

**Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association
Pennsylvania Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission**

**Regular Commission Meeting
October 24, 2024**

Call to Order

The Regular Commission meeting of the Pennsylvania Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission was called to order on Thursday, October 24, 2024, at 10:30 a.m. at the Sheraton Harrisburg Hershey Hotel, Harrisburg, PA. Chief Benson presided.

Members Present

Coordinator Adams, Chairman Chief Benson, Director Bohn, Chief Cortazzo, Captain Crone, Admin Assistant Feaser, Chief Hendershot, Chief Hettinger, Chief Kitzinger, Chief Lash, Esquire Lavery, Corporal Madrak, Director McVey, Sergeant Ross, Captain Sharif, Chief Splain, Chief Wagner

Chief Bergmann, Chief Ficco, Chief Haberman, Chief Kilgore, Chief Lauth, Chief Scalzo, Chief Sokoloski, and Chief Swartz were absent.

The commission stood, recited the Pledge of Allegiance, and introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes

The approval of the meeting minutes from the July 23, 2024, Regular Commission meeting was tabled until later in the meeting.

Introduction of Guests

Also present were representatives from the following agencies: Sheriff Tony Guy, Lieutenant Thomas Plunkard, Sergeant Jennifer Hamrick, Deputy Dave Mangerie, Deputy Tim Causey, Beaver County Sheriff's Office; Chief Eric Holmes, Deputy Chief Jennifer Ford, Duquesne University Police Department; Chief Jason Yerg, Hampden Township Police Department; Chief Scott Fida, Deputy Chief Adam Dunning, Dave Bonacquisti, Horsham Township Police Department; Chief Chris Prescott, Sergeant Matthew Coxford, Lock Haven University Police Department; Chief Jeffrey Perry, Sergeant Raymi Gausline, V.P. of Facilities and Police Stacy Wagner, Chief Ramon Welkom, Sergeant Robert Neiderhiser, Mansfield University Police Department; Chief James Sabath, Sergeant Sean Orr, Newtown Borough Police Department; Commissioner Kevin Bethel, Officer Chris Frazier, Philadelphia City Police Department; Detective Sergeant Jon Koretzky, Sergeant Marc Mansour, Solebury Township Police Department; Chief Robert Martin, Lieutenant Andrew Verbos, Susquehanna Township Police Department; Chief Thomas Bush, Sergeant Christopher Jones, Detective Michael Molineux, Detective Jack Keith, Officer Allen Reeves, Police Administrator Ray Fuller, Upper Chichester Township Police Department

Assessment Reports for Consent Agenda

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Duquesne University Police Department
Hampden Township Police Department
Horsham Township Police Department
Philadelphia City Police Department
Solebury Township Police Department
Susquehanna Township Police Department

On a motion by Sergeant Ross, seconded by Chief Hettinger, the consent agenda was approved, and all agencies were granted Accredited Status for an additional 3 years. Chief Hendershot and Corporal Madrak abstained from Horsham Township Police Department. Sergeant Ross abstained from Philadelphia City Police Department.

Premier Agency Recommendations

The following agencies have successfully completed five or more reassessments and are eligible for Premier Status: Duquesne University Police Department, Hampden Township Police Department, Horsham Township Police Department, and Susquehanna Township Police Department. On a motion made by Chief Hettinger and seconded by Corporal Madrak all four agencies were granted Premier Status for 2024-2027. Chief Hendershot and Corporal Madrak abstained from Horsham Township Police Department.

Assessment Reports

Beaver County Sheriff's Office – Presented by Team Leader Officer Baldwin

Chief Lash questioned the lack of temporary holding as this is unusual for a sheriff's office. Officer Baldwin advised that they take the detainees straight from the cell to the courtroom.

Sergeant Hamrick commented that the PLEAC conference was a big help for them in becoming accredited.

On a motion by Chief Cortazzo and second by Director McVey, Beaver County Sheriff's Office was granted accredited status. All agreed.

Lock Haven University Police - Presented by Team Leader Captain McGarr

Chief Prescott thanked the Commission and assessors. He said that accreditation is already benefiting the department around them. Neighboring departments are taking action to raise their fingerprinting rates.

On a motion by Chief Hendershot and seconded by Sergeant Ross, Lock Haven University Police Department was granted accredited status. All agreed.

Mansfield University Police - Presented by Team Leader Officer Baldwin

Chief Benson commented that the department having 32 file maintenances was a large amount. Officer Baldwin explained that the department had all their proofs in order, but some needed to be changed as they weren't what the assessment team was looking for.

On a motion by Sergeant Ross and seconded by Chief Hendershot, Mansfield University Police Department was granted accredited status. All agreed.

Chief Benson turned the meeting over to Chief Cortazzo as he presented the report for Newtown Borough Police.

Newtown Borough Police - Presented by Team Leader Chief Benson

The department has an average of 20 arrests annually. Chief Wagner commended the department for having a 100% annual fingerprint compliance rate for those arrests. Chief Benson noted that when he asked Chief Sabath why he was accrediting his agency, he responded that the citizens deserved it.

On a motion by Chief Splain and seconded by Chief Lash, Newtown Borough Police Department was granted accredited status. Chief Benson, Chief Hendershot and Corporal Madrak abstained.

Chief Cortazzo turned the meeting back over to Chief Benson.

Upper Chichester Township Police – Presented by Team Leader Captain McGarr

Captain McGarr commented that their department is well organized and very professional. It is evident that they are dedicated to accreditation and their community.

On a motion by Corporal Madrak and seconded by Chief Kitzinger, Upper Chichester Township Police Department was granted accredited status. Chief Hettinger and Sergeant Ross abstained.

Committee Reports

Assessment Committee

Committee Chairman Chief Hendershot presented the Commission with a report of suggested changes for assessments. The Committee suggests the following:

- 1) *Previously there was a restriction on selecting assessors from the same county as the requesting agency and a restriction from directly neighboring counties. If these restrictions are currently in place, the Committee recommends that the restriction be amended to just the county of the agency requesting the assessment.*

Chief Benson questioned if no other assessor is available can an assessor from the same county be used? Chief Hendershot advised that this may be done as a last resort.

- 2) *The rate paid to assessors should be increased from \$300.00 per day to \$400.00 per day.*

Director Bohn confirmed that this will be present before the PCPA Executive Board for discussion.

Corporal Madrak made a motion to accept the Assessment Committee's report. Sergeant Ross seconded the motion. All agreed.

At 12:01 p.m., the meeting recessed for lunch.

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At 12:35 p.m., the meeting reconvened. Chief Splain did not return due to another meeting.

Once reconvened, the Commission discussed the meeting minutes from the July 23, 2024, meeting. Chief Hettinger made a motion to accept the minutes of the July 23, 2024, Regular Commission meeting. Chief Wagner seconded the motion. All agreed. Corporal Madrak discussed his disputes with the meeting minutes. Under New Business: ByLaw Changes, Corporal Madrak addressed his concerns that he was misquoted in bullets 2 and 3. He also stated that he had thought there was to be another meeting of the Special Committee to discuss the ByLaw changes but that was not noted in the minutes.

Standards Committee

Committee Chairman Captain Crone presented the Commission with the meeting minutes from the September 12th Standards Committee meeting and recommended changes to the Standards manual. Several items were discussed on the presented changes:

Chief Hettinger and Chief Lash do not believe that 1.9.4 should be made a standard. It is important that we encourage departments to recognize their employees' work; however, we should not be mandating it. However, the Standards Committee believes that this is a chance to do something positive.

Chief Hettinger questioned if a standard is needed for automated red-light camera systems when departments are not the ones regulating them. Chief Lash agreed that it isn't needed as third-party vendors are the ones regulating them. Captain Crone believes a standard is needed to address this since a department must be accredited to have one of the cameras. Director McVey agrees that a standard is needed since the police departments have the authority to issue the citation; whereas, the third-party does not.

Chief Hettinger suggested that new standard 4.11.2 be simplified to say departments must comply with Act 22. Captain Crone disagrees as the assessors will not know what to look for, and some may not know what Act 22 is.

To ensure that every Commission member can address their questions on the new standards, Chief Benson instructed that feedback be given to the Standards Committee by the end of November. A workflow will be created in PowerDMS in which each member can make suggestions and approve/deny the changes.

Director McVey made a motion to accept the Standards Committee report. Corporal Madrak seconded the motion. All agreed.

Administrative Committee

Committee Chairman Chief Hettinger had no report.

Strategic Planning Committee

Committee Chairman Chief Wagner had no report but asked the Commission to speak with him if they have anything for the committee to discuss. He is also looking for members to join the committee as he is now the only member.

Coordinator's Report

Coordinator Adams discussed his report. He informed the Commission that starting January 1, 2025, premier agencies will have only two assessors conducting the assessment. He will be in contact with the team members to make sure that this change works. Chief Hettinger questioned if we should simply the report for those assessments such as taking out the demographics section. Coordinator Adams doesn't believe they should as most chiefs appreciate having those details in the report. Captain Crone also pointed out that it is good to have those details for new Commissioners who have not been on the Commission long enough to have seen those agencies before.

Coordinator Adams informed the Commission that Chief Dave Holl is conducting a doctoral dissertation research study on Pennsylvania accreditation. Chief Holl will be reaching out to agencies requesting participation.

Chief Kitzinger made a motion to accept the Coordinator's report. Director McVey seconded the motion. All agreed.

Old Business

Esquire Lavery presented the Commission with the updated draft version of "Article 19 – Conflicts of Interest, Disclosure of Certain Interests, and Code of Ethics". He opened by saying that the Commission is so important because it is a board that strives for best practice. This draft of Article 19 shows best practice for code of ethics and conflicts. He believes that since we hold our police departments to a high standard with accreditation that the Commission must also be held to a high standard. That is why these ByLaws either meet or exceed state law.

Chief Lash made a motion to accept the ByLaw changes. The floor was opened for Commissioners to discuss their opinions. The following sections were discussed: *Section 4A, Section 4B, Section 4F.*

Captain Crone questioned if the Executive Board has a similar document in place for their ByLaws.

Esquire Lavery confirmed that they do not currently, but it is his recommendation that they adopt similar changes to their ByLaws.

Section 4A

Captain Crone gave an analogy to clarify what this bullet addresses. If he is contracted to work for agency A by LEAS, and agency B also uses LEAS as their

consulting company, but he does not assist them. If he votes on agency B is there a conflict of interest even though he has nothing to do with agency B.

Esquire Lavey confirmed that there is a potential conflict of interest. Chief Benson agreed that it gives the appearance of voting bias.

Captain Crone questioned if someone brought this conflict to the attention of the chairman or coordinator.

Coordinator Adams confirmed that the PCPA received a letter in which an individual pointed out the conflict of having consultants on the Commission. Previously, other Commission members have also talked to him about the conflict.

Section 4B

Captain Crone believes this bullet silences him. He believes that any member on the Commission should be able to speak on any issue. If he has an opinion, it should be heard, and it should be up to the other Commission members to decide the intent behind the suggestion. He questions the point of him being on the Commission if he is unable to express his opinion.

Corporal Madrak agreed with Captain Crone. He believes they shouldn't vote, but they should have a voice. He does not think it is right that they won't have a voice.

Esquire Lavery agreed that everyone should have a voice. He explained that this bullet is not meant to silence anyone. If a member has a conflict, they can speak after the consideration of accreditation for an agency is voted on, and it will be recorded in the minutes. Esquire Lavery stated that the member 1) mustn't vote, 2) must show abstention 3) can't be part of the deliberation.

Captain Crone does not believe that the wording in bullet B reflects this. Since every consulting agency will profit from the standards updates, should he not be part of the Standards Committee and discussing those changes.

Chief Hettinger agreed with Captain Crone. He believes that the language says that no commission member doubling as a consultant can be on a committee.

Chief Lash pointed out that the standards pertain to everyone and not just consultants benefit from the changes. He believes the wording reads that when a specific agency is being presented that uses a consulting group, Commissioners contracted with that consulting group can't be part of the discussion.

Chief Benson questioned if Section 4B could be taken out and everything that needed to be addressed would still be there.

Esquire Lavery advised that Section 4B is essential.

Corporal Madrak believes that the wording should be narrowed since there are many different interpretations.

Esquire Lavery explained that if an issue arises with any bullet, it can be amended. However, he believes that the language is clear bullet B.

Chief Hendershot thinks the language from bullet C should be mirrored in bullet B.

Chief Lash believes that the wording is already the same since bullet C says "including but not limited to".

Corporal Madrak suggested the wording in bullet B be revised to include the following at the end of the first sentence: **including, but not limited to accreditation or reaccreditation of law enforcement agencies that will be voted on at a meeting.**

Captain Sharif said that if a written policy is interpreted differently by 2 or more, then it should be rewritten. He questioned what harm adding Corporal Madrak’s wording posed.

Esquire Lavery stated that the harm is that the current wording aligns with the rest of the document. The bullets are to generally address every issue. This is the wording that was taken from multiple different states’ ByLaws. Esquire Lavery recommends the wording stays the same.

Chief Lash and Captain Sharif both believe the wording in bullet B reflects the wording in bullet C.

Section 4F

Captain Crone believes the wording should be revised to read “their positions as PLEAC Commissioner”. References to your influence as a Commissioner should be eliminated but not references to your knowledge that you’ve gained as a PLEAC assessor.

Esquire Lavery said he would make that change.

Chief Lash amended his motion to include the changes to Section 4F. Director McVey seconded the motion.

After much deliberation, it was decided that Section 4B would also be revised to include “*including, but not limited to accreditation or reaccreditation of law enforcement agencies that will be voted on at a meeting*”. Chief Lash made a second amendment to his motion to include the changes to Section 4B and Section 4F. Director McVey seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the results are as follows:

<i>In favor</i>	<i>Opposed</i>
Chief Benson	Chief Hendershot
Chief Cortazzo	
Captain Crone	
Chief Hettinger	
Chief Kitzinger	
Chief Lash	
Esquire Lavery	
Corporal Madrak	
Director McVey	
Sergeant Ross	
Captain Sharif	
Chief Wagner	

The motion carried 12-1.

New Business

Coordinator Adams presented the Commission with an amendment to the Administrative Manual which will address agency mandatory PLEAC meeting attendance. On a motion by Chief Lash and seconded by Captain Crone, the changes were adopted. All agreed.

Chief Benson read the resignation letter from Chief David Steffen. The Central PA Chief of Police Association has selected Chief Josh Kilgore from the Northern Lancaster County Regional Police Department to take his place. Chief Benson also read the resignation letter from Chief Carl Scalzo. Coordinator Adams will be reaching out to Northeast Chiefs to inform them of the vacant seat.

Chief Benson discussed the schedule for the PLEAC quarterly meetings for the years 2025, 2026, and 2027.

For the Good of the Order

Captain Crone advised that PowerDMS is revising their system, and updates will be available to the public in the next few months.

Corporal Madrak thanked Coordinator Adams and Captain Crone for participating in and providing valuable insight to the PPAC meetings.

Coordinator Adams informed the Commission that there is no update on DOJ credentialing, but he will inform them when there is.

Date of Next Meeting

The next Regular Commission meeting will be held on Thursday, January 23, 2025, at the Sheraton Harrisburg Hershey Hotel.

Adjournment

At 1:45 p.m., a motion was made by Chief Hettinger to adjourn; seconded by Corporal Madrak. All agreed.

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Abstentions Noted in Advance

<u>Commissioner</u>	<u>Business Interest</u>	<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Reason(s)</u>
Benson	No	Newtown Boro	Assessment Team
Hendershot	Yes	Horsham Twp	LEAS Client
		Newtown Boro	LEAS Client
Hettinger	Yes	Upper Chichester	Aspirant Client
Madrak	Yes	Horsham Twp	LEAS Client
		Newtown Boro	LEAS Client
Ross	No	Philadelphia City	Own Dept.
	Yes	Upper Chichester Twp	Aspirant Client

Commission Member / Consultants Stating Their Intent Not to Abstain

Crone LEAS