arkansas, that this was her first and only trip and that every time she sees an Arkansas license plate that is what she is going to be reminded of. But because of Special Agent Jack's work, she at least has something positive to consider.

Colonel Bryant presented an Official Commendation to Special Agent Ryan Jacks

Captain Stacie Rhoads gave an overview of the nomination of Special Agent Ryan Jacks for an Official Commendation.

In January 2020, Alaska State Troopers contacted Company A about a cold case homicide they were currently working to solve. Back in 1996, a 17-year-old female was found along an isolated road in the small fishing village in Sitka, AK. She had been raped, sodomized, and strangled and her remains were found concealed beneath some underbrush. Troopers in Alaska diligently pursued leads in the investigation, however years passed, and the case remained unsolved. Fast forward twenty-four years, they were able to through genealogy DNA, Alaska Troopers were able to identify a potential suspect who lived in Sitka at the time had sense moved to Lonoke County in Arkansas. The suspect lived in a remote area in the Austin community. Company A agents were asked to try to surreptitiously obtain a DNA sample from him through his trash, but because of where he lived and the very isolated area down a dead-end road, we were unable to do that. So, to further investigate, Alaska Troopers traveled to Arkansas to see if we could get this DNA sample, again Special Agent Ryan Jacks volunteered to assist. Special Agent Jacks was briefed for over two hours on the specifics of the case so that he could conduct an effective interview. Along with one of the Alaska Troopers, Special Agent Jacks went to the suspects residence and conducted the interview.

The suspect denied involvement in the murder but also refused to provide a DNA sample for comparison. The officers left and Special Agent Jacks began to construct a DNA Warrant to be able to get the suspects DNA for comparison. They also learned that the suspect had a son who lived in Blytheville, and because this was familial DNA there was also a possibility that his son had committed the murder. When Troopers and Investigators traveled to Mississippi County to conduct the interview of this son the following day, they learned that 30 minutes after they had left his father's house that he had committed suicide. Special Agent Jacks immediately contacted the Lonoke County Sheriff's Office to inquire about the death. He learned that the body was in just a few hours of being cremated so he quickly kicked into action and went to the funeral home to pull DNA for comparison. Special Agent Jacks also obtained warrants for the suspects phones so he could put together a tight timeline for the Alaska Troopers and help them further their investigation. Within just a few days of obtaining the DNA the comparison was made that he was in fact, or he was in fact the murderer of the woman in Sitka, Alaska. And it may not seem like much, but Special Agent Jacks set aside four days of doing his own work to help the Alaska State Troopers. And I read one time that success is learned in the service of others not by serving yourself and Special Agent Jacks is a testament to that and that is why I am glad to be able to get up here and speak on his behalf.

Colonel Bryant presented an Official Commendation to Special Agent Ryan Jacks.

#### DIVISION REPORTS:

##### Fiscal Section – Jenna Castleberry

Ms. Castleberry gave an overview of the reports which were distributed to the Commission. Ms. Castleberry stated we are in the last few weeks of the fiscal year 2021. We are in a good position and are watching everything closely, staying very busy cleaning up outstanding POs, but we expect to end well. We have prepared and submitted the FY22 budget. The most significant item to speak of was the fuel budget, we loaded it higher at \$2.85 a gallon which was about a \$480,000 increase to our budget.

##### Administrative Services – Major Charles Hubbard

Major Hubbard presented an oral summary of the written report distributed to the Commission. He began by reporting the Human Resources/Personnel transactions for the month. The uniformed noncommissioned transactions include five new hires and two terminations. The commissioned transactions include one promotion, three terminations, and thirty-seven transfers and those transfers were mostly recruits transferring from Troop School out into the field. Currently we have six military deployments.

Regarding the ASP Health Plan May paid claims were \$979,597 which was a decrease of \$51,204 from last month and the fund balance is \$43,887 higher than last month for a total fund balance of \$10,063,682.58. The average discount savings for the month of April was about 68%.

A quick update on our recruiting process for the next Troop School. In January 2022, we will start our next school. Currently we have just over 100 contact forms that are being reviewed and we are expecting to receive several more of those in the near future. Also on the training side, we are going to begin our in-service training for all of the commissioned troopers next week and that will run for the next few months. They will complete several practical exercise trainings as well as online training and will be over 30 hours of additional training for the troopers.

#### OTHER BUSINESS:

Commission Chairman Basore asked Colonel Bryant do we have personnel matters to attend to? Colonel Bryant stated yes Mr. Chairman, we have three promotions to consider.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Commissioner Edwards made a motion to go into Executive Session for the purpose of considering employment, appointment, promotion, demotion, disciplining, or resignation of employees, Commissioner Hinkle seconded, and the motion passed. The Commission went into Executive Session at 10:25 a.m.

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Commission Chairman Basore called the meeting back to order at 11:26 a.m. and asked Colonel Bryant if he has any recommendations.

Colonel Bryant stated the first promotion is an ASP Captain position in the Highway Patrol Division, Troop L. My recommendation to the Commission would be Lieutenant Scott Russell. Commissioner Edwards made a motion that Lieutenant Scott Russell be promoted to Captain in the Highway Patrol Division, Troop L. Commissioner Hinkle seconded and the motion passed.

Colonel Bryant stated the next position is an ASP Sergeant position in the Highway Patrol Division, Troop A Pulaski County. My recommendation to the Commission would be Corporal Jay McAllister. Commissioner Hinkle made a motion that Corporal Jay McAllister be promoted to Sergeant in the Highway Patrol Division, Troop A Pulaski County. Commissioner Benton seconded and the motion passed.

Colonel Bryant stated the next position is an ASP Sergeant position in the Highway Patrol Division, Troop F Ashley, Chicot and Drew Counties. My recommendation to the Commission would be TFC Matthew Schanzlin. Commissioner Reeves made a motion that TFC Matthew Schanzlin be promoted to Sergeant in the Highway Patrol Division, Troop F Ashley, Chicot and Drew Counties. Commissioner Benton seconded and the motion passed.

NEXT MEETING:

Commission Chairman Basore stated the next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on Thursday, July 8, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

With no more business, Commission Chairman Basore adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

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Commission Chairman

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Commission Secretary