

PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY
CONSTABLES' EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD

Approved Minutes of the February 13, 2020 Meeting

Members Present

Francis Peitz Jr., Constable, Allegheny Co.
Craig Westover, Constable, Venango Co.
Major Thomas E. Dubovi, PSP

Commission Staff Present

Sherry Leffler, Constables' Program
Tracy Beaver, Constables' Program
John Pfau, PCCD
Debra Sandifer, PCCD
Beth Romero, PCCD
Michael Pennington, PCCD

Members Absent

Thomas Brletic, MDJ, Allegheny Co.
John Bruno, Constable, Dauphin Co.

Visitors

Jeff Watson, IUP
Deidre Beiter, Temple University
Anthony Luongo, Temple University
Louis Marcozzi, Delaware Co.
Daniel Hollenbaugh, Adams Co.
Antione Malloy, Allegheny Co.

Stephen Teller, Montgomery Co.
Todd Rich, Montgomery Co.
Brian Webster, Perry Co.
Alex Farganis, Lancaster Co.
Joshua Fitting, Adams Co.

I. Call to Order:

The Constables' Education and Training Board (Board) meeting was held at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, February 13, 2020 at the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), 3101 N. Front Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Vice-Chair Francis Peitz called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and asked all to join him in the Pledge of Allegiance. Board and staff introductions were then made to audience members.

Chief Counsel Debra Sandifer advised those present at the Board Meeting that the meeting will be audio recorded. A notification advising of this was noted on the sign-in sheet and all Board Members were in affirmative recognition and consent. No Board Members objected consent of the recording.

II. Action Items:

Ms. Sherry Leffler advised the Board does not have a quorum and therefore cannot act on any of the Action Items listed on the agenda. These will be tabled and brought before the Board Members for action during the May 7, 2020 Board Meeting.

III. Discussion Items:

The first Discussion Item Ms. Leffler brought to the Board's attention is the possibility of constables wanting refunded class payments. There are 26 constables in the 80-Hour Basic Training class and each person has paid the required \$1,125.00. There is a case of one constable who made payment for a failed class, rescheduled, and was unable to take the class due to an illness. This individual has already asked about a refund and Ms. Leffler wanted to bring this to the Board's attention. It will be brought forth at the May 7, 2020 meeting. Currently there is no mechanism in place for refunds. Mr. John Pfau spoke and advised early on in the history of the Board, refunds were previously approved, but it would take at least two to three months to get a refund check issued to the constable. Staff will confer with fiscal for input and guidance. Constable Craig Westover asked about the possibility of the Program accepting credit card payments. In talking with the constables in the 80-Hour Basic Training class, constables were saying they had some issues coming up with the full amount, but paying by credit card would allow a constable to make monthly payments. Ms. Leffler stated Staff are looking into third party vendors, but it is a lot of work on IT Staff to incorporate this into the Constables' Certification, Education, and Training System (CCETS). Mr. Pfau advised there are other state agencies, Department of Motor Vehicles for example, who do use third party vendors. He advised right now, Keystone Login and Canvas are the Program's main priorities, and Staff do not have the time available to look into third party vendors for accepting credit card payments. Constable Westover stated he noticed there is a different attitude among the constables in the 80-Hour Basic Training. They are more attentive and want to make sure they get the most out of their investment.

The second Discussion Item Ms. Leffler brought forth was to advise a candidate has accepted the vacant position and would start sometime in March. Constable Westover asked about the vacancies in the Board Members. Executive Director Mike Pennington advised the Court Administrator position is in the process of getting appointed. He is awaiting a nomination for the County Commissioner's position. Mr. Pennington will reach out again to the County Commissioner's Association.

IV. Informational Items:

The first Informational Item was an update on Keystone Login. Ms. Leffler advised there are still about 100 phone calls to return to constables. Between Ms. Leffler and Ms. Beaver, over 1,200 phone calls have been received and over 500 emails have been received from constables who needed help with the Keystone Login migration process. Out of 1,211 active and certified constables, about 915 have migrated over from the old PA Login system. 28 constables have not been successfully migrated and IT Staff are looking into those issues.

The second Information Item was an update on the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) activation. Ms. Leffler advised 1,256 records were sent to Temple University for mass enrollment. 127 constables have started the activation process and 87 constables have actually completed the "Reacting to Witnessed Criminal Behavior" module. Ms. Leffler has received positive feedback from constables. She stated she appreciates the feedback, both good and bad. Mr. Pfau advised the Deputy Sheriff's Program

also launched with Canvas. Between the two Programs, Temple enrolled and activated about 3,200 people. Mr. Tony Luongo, Temple University, reported there have been 78 Help Desk tickets created since Canvas went live on January 22-23, 2020. Of those 78 tickets, 58 have been resolved and 20 are still pending. The 20 pending are due to either Temple needs to look into the issue, or they are waiting on a response from the constable. About 55% of the tickets are relating to those who cannot activate their accessnet account email. The email has gone to either their spam or junk folder and needs to be resent. 26% of the Help Desk tickets are “how do I access/navigate the system.” The remaining 19% are general login issues of a password needs reset or questions about Keystone Login, which are referred back to PCCD Staff. Mr. Pfau advised as the Programs evolve, Staff will be better able to determine what data can be reported. Ms. Leffler stated there are 17 constables who have not received the activation email and Staff are working with Temple to get those emails out so constables can complete the online training by December 4, 2020.

The third Informational Item was the Status of Certifications presented by Ms. Leffler to the Board. As of January 29, 2020, there were 1,077 constables and deputy constable currently listed as active and certified. Of these, 835 or 78% were also certified to carry a firearm in the performance of their constable duties.

Since the inception of the Program in 1996, there have been a total of 4,609 individuals who successfully completed basic training or the waiver examination and were certified by the Board. Ms. Leffler advised constables can encourage their Clerk of Courts to become CCETS users so they can input insurances directly into the system. There are about 31 counties who are users of CCETS.

V. Public Voice:

Louis Marcozzi (Constable, Delaware County) mentioned constables doing security work and not generating a Constable Education Training Act (CETA) fee that the courts can collect. He questioned if there could be some type of incentive for constables to be financially reimbursed if they do work for the courts? Mr. Pfau advised this was a suggestion that came from the Workgroup. He stated the 25 constables who are going through the 80-Hour Basic Training now are going to be followed about every six months through the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC) to see if any of them do any work for the courts. Ms. Leffler stated the data received from AOPC on the 2016 Basic Training Course verified those constables did not do any work for the courts. At least two constables from that Course have provided documentation verifying they have done work for the courts. This comes down to the Magisterial District Judges (MDJs) not properly assessing the fee. Staff will go back to AOPC for additional information on specific dockets. Constable Westover stated this skews the data, but the money charged and collected for the 80-Hour Basic Training is revenue neutral and not for profit. Constable Peitz stated the actions taken by Staff, based upon suggestions from the Workgroup, have pushed the Program further as it was predicted the Fund would be out of money at this point in time if actions were not taken. Constable Marcozzi also informed the Board there is a one-page memorandum increasing the CETA fee coming from Representative Stephen Barrar’s office. Mr. Pfau advised it will still take two to three years for this increase to impact the fund.

Brian Webster (Constable, Perry County) questioned if the CETA could be an “auto-fill” line item so it takes the control out of the MDJ’s office staff. Ms. Leffler advised AOPC will not make it a mandatory field as other fees would then need to be marked as mandatory. Constable Hollenbaugh stated other

surcharges are not going out there collecting the fee. Constables are going out and doing the work to collect the fee. He asked if the Board has reached out to AOPC. Mr. Pfau stated not recently, but an effort has been made in the past and AOPC Staff do cooperate with the Constable Program's Staff. Constable Westover stated different judges have different mentalities regarding the \$5.00 surcharge fee.

Stephen Teller (Constable, Montgomery County) questioned about the work not being done. Ms. Leffler advised that if the fee was assessed and there was work done by a constable. Mr. Pfau stated the fee is only assessed on civil and criminal work done by constables. The surcharge fee is not assessed on prisoner and mental health transports, but a constable has to be trained and certified before being able to do this work.

VI. Adjournment:

Vice-Chair Peitz asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:39 a.m. A motion was made by Constable Craig Westover to adjourn the meeting and the motion was second by Major Thomas Dubovi.

VOTING AYE: Peitz, Ruddock, Westover

VOTING NAY: None

ABSTAINING: None

The next Board meeting will be held on May 7, 2020 at PCCD's Office in Harrisburg.