

In Re: Law Enforcement Officer Standards & Training

Transcript of Meeting

March 5, 2026

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Transcript of Meeting 3/5/2026

**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
BOARD ON LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER
STANDARDS & TRAINING**

TRANSCRIPT OF MEETING

**Taken at Mississippi Department of
Public Safety Planning,
152 Watford Parkway Drive,
Canton, Mississippi,
on Thursday, March 5, 2026,
beginning at approximately 9:00 a.m.**

REPORTED BY:

ELLA J. HARDWICK, CVR-M, CCR #1749

Transcript of Meeting 3/5/2026

1 **BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

2 **Jim H. Johnson, Chair, Sheriff, Lee County**

3 **Amy Vanderford, Director, Office of**
4 **Standards & Training**

5 **John Quaka, Chief, Tupelo Police Department**

6 **Michael Hall, Chief, Guntown Police Department**

7 **Lindsay Cranford, Esq., Office of the**
8 **Attorney General**

9 **Kassie Coleman, Esq.**

10 **Robert Hancock, Constable, Mississippi**
11 **Constables Association**

12 **Kenny Rogers, Chief, Mississippi State**
13 **University**

14 **Randy Johnson, Sheriff, Jasper County**

15 **Tadd Pitts, Colonel, Director of Highway Patrol**

16 **Board Attorney Present:**

17 **Luke Williamson, Esq.**

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1 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: We're going
2 to call the Board of Law
3 Enforcement Standards and Training
4 meeting to order this morning. We
5 welcome everybody here.

6 First of all, we're going to
7 ask Kenny Rogers from Mississippi
8 State University to do our prayer,
9 and Sheriff Johnson to do our
10 pledge. If everyone will please
11 stand and face the flag.

12 (PRAYER.)

13 (PLEDGE.)

14 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.
15 You may be seated.

16 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: I would
17 like to take just a moment to
18 recognize Deputy Richard Allen
19 Haggard, who passed away in the
20 line of duty, and to present this
21 certificate to the sheriff on his
22 behalf to give to his family, and
23 if we can, just have a moment of
24 silence.

25 (PAUSE.)

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1 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.

2 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Thank
3 you.

4 UNIDENTIFIED: Director, would
5 it be possible for a picture to be
6 taken?

7 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Yes.
8 Right now? Okay.

9 (OFF THE RECORD.)

10 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Thank y'all
11 very much.

12 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Roll
13 call. Honorable Anthony Chancelor,
14 Mississippi Sheriffs' Association.

15 (NO RESPONSE.)

16 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Royce
17 Cole, DPS counsel.

18 (NO RESPONSE.)

19 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Honorable
20 Kassie Coleman, District Attorney.

21 MS. COLEMAN: Present.

22 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Honorable
23 Lindsay Cranford, Office of the
24 Attorney General.

25 (NO RESPONSE.)

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1 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Chief
2 Michael Hall, Guntown Police Chief.
3 CHIEF HALL: Present.
4 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Honorable
5 Robert Hancock, Mississippi
6 Constables Association.
7 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: Present.
8 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Captain
9 Brandon Hendry, Director of Law
10 Enforcement Training Academy in
11 Hattiesburg and Harrison County.
12 (NO RESPONSE.)
13 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Sheriff
14 Jim Johnson, Lee County.
15 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Here.
16 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Colonel
17 Tadd Pitts, Mississippi Highway
18 Patrol.
19 COLONEL PITTS: Here.
20 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Chief
21 John Quaka, Tupelo Police Chief.
22 CHIEF QUAKA: Here.
23 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Chief
24 Kenneth Rogers, Campus Law
25 Enforcement Officers Association,

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1 Mississippi State University.

2 CHIEF ROGERS: Here.

3 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Chief
4 Billy Seal, Mississippi Chiefs
5 Association.

6 (NO RESPONSE.)

7 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD:
8 Commissioner Sean Tindell,
9 Department of Public Safety.

10 (NO RESPONSE.)

11 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Sheriff
12 Randy Johnson.

13 SHERIFF JOHNSON: Here.

14 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Luke
15 Williamson, Board counsel, Attorney
16 General's Office.

17 MR. WILLIAMSON: Here.

18 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Thank you,
19 Director. We do have a quorum.
20 I'll take up a motion from the
21 Board to accept the agenda that is
22 placed before you. It's a little
23 bit different than the tentative
24 one that was sent out by email, but
25 I'll entertain a vote to accept it.

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1 CHIEF QUAKA: I make a motion.

2 MS. COLEMAN: Second.

3 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Have a
4 second. Any discussion?

5 (NO RESPONSE.)

6 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All in favor
7 say aye and raise your right hand.

8 ALL: Aye.

9 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Any opposed?

10 (NO RESPONSE.)

11 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: There are
12 none. Item 4 is the approval of
13 the minutes, which was emailed out
14 to the Board. I'll entertain a
15 motion to accept them.

16 CHIEF QUAKA: I'll make a
17 motion.

18 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Motion from
19 Chief Quaka. Do I have a second?

20 SHERIFF JOHNSON: Second.

21 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: We have a
22 second. Any discussion?

23 (NO RESPONSE.)

24 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All in favor
25 say aye and raise your right hand.

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1 ALL: Aye.

2 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Any opposed?

3 (NO RESPONSE.)

4 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: There are
5 none. Old business. There are no
6 hearings. And the next item is
7 reimbursement.

8 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD:
9 Reimbursements was discussed at the
10 last meeting, and we are looking
11 at, across the boards, from law
12 enforcement, telecommunicators, and
13 jailers to have some sort of policy
14 set that we are not reimbursing for
15 those people or departments who are
16 not in compliance.

17 We discussed this at the last
18 meeting. I wanted to bring it back
19 to the table. The Commissioner
20 asked me to draft something. I did
21 that, but then Luke reeled me in
22 and said we don't necessarily need
23 to be as punitive.

24 And so, we are still working on
25 what we are going to do for these

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1 departments. I just dealt with a
2 situation with a department that
3 owed one of the training academies
4 about \$16,000, and we advised them
5 them what had happened at the Board
6 meetings, that across the board,
7 telecommunicators -- this
8 department only has
9 telecommunicators and law
10 enforcement.

11 And so, they are paying the
12 bill. But I think that there needs
13 to be something in place for these
14 departments who are not paying
15 their bills that we, this Board,
16 this office, needs to be able to
17 set some sort of noncompliance
18 standard.

19 MR. WILLIAMSON: And I would
20 just note, for the record, the
21 discussion we had was concerning
22 the new statutory authority that
23 the Board got to withhold
24 reimbursement for agencies who are
25 noncompliant with their termination

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1 notices.

2 I know the Board is familiar
3 with that. We had the author of
4 that bill come speak to us before
5 he introduced it. That's been the
6 law since last July 1.

7 However, that is the only type
8 of noncompliance that the Board has
9 any specific statutory authority
10 for, and there is a statutory
11 requirement for reimbursements to
12 be made of at least 50 percent of
13 cost. So for the Board to be able
14 to not fulfill its statutory
15 obligation, I feel like we would
16 need some statutory authority to
17 rest on rather than just policy.

18 MS. COLEMAN: Luke, I thought
19 that we discussed at one point that
20 we would -- since it is a
21 reimbursement, that we would make
22 sure that it was paid before we
23 reimbursed it. So would that not
24 solve the problem of them not
25 paying their bill?

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1 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: And we
2 are. They are signing the
3 affidavit. That has changed since,
4 what was it? Two years ago when we
5 discovered that there was a lot of
6 money out there. And I think at
7 one academy, it was over \$88,000
8 that was owed. They were signing
9 the affidavit and waiting on the
10 reimbursement to pay the bill,
11 which is theft, and, you know,
12 integrity issues.

13 And so, it's gotten better.
14 And we do find out after the fact
15 that sometimes they're not paying
16 their bill, and they're not turning
17 in anything for reimbursements.
18 They are going to the training
19 academies. They're receiving the
20 training, they're receiving an
21 invoice, and they're not paying the
22 bill.

23 MR. WILLIAMSON: I think under
24 that situation, Director, that the
25 academy and the office would be

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1 within its authority to require
2 proof of payment since it is -- to
3 Kassie's point, since it is
4 reimbursement, that implies the
5 fact that there's been money paid
6 first.

7 So I think proof of payment as
8 a condition of reimbursement is
9 perfectly in line with what the
10 statute allows and with what the
11 policy should be.

12 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Okay.

13 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: Does DPS
14 have that standard policy that you
15 have to have the invoice, canceled
16 check?

17 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: That is
18 the reimbursement policy now, DFA
19 requires the canceled check -- or
20 the cleared check. Not the
21 cancelled --

22 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: The cleared
23 check.

24 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: -- the
25 cleared check, front and back.

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1 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: Guess all
2 we have to do is tell them we
3 follow that same policy.

4 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: We do.
5 Okay? Okay. Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Is that all
7 on the reimbursement?

8 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Yes.

9 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Okay.

10 MR. WILLIAMSON: Mr. Chair,
11 you'll have a policy discussion
12 about endorsement later that's for
13 individuals who transfer after
14 completion of the academies.

15 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Right.
16 Yeah. That's the next --

17 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: We don't
18 want to cover it now?

19 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Right.

20 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Okay. All
21 right. Nothing else on that part
22 of the reimbursement matter. We'll
23 go to the next item of new
24 business, which is ACADIS.

25 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Ryan

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1 Gholson, who is the ACADIS manager.
2 Riley Good is here. She actually
3 works for ACADIS. Riley, come on
4 up. You're not going to be able to
5 sit back there. And Shawn Anderson
6 is here, as well, with ACADIS, and
7 they're going to do a little bit of
8 a presentation to tell you guys
9 where we are.

10 MR. GHOLSON: Good morning.
11 All right. Just since the last
12 time we all got together and met,
13 you know, I had come on board back
14 in November, and I think around
15 that time we had about 98 agencies,
16 give or take, in the system.

17 Since that time, we now have
18 over 250. So we've been very busy.
19 I have not slept much in the last
20 45 days. We've got 4,202 active
21 digital certifications that are now
22 issued in ACADIS, about 671
23 part-time certs. We have 6,887
24 people, person records, in the
25 system. 5,545 portal accounts, so

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1 officers that have access to their
2 records now is over 5,000 -- over
3 5500.

4 Like I said, 250 organizations,
5 about 292 agency-level
6 administrators, point of contacts,
7 as they're referred to in ACADIS.

8 We have started with the
9 academies. I've gotten Harrison
10 County in the system. They are
11 actually managing their students in
12 there. I've gotten MLEOTA's, a
13 class just started at MLEOTA. They
14 started out with 98, so we've got
15 93 of those that are still there.
16 They're in the system. SRPSI and
17 Mississippi Delta Community
18 College.

19 So I am trying to get all the
20 academies white-listed, their IP
21 addresses, so they can have
22 administrative access. My goal --
23 it may be a little lofty, but I'm
24 still thinking that by maybe third
25 or fourth quarter that we can have

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1 them testing in ACADIS and start
2 administering all of their
3 examinations through that so that
4 we have now a record of the testing
5 and a platform for testing.

6 I believe that -- I believe
7 we'll get there. I'm hopeful. I'm
8 going to email the heads of the
9 Sheriffs' Association, the Chiefs
10 Association to try to get the rest
11 of the rosters. We're starting to
12 run dry.

13 I think we just got to do a
14 little push to get the rest of the
15 agencies to send us their stuff and
16 get them imported into the system,
17 but we've moved the needle a long
18 way in the last 45 days.

19 I pulled the pin on the
20 electronic application grenade
21 yesterday. So since that time,
22 since yesterday at about 1530, I've
23 gotten 22 applications that were
24 successfully submitted into ACADIS.
25 The turnaround time -- so the

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1 Director has hired a couple of
2 people to try to start getting them
3 into ACADIS, to start getting them
4 acclimated to that system so that
5 we can kind of transition from the
6 old way of doing things to the new.

7 Literally, yesterday -- excuse
8 me -- if it's a new officer that
9 has nothing in there, background,
10 you know, nothing that causes -- I
11 can turn that application around in
12 15 minutes, and they can have a
13 training decision, and they can
14 start scheduling these folks in the
15 academy and getting them there.

16 So literally, yesterday, it was
17 15 minutes. It was a brand-new
18 officer. Nothing in the
19 background. It had all been vetted
20 by the agency. They just have to
21 coordinate with the academy. So
22 once we get people that are trained
23 up, the backlog is going to go
24 away. It's going to be
25 nonexistent.

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1 Now, there may be a little bit
2 of a bottleneck between now and
3 then because applications will
4 start coming in, and it's literally
5 me and Amy right now that are
6 trying to process applications.
7 But once we break that logjam,
8 you're going to start seeing a lot
9 more responsiveness as far as
10 applications being approved, people
11 getting -- putting officers on the
12 street, which is what we're here
13 for.

14 And with that, I'll entertain
15 any questions.

16 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Any
17 questions?

18 (NO RESPONSE.)

19 MR. GHOLSON: Okay. This is
20 something that y'all can do for me,
21 though. I have taken a lot of time
22 and effort to put information into
23 ACADIS on the portal so that
24 agencies can help themselves,
25 because my phone is ringing off the

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1 hook. Emails are coming in that I
2 cannot -- and it's not that I'm not
3 wanting to. I just literally don't
4 have the time.

5 So if you would push the word
6 out on the street and to the
7 organizations, then, there is a
8 section of that portal, it's called
9 the documents library. There is
10 about a dozen videos there that are
11 less than five minutes long that
12 will show them how to do what they
13 need to do with ACADIS.

14 I'm getting phone calls and
15 emails about how do I do this and
16 how do I do that. The information
17 is there, if you have an account.
18 If you don't have an account,
19 that's a different story. I
20 understand that.

21 But if y'all could push that
22 out, that would help me
23 tremendously, because there's
24 just -- I just literally can't
25 answer all the emails and phone

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1 calls that I'm getting about it.

2 So with that, any other questions
3 or thoughts, comments, concerns?

4 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Now, you do
5 plan on coming to -- I can only
6 speak for the Sheriffs'
7 Association, in June, to do some
8 presentation, because I think
9 that's going to be your biggest
10 captive audience. I don't know
11 about when the Chiefs Association
12 is, but the Sheriffs' the first of
13 June. So we can get you on the
14 agenda.

15 MR. GHOLSON: And I can talk
16 till the cows come home. So if
17 somebody wants to sit down and take
18 a look at it, if there are specific
19 issues that folks are having, you
20 know, I'm happy to.

21 And I have run into folks that
22 are, say, technically averse, and I
23 will take extra time with those
24 folks to help them get into the
25 system and get -- because it's a

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1 new way of doing things.

2 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Sure.

3 MR. GHOLSON: I get that. So
4 anybody that needs additional
5 attention, I am happy to help them.

6 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: I know the
7 Monroe Sheriff will have a little
8 trouble, but that's -- he'll work
9 through it. All right. Well,
10 thank you very much, both of you.

11 MR. GHOLSON: Thank you, sir.

12 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All right.
13 Item 6 is the Monroe County
14 part-time academy, John Bishop.
15 You can come forward, please. And
16 the sheriff and whoever else you
17 have.

18 CPT. BISHOP: I need
19 protection. Thank the Board for
20 allowing us to speak this morning
21 about our academy and where our
22 mission and our heart and where
23 we're moving our academy -- the
24 direction we're moving our academy,
25 because it's very important to us.

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1 And I'm telling you, we're putting
2 120 percent into this every day.

3 And if you don't mind, I'll
4 just glance at a few notes for a
5 minute, and it won't take but a
6 second. I don't want to take too
7 much time. At our Monroe County
8 Sheriff's Office Training Academy,
9 we have designed it to provide a
10 professional law enforcement
11 officer a high quality progressive
12 training experience.

13 Whether you're attending a
14 basic law enforcement training or
15 an advanced training program, you
16 can be assured that the training,
17 as well as those presenting it,
18 have been thoroughly researched and
19 prepared -- and are prepared for
20 the needs of our future law
21 enforcement.

22 So as far as our instructors,
23 we have 13 state-certified
24 instructors that are at our
25 department alone that we use for

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1 our academy, plus I use other
2 instructors from area agencies also
3 to come in, because I want to use
4 the best at our academy. And --
5 because to us, it's important. I'm
6 looking for the brightest, the best
7 to teach for us and all that.

8 To date, we have trained about
9 700 officers, and we are a new
10 academy. We are -- we started our
11 academy back in 2022, and we are at
12 about 700 officers now. But that's
13 not basic. Most of that's through
14 our advanced courses, also. It's a
15 combination of different things
16 we're doing with our academy.

17 So with our basic recruits,
18 we've done about only 67 and a few
19 refreshers and a few skills
20 updates.

21 Defensive tactics, we're doing
22 weekly defensive tactics training
23 for area departments also, and
24 we've averaged about 364 officers
25 today, and we do that every week,

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1 that come from different agencies.
2 Every Wednesday morning, we do
3 that. So our commitment is -- it's
4 there. I promise it's there for
5 our academy.

6 And we've had a huge
7 investment. We've invested several
8 hundred thousand dollars into our
9 training facility: Our shoot
10 house, our range, our training
11 classroom, our barracks, things
12 like that. We have officers that
13 travel that do our advanced classes
14 that stay overnight. We don't
15 charge them anything to stay
16 overnight. We just let them stay
17 in. That way -- and that way they
18 can just get the training they
19 need.

20 It's not about the money for
21 us. We just want these guys to
22 live and go home at the end of the
23 day is what it is for us. But
24 we're very fortunate to be where we
25 are.

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1 And as far as the training
2 standard, and I've had different
3 conversations about -- I know we
4 talked about in the last Board
5 meeting here, the standard for
6 part-time, full-time. I'm all over
7 the state teaching active shooter,
8 and I see it on all levels,
9 full-time, whether 20-year
10 veterans, five-year officers,
11 whatever, I see it -- the struggle
12 is real, full-time and part-time.

13 And I hope maybe sometime soon
14 we come up with some type of
15 solution for it, on top of that,
16 whether it's with part-time people,
17 have it to where we increase the
18 hours on the skills part of it,
19 might be a solution. And I know
20 we're going to talk more about that
21 later, but it's just -- there's
22 different options out there now,
23 and I understand that it is needed.

24 But our commitment at our
25 department is definitely 120

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1 percent. I mean, we love what we
2 do, and it's a passion for us.
3 That's for sure. But I'll let the
4 sheriff kind of finish that up for
5 me.

6 SHERIFF CROOK: I just want to
7 say I appreciate everybody here on
8 the Board and the effort that's
9 being made to kind of clean and
10 shore some things up with Standards
11 and Training. And just want y'all
12 to know that our ideals align with
13 yours in every way, you know, and
14 we just want to be a part of
15 whatever we can be a part of going
16 forward that's going to put a
17 quality officer out there on the
18 street.

19 And that's the bottom line.
20 Like John said, a lot of that
21 that's going on is free. There's
22 state and federal agencies coming
23 over there training. A lot of
24 their training is free. We fit the
25 bill for all the defensive tactics

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1 stuff that's going on over there.

2 And, you know, as long as we
3 can do that, and we're doing it for
4 our guys, pretty much anyway, so,
5 you know, we're offering that, just
6 opening up to anybody and everybody
7 that wants to be a part of it in
8 our area.

9 So that's what our heart is,
10 and it ain't going to change. And
11 however we can be a part of
12 whatever going forward, you know,
13 we want to do that.

14 CPT. BISHOP: We're there 100
15 percent. 100. But thank y'all so
16 much. I don't know if anybody has
17 any questions as far as the academy
18 goes and all that. Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Questions or
20 comments? We appreciate your
21 efforts and the report especially
22 from the academy --

23 CPT. BISHOP: Yes.

24 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: -- back to
25 us. If we can help you, let us

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1 know.

2 CPT. BISHOP: Yes, sir. Thank

3 you, Director. Yes, ma'am.

4 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Thank

5 you.

6 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All right.

7 The next item is item 7, Sheriff

8 Ward from Lauderdale and Brian

9 Fortenberry. You may come forward.

10 SHERIFF CALHOUN: Good morning.

11 I've had the opportunity to speak

12 to many of you. Maybe not all of

13 them. Sir, would it be all right

14 if I pass these packets out?

15 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Sure.

16 (OFF THE RECORD.)

17 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All right.

18 For the record, on item 7 -- did

19 the court reporter get a copy?

20 THE COURT REPORTER: I did.

21 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: You want to

22 do this as Exhibit 1?

23 THE COURT REPORTER: Sure.

24 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: This will be

25 Exhibit 1 for the record. And when

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1 she's ready, we'll continue.

2 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm ready.

3 You can go ahead. Keep going.

4 (EXHIBIT 1 MARKED FOR THE RECORD.)

5 SHERIFF CALHOUN: Okay. Thank
6 you. I appreciate the opportunity
7 to come before the Board this
8 morning. For you, it may just be a
9 Board meeting. For us, this has
10 been a conversation and an idea
11 that we have had for several years.

12 Standing here with me is Brian
13 Fortenberry. I will go ahead and
14 tell you, one of my best friends,
15 but that doesn't matter to you, and
16 I understand that. However, he is
17 an important part of our
18 organization.

19 This morning, what I want to do
20 is tell you a little bit of a story
21 about the Lauderdale County
22 Sheriff's Department and a journey
23 that we have been on as a
24 department and how he has been a
25 part of that and why it is

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1 important for us -- important for
2 me to come to you today and ask for
3 your consideration in changing his
4 part-time certificate to a
5 full-time certificate.

6 That's going to be my request,
7 but let's back up and let's tell
8 the story real quick. Lauderdale
9 County Sheriff's Department, I've
10 been there since -- I know it
11 sounds like a long time now --
12 since April of 1992 when I became a
13 reserve deputy and was there until
14 Sheriff Sollie came into office in
15 January of '96.

16 I saw what Sheriff William D.
17 Sollie was going to do in that
18 department, and I wanted to be a
19 part of it. To say that we lived
20 in the 1970s is an understatement.
21 Everything was on pencil and paper.
22 I mean, it was -- it was rough.

23 As I saw what he was going to
24 do, I said I want to be a part of
25 that, and came to work full-time in

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1 '96. And we had a lot of
2 struggles.

3 Then Sheriff Sollie showed up,
4 I think it was in 2004 or '05, and
5 he said, you know what, we're going
6 to become the first accredited
7 sheriff's department in the State
8 of Mississippi.

9 And I remember being in that
10 staff meeting and looking at the
11 information that he provided, and I
12 said, Boss, it's going to be too
13 hard. I don't know that we can do
14 this. He says, It's not optional.
15 We are doing it. Yes, sir. And if
16 you know William D. Sollie, that's
17 just the way he operated, and
18 that's the way we responded. And
19 we went to work.

20 And sure enough, we ended up
21 becoming the first sheriff's
22 department accredited through the
23 State of Mississippi, and it was a
24 great day in 2007. At that time,
25 and why this is an important part

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1 of the story, CALEA was involved in
2 this, and we were recognized as an
3 allied program.

4 There was a problem. The
5 biggest problem we had was, at that
6 time, CALEA did not recognize a
7 part-time certificate. They only
8 recognized full-time. Well, we had
9 about 15 or so auxiliary reserve
10 deputies, just like me, how I had
11 started, and that program was
12 important to me because not only
13 was it where I started, but I had
14 seen where we were able to take
15 some individuals and move them from
16 being auxiliary reserve deputies
17 into employees.

18 I wanted to continue that, and
19 this was going to be a -- it was
20 going to be a problem. So we had
21 to find a solution.

22 What I passed out to you in
23 these packets -- and just for the
24 record, the packets that you have
25 are not completed documents. I

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1 pulled pages out of them. I know
2 you don't want to go through all of
3 these pages. I have the completed
4 documents if anybody would like to
5 see that at some point in time.

6 But if you will look at Exhibit
7 A, you'll see that it is Major
8 Billy Lane. He's the assessment
9 team leader. You see July 2nd,
10 2007, on the date there.

11 And if you go over to the next
12 page -- and I'm going to -- just
13 for the record there, just want to
14 read. I think it'll summarize this
15 quicker than me trying to tell it.
16 Says this agency -- or the agency
17 has an active reserve officer
18 program. The State of Mississippi
19 issues two types of certificates
20 for law enforcement: Full-time,
21 part-time.

22 Reserve officers fall into the
23 part-time category and receive the
24 236 hours of training as mandated
25 by Mississippi code -- Mississippi

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1 state code. However, full-time
2 officers are required 400 hours of
3 basic training. So the additional
4 164 hours to give reserve officers
5 equivalent training is provided by
6 the East Mississippi Public Safety
7 Institute located at the Meridian
8 Community College.

9 And it goes on and talks about
10 the officers a little bit there. I
11 think the biggest thing out of this
12 is the fact that we were able to
13 receive approval for accreditation
14 and through CALEA, ultimately, by
15 taking these individuals who had
16 part-time certificates and
17 providing them with the additional
18 training to equal the 400 hours
19 that our regular deputies received
20 by going to the academy. So that
21 was done -- that was done.

22 And in the back of your packet,
23 just for documentation, you will
24 find there -- under Exhibit -- I
25 believe it's Exhibit D. Maybe E.

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1 D. You will see a copy -- under
2 Exhibit D, you will see a copy of
3 where we were accredited in July of
4 '07, and then the next document is
5 the actual CALEA recognition.

6 Now, this program was only in
7 place through about 2011, and they
8 did away with it. They did a
9 tiered system. So all of a sudden
10 then we didn't have a -- we didn't
11 have a problem anymore. That
12 wasn't an issue.

13 But we had five of our
14 auxiliary deputies who did that
15 additional training at Meridian
16 Community College with state
17 instructors blessed on by this
18 Board. Brian Fortenberry is the
19 only one who is still with us.

20 Brian then came to work -- I
21 twisted his arm, basically. Well,
22 let me back up a second. Here's a
23 guy that until 2018, 2019, when we
24 turned our auxiliaries into
25 part-time and started paying them,

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1 has spent literally thousands of
2 hours serving Lauderdale County for
3 free being a reserve part-time
4 deputy. Working ball games,
5 supplementing on patrol, all of
6 those kind of things that we've
7 used that program for through the
8 years, while also being a very
9 successful businessman, at one time
10 having a business with over 500
11 employees that provided security
12 services all the way from
13 California to Florida, which took
14 him out of town a lot.

15 But Brian's the guy who always
16 showed back up to make sure he got
17 his minimal 16 hours in every
18 month. He was dedicated to what we
19 were doing. And in -- oh, see,
20 you're going to help me -- I guess
21 about June of 2021; is that right?
22 When you came to work?

23 MR. FORTENBERRY: '22.

24 SHERIFF CALHOUN: '22? Talked
25 him into coming to be our assistant

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1 jail administrator. We had a
2 vacancy there, and he was -- he
3 was -- he had had enough of the
4 corporate life. I'll say it for
5 him, he'd had enough. He was ready
6 to -- I'm ready to come home and
7 just be at home. And so, plugged
8 in there.

9 And then I was elected in
10 November of '23, and I asked him at
11 that time to then do what basically
12 my job had been as chief deputy
13 prior, which was kind of run
14 operations. Not something that
15 required a certificate. I mean, he
16 runs the office, administrative
17 type of activities.

18 I know his capabilities. I
19 have some plans for our department
20 that I want to utilize him in other
21 ways, but he is hampered because he
22 has this part-time certificate.

23 So why not just go to the
24 full-time academy? Well, here's
25 why: I need him at the office. I

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1 need him in the organization. I
2 don't need him gone for 12 weeks.
3 Not to mention, he's already
4 completed everything by doing the
5 part-time certificate, doing the
6 additional hours. He has -- he has
7 done all of this. He has been
8 there.

9 Those of you that may not be
10 familiar with an accredited agency,
11 we are mandated training. We do
12 somewhere around 24 to 36 hours,
13 kind of depending on whether driver
14 training falls into all that, each
15 and every year. He's had the
16 ongoing training. He has done
17 everything that a full-time
18 employee does, a full-time deputy
19 does, except he has a part-time
20 certificate.

21 Now I know this has been a
22 conversation on this Board. I've
23 talked to many of you. I know it's
24 a quandary, the way we do things.
25 I hope that this Board -- and I

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1 know that you have an interest in
2 looking at trying to do things
3 differently, but we find ourselves
4 today where we are.

5 And so, my request of this
6 Board today would be to honor --
7 and not give him anything -- it is
8 acknowledging what he's already
9 done. We would take -- this Board
10 would take a new individual that
11 came here from another state, came
12 here out of the military, and would
13 grant a certificate to them after
14 they did the things that needed to
15 be done.

16 Brian has done all of those
17 things, and we have the
18 documentation and the proof to show
19 that. And so, I am requesting of
20 the Board to simply take his
21 part-time certificate and to turn
22 that and to award him a full-time
23 certificate based off the work that
24 has already been done and his
25 continuation of service since 2001.

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1 Does anyone have any questions?

2 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Are there
3 any questions before we -- I am
4 going to get legal to look to see
5 if there's any type of policy that
6 would direct us in what our ability
7 as a board would be, but right now,
8 are there any questions or comments
9 from the Board for the sheriff?

10 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: I have a
11 question. So his hours that you do
12 at work now, what is it -- how many
13 administrative hours is your work
14 week?

15 MR. FORTENBERRY: 40, all of
16 it.

17 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: What is the
18 reason to go from a part-time to a
19 full-time certificate?

20 SHERIFF CALHOUN: In his
21 current spot, he doesn't
22 necessarily have to do that, but in
23 some plans that I have for the
24 future, I would need him to have a
25 full-time certificate.

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1 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Any other
2 questions or comments?

3 SHERIFF CALHOUN: Yeah. If
4 that wasn't the case, we'd just
5 keep cooking along. But in order
6 to do some of the plans I have, he
7 needs this. It will be beneficial
8 to us.

9 And, again, ladies and
10 gentlemen, he's done the work. He
11 passed the PT test. He did the
12 driving. He's done it all. He
13 just got here a different way. Not
14 unlike all of us arrived at this
15 same spot today, but we all came
16 from -- our journey was from
17 different locations, but we're in
18 the same spot. He's in the same
19 spot as a full-time employee. He's
20 done everything that was required.

21 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: I do know
22 that later in the agenda there is
23 talk that -- we're going to have a
24 presentation from the academy and
25 others here of a program that we

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1 are -- that will allow people to go
2 from part-time to full. I mean, we
3 are working on it.

4 It's been a very difficult path
5 to go down, but we are currently
6 working on it, but we are governed
7 by rules and policies through
8 legislative or policies of our own.

9 So, Luke, with that, is there
10 anything that you want to address
11 that can direct -- before we go to
12 executive session --

13 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yes, Mr.
14 Chairman.

15 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: -- that
16 would help us on the record?

17 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yes, Mr.
18 Chair. Thank you. And Sheriff, if
19 you don't mind, I will refer to the
20 Board policies that guide the
21 Board's actions and decisions, but
22 I want to phrase it in terms of
23 questions just to kind of
24 illustrate what my position is in
25 advising the Board as board

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1 counsel.

2 SHERIFF CALHOUN: Yes, sir.

3 MR. WILLIAMSON: Obviously
4 you're familiar with what the
5 statutory and policy requirements
6 are for full-time and part-time.

7 SHERIFF CALHOUN: Yes, sir.

8 MR. WILLIAMSON: Because
9 they're in the packet you presented
10 today. And so, by being aware,
11 you're aware that those are
12 basically the two options:
13 Full-time or part-time. And as it
14 currently exists, there's not a
15 bridge program, just to use that
16 for terminology. There's not a
17 bridge to get from part-time to
18 full-time, right?

19 SHERIFF CALHOUN: I would
20 advocate that the intent of the
21 legislature in this law, which is
22 what we all know we look at, is to
23 provide a mechanism to be able
24 to -- for a person to do that.

25 And in the legislature's -- be

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1 careful how I say this, because
2 sometimes they do get things
3 right -- they made the idea, the
4 thought process was that this Board
5 would be in a better position than
6 them dictating how to do it
7 necessarily, but that they would
8 give some guidance to it.

9 And I don't know that there
10 would be another individual in the
11 State of Mississippi that would fit
12 the criteria that Brian's in.
13 There may be, but because of us
14 having to do those additional hours
15 to become that allied program with
16 CALEA, we had to do exactly the 400
17 hours. So I don't know if there's
18 anybody else out there.

19 And I know that there have been
20 other programs through the years.
21 I'm familiar with some of those.
22 So when I look at the intent of the
23 statute, and I tried to do my
24 research, I'm thinking, what did
25 they intend by that?

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1 And what I see the intent being
2 is this Board having the ability to
3 make those kind of determinations
4 because they realize they can't see
5 every single situation that would
6 come up. So that would be my
7 argument to that.

8 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yes, sir. But
9 you understand, our policies that
10 are on the books right now are what
11 the Board has to abide by.
12 Otherwise the Board's decisions
13 aren't valid.

14 SHERIFF CALHOUN: Yes, sir.

15 MR. WILLIAMSON: Right? And
16 looking at the policies that are on
17 the books -- because I -- I
18 understand and candidly agree with
19 most of what you're saying about
20 intentions and the way that the
21 legislature vests the Board with
22 certain authority because the Board
23 is in a better position.

24 But Rule 7.1 of our Board
25 policies requires that a person

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1 who's applying for certification,
2 any certification, completes the
3 requirements at an accredited
4 training academy.

5 SHERIFF CALHOUN: That was
6 done.

7 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yes, sir. And
8 then, Rule 7.2 requires that the
9 approved basic class is what the
10 person completes.

11 SHERIFF CALHOUN: And he did
12 that in terms of the basic
13 part-time class.

14 MR. WILLIAMSON: Right, yes,
15 sir.

16 SHERIFF CALHOUN: So that's
17 done.

18 MR. WILLIAMSON: But Rule 7.3
19 and 7.4 are what govern -- and 7.5
20 are what govern the two lanes that
21 are currently available for
22 officers in this state: Full-time
23 and part-time.

24 The full-time requirement
25 requires that a person seeking

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1 certification complete 480 hours of
2 training in the approved basic
3 course at an accredited training
4 academy, and that that academy give
5 that officer a certificate of
6 completion when they have met the
7 graduation requirements.

8 So is there an accredited
9 training academy that can certify
10 that Deputy Fortenberry has
11 completed the 480 hour basic
12 course?

13 SHERIFF CALHOUN: Today, it's
14 480. Back then it was 400, and he
15 did that through the Meridian
16 Community College of the East
17 Mississippi Public Safety Training
18 Institute. And it is documented
19 that training, as well as through
20 the accreditation program, we see
21 that we could not have been
22 accredited without that having
23 occurred.

24 Because we're talking about
25 something happened almost 20 years

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1 ago. You know, we have a pile of
2 training records over there. Just
3 a short, sweet story. Went to
4 archives. Every now and then
5 archives does not destroy
6 everything they're supposed to.

7 I found a box that actually had
8 this. It was in the wrong pile.
9 It was supposed to have already
10 been gone, or we wouldn't have had
11 that. I recognize that this is
12 different than what you normally
13 see. It is very unique.

14 And that's where I go back to
15 the intent of the legislature was
16 to give this Board the authority to
17 make decisions about things that
18 they could not foresee. And in
19 this case, my argument is simply
20 that he has done everything that
21 needed to be done by many other
22 people who have a full-time
23 certificate that would have -- that
24 had we been here earlier, we would
25 have done that.

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1 He is doing more today -- we,
2 as an agency, an accredited agency,
3 do more than, up until recently,
4 other sheriff's departments did.
5 Of course, we all know now of the
6 continuing education we have to do
7 each year, but up until year before
8 last, we didn't have to do that.

9 And we've been doing that.
10 He's been doing that. I guess when
11 I look at it, I go, here's a guy
12 who has all the experience that he
13 brings, the education, all these
14 years, and he's simply asking this
15 Board, or we are asking this Board
16 to not give him anything. He's
17 earned it. He's done the work. He
18 just didn't get here by going to an
19 academy for 10 weeks or 12 weeks.

20 Not unlike all of us getting
21 here today. We all came different
22 paths. And I get we want
23 everything to be a certain way.
24 But that is limiting us as a state
25 in having good people in positions

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1 to do jobs that we desperately
2 need.

3 I'm sitting -- standing here in
4 front of a group that I know y'all
5 are having trouble finding folks to
6 work for you because I know we do.
7 Things are a little better right
8 now, but, you know, they've been
9 tough.

10 And when I have somebody with
11 this caliber of experience and
12 training and for us to say, well,
13 he didn't go sleep at the academy
14 so he doesn't get to get a
15 full-time certificate, to me is
16 ludicrous. I'm the kind of guy who
17 says let's fix the problem.

18 And maybe that's what has to
19 happen first. I don't know. But I
20 believe he's done everything that
21 this state has asked of a person to
22 do to have a full-time job. I know
23 he has. And if there's a mechanism
24 for this Board to give him -- or to
25 change his part-time to full-time,

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1 that is my request.

2 MR. WILLIAMSON: And, Mr.
3 Chair, I think what the sheriff has
4 just said has really struck at the
5 heart of the issue, which is that
6 there may or may not be a
7 mechanism, and there may be a
8 mechanism very soon based on the
9 Board's discussion.

10 But what I would recommend,
11 Mr. Chair, and for the sheriff, is
12 any documentation of the hours that
13 he completed that would constitute
14 the basic curriculum at the time he
15 completed them. So, to your point,
16 we're going to have to do some
17 research to see what the policy was
18 at that time or whether he has to
19 meet today's policy.

20 But I would suggest that you
21 provide all of the curriculum that
22 he did complete, the certificates
23 of completion, things like that, to
24 the office so the office can
25 determine whether or not he meets

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1 the requirements for full-time
2 certification, and then the office
3 can put that in front of the Board.

4 Once we have that, that also
5 would give this Board the time to
6 consider a mechanism that would do
7 exactly what you're asking for it
8 to do because right now it doesn't
9 exist in the current policy.

10 SHERIFF CALHOUN: I understand.
11 We will provide what we can.

12 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yes, sir.

13 SHERIFF CALHOUN:
14 Unfortunately, because of the
15 time -- I know that not all the
16 documentation is there, because
17 some of it's just not there. We
18 went to Meridian Community College,
19 and I used to be the director of
20 that program, and they've moved
21 offices, and what happens when you
22 move to a new office? People clean
23 out.

24 And we're going to have a
25 difficult time to individualize

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1 that training, but we can, from a
2 department standpoint, through the
3 accreditation process assure the
4 Board that that training was done
5 because he wouldn't still be here
6 with us, and we wouldn't have
7 gotten accredited without it.

8 MR. WILLIAMSON: Right, yes,
9 sir. Mr. Chair, that's what I
10 would recommend, is that the office
11 request additional documentation
12 from Deputy Fortenberry concerning
13 his completion and the office get a
14 chance to vet what those courses
15 were and whether or not they meet
16 the basic requirement.

17 Because as our policy exists
18 today, either the requirements of
19 the policies have been met or not.
20 I don't think it's a judgment call
21 or a question of intent. I think
22 it's more of just a black and white
23 decision.

24 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Okay. What
25 the recommendation is going to be

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1 is basically table any decision
2 today until you can present those
3 documents to the office here, and
4 then Amy and them will get it and
5 present it back and give us a
6 recommendation after they talk to
7 legal to see if this is a possible
8 thing.

9 But I also would -- and I
10 commend you. You know, that's --
11 I'm proud you got the training, and
12 hopefully we can do something to
13 help you.

14 But I certainly would also, if
15 you can, stay for the remainder of
16 the meeting and listen to this
17 bridge presentation because, if
18 that is a route you have to go,
19 that would need to be something you
20 consider that I think we're going
21 to get there. In this case, we may
22 already be. I don't know.

23 But right now, we're just not
24 going to be able to make a decision
25 immediately, but we'll get with you

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1 on it. Okay?

2 SHERIFF CALHOUN: Very good.

3 Thank you. I appreciate the
4 opportunity today.

5 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Is there
6 anything else concerning this
7 matter? Director, anything? All
8 right. Thank y'all.

9 All right. Item 7 is
10 certification of officers.

11 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: I gave
12 y'all a list this morning at your
13 place, and it has a list of
14 full-time basic classes, part-time
15 basic classes that are currently
16 going on. Well, you've got some
17 that are going to start March 14th.
18 So we went ahead and added those on
19 the list, these classes that are
20 coming up.

21 And then, the equivalency of
22 training, the full-time list is on
23 another page, and I just ask that
24 these be certified.

25 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: We've had a

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1 recommendation of the Director of
2 the handout that consists of two
3 pages. The last page is front and
4 back. If you'll look at that, I'll
5 entertain a motion to accept this
6 training.

7 CHIEF QUAKE: Chief Quake.
8 I'll make the motion to accept.

9 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: We have a
10 motion. Do I have a second?

11 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: I second.

12 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Constable
13 seconds. Any discussion?

14 (NO RESPONSE.)

15 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All in favor
16 by saying aye and raising your
17 right hand.

18 ALL: Aye.

19 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Any opposed?

20 (NO RESPONSE.)

21 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: There are
22 none. Anything else on 8?

23 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: No.

24 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Okay. 9 is
25 the Director's report.

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1 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: So I
2 think it was around February 2nd I
3 sent through the Chiefs Association
4 and the Sheriffs' Association per
5 the last Board meeting, we started
6 sending out warning letters,
7 probation and suspension.

8 And I sent a letter to the
9 chiefs and the sheriffs stating
10 what the purpose of those letters
11 were going to be and how they would
12 receive them and how they should
13 disseminate them -- or I asked them
14 to disseminate them. And so, those
15 have gone over pretty well.
16 They've been received pretty well.

17 I think that there is more talk
18 across the state of what the office
19 is doing with regards to these
20 cases. And in ACADIS, the next
21 item, B, statistics of cases, this
22 kind of all goes together.

23 Executive Director Broman, we
24 went into ACADIS, and we pulled or
25 extracted some of our data that

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1 we're working on right now, and
2 there were 85 cases logged in over
3 the first 62 days of 2026,
4 averaging approximately 1.4 cases
5 per day or 41 to 42 cases per
6 month.

7 And if we hold this, we'll be
8 able to handle roughly 500 cases
9 annually. Saying that, all of
10 these are not going to be hearing
11 cases. Okay? This goes back to
12 the warning, probation, or
13 suspension letters. The ones who
14 typically are going to receive a
15 suspension letter are the ones who
16 we will hear back from, maybe
17 wanting a case or maybe even
18 surrendering their certificate.

19 The case types, the vast
20 majority of the cases, 82 of the
21 85, are certification reviews, and
22 that's what we are looking for with
23 these three categories. Of the 85
24 cases, 50 have been closed, and 35
25 remain active.

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1 Our investigators, we have a
2 new investigator, Anna Hatter, who
3 is sitting up here with Reginald
4 Cooper. If you get a chance to
5 meet with her, she -- Anna is in
6 the south; Reginald Cooper is in
7 the central. And then, y'all met
8 Corie Robbins at the January
9 meeting.

10 We also have new staff, Karen
11 Goodman, who is back here behind
12 Chief Quaka, and T.J. Boyd. Karen
13 is taking Donna's place with the
14 law enforcement side, and then,
15 T.J. is the manager of
16 telecommunications. And so, we've
17 added some staff to be able to get
18 through these and process these a
19 little bit quicker.

20 We have issued warning letters.
21 There's 17. We have suspended 14
22 people. There was no action taken
23 on 12. If it is an HR issue within
24 the department, we are putting it
25 back on the department for them to

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1 handle those cases.

2 Probation, we sent seven
3 letters and decertified -- two
4 people have turned in -- well, I'm
5 sorry. Voluntary certificate
6 surrender was one, and then we
7 revoked two because of felony
8 cases. Okay. Does anybody have
9 any questions so far?

10 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: No. But I
11 will say on the record when we
12 first scheduled this meeting, it
13 was like three days because of
14 hearings and, because of the work
15 that y'all have done, it's down to
16 no hearings. So, I mean, thank
17 y'all for that.

18 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: It is.
19 And we worked -- Anna and Corie got
20 here February 1st. And so, that
21 first full week we sat and started
22 going through all of these things,
23 because the backlog -- well, that
24 was the cases, the backlog.

25 So I think I had reported to

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1 you guys that there were 52 cases
2 that I had gone through, and then I
3 gave them to the investigators to
4 say am I missing anything? This is
5 what my suggestion is. And we went
6 forward from there.

7 And so, I think that with only
8 being here -- it was -- 62 days in,
9 we're being able to clear this old
10 docket of cases and things that
11 should not, you know, come before
12 the Board are just -- we're not
13 doing that.

14 And talking with Luke
15 Williamson, Sheriff, Chief Quaka,
16 and a couple of you guys, it's just
17 we're going to -- only the most --
18 the baddest of the bad are going to
19 come before the Board. Does
20 anybody have any questions?

21 MS. CRANFORD: If the case
22 is -- I mean, I'm assuming that
23 some of these, if they're just
24 getting warnings or probation,
25 they're just lower-level

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1 policy-type violations.

2 Are there any cases that would
3 indicate that there needs to be
4 further criminal investigation that
5 we're not referring out to some
6 investigative agency?

7 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: In
8 talking to Chief Quaka and Sheriff
9 Johnson just in happenstance
10 conversations, we wanted to
11 establish a pattern. So let's say
12 Fuelman, using the Fuelman to gas
13 up your personal vehicle, we run
14 in -- we've run into about 10, 12
15 cases like that. Some of them were
16 accidents, and they paid back the
17 money.

18 But what was suggested is that
19 we show a pattern. And so, we're
20 going -- so if an officer uses his
21 Fuelman, did he use it for one time
22 and he paid back the money, or did
23 he use it for three years and it's
24 just not being discovered?

25 And so, we wanted a pattern to

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1 show. And obviously, that would be
2 a suspension. But if it was one
3 time accidental use, we would give
4 them a warning that the office is
5 watching them, that we've pulled
6 their file, and going forward from
7 there. And a lot of it's policy.
8 I'm sorry.

9 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: We also
10 talked about even in that case, if
11 they --

12 MS. CRANFORD: It's a felony
13 crime.

14 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: If they --
15 if they --

16 MS. CRANFORD: I mean, it --

17 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: -- charged
18 them.

19 MS. CRANFORD: Yeah. But it's
20 not -- their agency is not going to
21 investigate and charge their own.
22 I mean, that's a conflict.

23 So my concern is that it's a
24 felony, and we're not referring it
25 to an investigative agency to let

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1 them investigate it and make sure
2 that we have all the operable facts
3 before we just check the box and
4 say it was just one time based on
5 information that we have in a very
6 small circumstance.

7 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: And I
8 will tell you this, the case that
9 we're looking at, this stuff
10 happened four and five years ago,
11 and nothing was said --

12 MS. CRANFORD: There's not a
13 statute of limitations on
14 embezzlement. So, I mean, there's
15 a lot of concerns, I think, about
16 whether or not we're vetting those
17 cases properly, and we're just kind
18 of passing judgment on whether or
19 not they should be investigated for
20 a felony charge. I mean, that's
21 just my two cents on it.

22 I think we had discussed, and
23 this would have been prior to you
24 being Director, that there should
25 be some protocol for cases like

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1 that that we identify that may have
2 a felony charge behind them, that
3 those cases are getting referred to
4 MBI so that they can be
5 investigated, and then a decision
6 can be made at that level.

7 Whether or not the chicken
8 comes before the egg, you know, I
9 don't know, but --

10 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: MBI and
11 the state auditor's office where
12 they're not -- they're not looking
13 at the cases.

14 MS. CRANFORD: They're not
15 investigating these people at all?

16 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Uh-huh.
17 (Affirmative response.) They're
18 saying that there's not enough
19 evidence.

20 MS. COLEMAN: So they have
21 looked at it --

22 MS. CRANFORD: But they have
23 looked at it then.

24 MS. COLEMAN: They just don't
25 believe there's sufficient --

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1 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: They've
2 looked at it but they're not going
3 forward.

4 MS. COLEMAN: Okay. I think
5 that makes a difference.

6 MS. CRANFORD: That's a big
7 difference.

8 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: It does,
9 yes. We -- and they can attest to
10 this, we are digging into these
11 people's lives. You know, and
12 it's -- so we're being as -- we're
13 doing our due diligence, I believe,
14 as far as that goes.

15 MS. CRANFORD: But you have
16 something --

17 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: I think what
18 we talked about whenever she was
19 talking about just by happenstance
20 was when all of this is done that
21 you're concerned about, and it
22 comes, and there was no -- after
23 the investigation, there was no
24 felony charge or anything, does it
25 still come before the Board?

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1 And I think that -- I think
2 it's being looked into criminally
3 by an independent agency, and then
4 they're making the decision whether
5 it was enough to warrant an arrest
6 or whatever, and then we looked at
7 it. But --

8 MS. CRANFORD: Yes. That in
9 that case --

10 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: -- that's --
11 that's what we talked about.

12 MS. CRANFORD: If that's the
13 case, that's a different issue than
14 us just reviewing something that an
15 agency has sent us that hasn't been
16 referred out.

17 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Right.

18 MS. CRANFORD: But my
19 suggestion would be, if there's
20 ever a scenario where it looks like
21 there's not evidence, that an
22 independent investigative agency
23 has reviewed that charge and passed
24 on it, then it needs to be referred
25 for somebody else to look at it

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1 before we pass judgment on it.

2 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: And most
3 of it is just an internal done by
4 their department.

5 MS. CRANFORD: Right. And so,
6 that's the problem, right? Because
7 they're not looking at it from the
8 perspective of whether or not
9 there's a criminal prosecution, and
10 they can't prosecute their own
11 people. So. . .

12 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: So when
13 you're -- that internal review,
14 like that one you're talking about
15 that they just used it one time and
16 they were given a warning, does
17 that still go into an ACADIS
18 system?

19 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: It does.

20 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: So another
21 agency sees, oh, this is something
22 that they've done wrong?

23 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: These are
24 the cases that have been uploaded
25 into ACADIS. And so, in the

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1 documentation of that, we are
2 making notes in there. And we can
3 also flag them in ACADIS. There's
4 flags that we can put at the top.
5 So if someone opens that file, they
6 can click on those flags and see
7 what they did.

8 MS. CRANFORD: How long will
9 that stay in there? Just as long
10 as the suspension is effective?

11 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Forever.

12 MS. CRANFORD: So it'll always
13 be there?

14 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Uh-huh.
15 (Affirmative response.)

16 MS. CRANFORD: That's good.

17 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: We can
18 open and close cases, but if
19 there's any warnings to be had, you
20 can see those flags on there, or
21 warnings to be noted, to an officer
22 or to an agency.

23 If they're going to go down the
24 street and get hired by someone,
25 they should be able to see those as

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1 well with some guidance from the
2 office. I think -- you can't see
3 the whole file. Questions?

4 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Anything
5 else on that?

6 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: What is the
7 total caseload we have now to
8 include the backlog before January?

9 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: There's
10 82 cases. There's 8 -- excuse me.
11 There's 85 total cases. 50 have
12 been closed, and 35 remain active.
13 And those 35 have been given to the
14 investigators.

15 MR. WILLIAMSON: Director, do
16 those 35 include some of the cases
17 that were originally scheduled for
18 this week, or is that --

19 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Uh-huh.
20 (Affirmative response.)

21 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yes. Okay.

22 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: It is.

23 MR. WILLIAMSON: And I mention
24 that just to say there are some
25 where the investigator's work's

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1 done. We're just waiting on a
2 hearing date; is that right?

3 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: It is
4 done, correct. And that's Reginald
5 Cooper's -- I think Cooper had all
6 of the cases this time. All of
7 Matt Hales's -- that person who
8 surrendered his is not wanting to
9 be in law enforcement anymore. So
10 he surrendered that certificate.

11 And then, the other ones were
12 small policy violations that had
13 been given to Matt Hale to work up.

14 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: How many do
15 we currently have that we're ready
16 for a hearing?

17 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: There's
18 13 or 14.

19 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: That we
20 could -- that's ready to be heard?

21 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Well, I'm
22 sorry. You have six or seven?

23 INV. COOPER: 13 total and
24 about six or seven ready to be
25 heard.

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1 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Those
2 were ready for yesterday and the
3 day before. Those were ready, and
4 all of those have asked for a
5 continuance. And then, Anna will
6 have some. You have two? For May.

7 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: So we need a
8 May hearing day --

9 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Right.
10 We're going to --

11 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: -- or two
12 days?

13 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Uh-huh.
14 (Affirmative response.)

15 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: We need to
16 discuss that before we leave.

17 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Right.
18 It's on here.

19 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Okay. All
20 right. D?

21 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD:
22 Certification of courses. Everyone
23 is getting adjusted to us not
24 certifying classes anymore. I
25 think that the academies and the

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1 agencies are liking that autonomy
2 of having -- being able to decide
3 what is good for their people. And
4 so, that's worked very well.

5 We've discussed the training
6 hours, the 24 hours of continuing
7 education that officers have to
8 have every year. We actually got
9 COPS online training. This is F.
10 I'll go ahead and talk about that.

11 We were looking for -- not
12 "we." Executive Director Broman
13 was looking for a class for
14 someone, an online class, and we
15 noticed that COPS, the online
16 program, that Mississippi didn't
17 recognize it. And so, I met with
18 the COPS program people, COPS
19 training, and Mississippi now
20 recognizes all of those courses,
21 and they're really good online
22 courses.

23 So for all intents and purposes
24 of certifying courses, that is
25 going well. They're able to do

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1 their part in making sure that they
2 bring in good training, good
3 companies for their people.

4 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Okay. The
5 next item is item E, which is going
6 to be some of the academy directors
7 and the Board and whoever else that
8 can help us discuss this bridge
9 program from part-time to
10 full-time. It's probably going to
11 take a little bit of time. So
12 we're going to take a ten-minute
13 recess.

14 Restrooms are down the hall to
15 your left, and there's a break room
16 across the hall, and we'll
17 reconvene at 10:15.

18 (OFF THE RECORD.)

19 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: We're going
20 to call the meeting back to order.
21 All right. We'll pick up on the
22 agenda, 9E, bridge program
23 part-time/full-time.

24 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: So I've
25 got two academy -- three academy

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1 directors in here. We met last
2 week on Teams and discussed what we
3 had discussed at the last January
4 meeting, which is a possible bridge
5 program that the Commissioner had
6 brought up.

7 And so, we looked at --
8 initially, I looked at the
9 difference in hours between the
10 part-time and the full-time, and
11 it's 172 hours. Going in there and
12 looking at the high liability
13 areas, driving, firearms, defensive
14 tactics, and use of force, I
15 started adding a couple of hours.
16 Came up to 190 hours.

17 The refresher course is 200
18 hours. Okay? So that's why when I
19 start talking about a refresher
20 course, that's how I arrived at
21 that number. So in discussing with
22 the academy directors, and anyone
23 can stand up and talk if you wish,
24 the applicant must have -- and this
25 was discussed last time -- at least

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1 five years of working experience,
2 not just someone holding their
3 certificate.

4 How we would prove that, that
5 is open for discussion. They must
6 take the equivalency exam, which is
7 on ACADIS, and that is the
8 equivalency exam. If you come in
9 from another state or if you're
10 active military and you've been an
11 MP, those are the types of people
12 who can take that test.

13 Must take a PT test and pass
14 the entrance PT test at 50 percent.
15 If they fail -- there's two things
16 on here. If there is a failure of
17 the equivalency exam or the PT
18 test, do we allow them to retake,
19 or do they come back through the
20 next cycle?

21 And then I highlighted D and E
22 on that email that I sent to you
23 guys, because we wanted -- we
24 discussed about residential. If
25 they are going to be residential

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1 and they're going to come in and
2 they're going to stay two or three
3 days a week, and they're going to
4 PT and be a part of that basic
5 academy that they are going to
6 attend, okay? With the rest of the
7 basic cadets, do we do a final PT
8 test and make them complete it at
9 70 percent?

10 So they would come in at 50
11 percent; they would leave at 70
12 percent. And so, that was the D
13 and E part of that email that I
14 sent to you guys.

15 If they stay, the probability
16 of them passing at 70 percent is
17 high. If they do not stay, the
18 probability of them failing that
19 70 percent is -- well, it's high
20 that they're going to fail it.
21 Yeah. It would be higher if they
22 did not stay, the probability of
23 them failing the final PT test.

24 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: So working
25 through the different avenues to do

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1 this bridge, do we want to hear
2 from the academy directors of how
3 they derived or what their opinion
4 is, and how do you want to do that?

5 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Anybody?

6 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Anybody want
7 to discuss? All right. If you'll
8 come forward. We're doing a court
9 reporter. This is recorded. So if
10 you'll just state your name and
11 where you're from and maybe spell
12 your name.

13 MR. MCKINNEY: Daniel McKinney,
14 M-C-K-I-N-N-E-Y, North Mississippi
15 Law Enforcement Training Center,
16 Tupelo PD. I know 200 hours, it's
17 going to take -- may still take
18 them 12 weeks considering our
19 schedule. Okay? I just didn't
20 know if we wanted to try to make it
21 within the five weeks that you're
22 requiring. That would be my only
23 question.

24 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: No. This
25 would be to go along with, they

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1 would run concurrent with a basic
2 academy that is already in session.

3 MR. MCKINNEY: Our other issue
4 is room --

5 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Housing.

6 MR. MCKINNEY: -- how many we
7 have. And so, we may have to just
8 do one 5 straight weeks in November
9 when we don't have a basic class.
10 So that would be sufficient enough,
11 wouldn't it?

12 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Okay.

13 MR. MCKINNEY: I mean, is
14 that --

15 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD:
16 Financially -- and that was another
17 discussion: Can you run it if you
18 only have four people? I don't
19 think the numbers are going to
20 be --

21 MR. MCKINNEY: I don't know if
22 we're going to have as many as we
23 think --

24 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: -- just
25 great with this.

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1 MR. MCKINNEY: Right.

2 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD:

3 Especially if we put five years and
4 the equivalency exam. There's
5 going to be -- somebody's either
6 going to fail the equivalency, or
7 they're going to fail the PT.

8 MR. MCKINNEY: And do we get --
9 is it going to be 4,000 for them,
10 as well?

11 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Huh-huh.
12 (Negative response.) 1500.
13 Because it'll be a refresher, and
14 that's what we're charging right
15 now for a refresher.

16 MR. MCKINNEY: Okay. All
17 right. I guess that's all the
18 questions I had.

19 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Anything
20 else? Okay.

21 DIRECTOR MORENO: Jackie Moreno
22 from SRPSI. So on the -- we don't
23 have a problem with housing,
24 because we have extra room, sets of
25 barracks and all that we can house

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1 them from the basic cadets.

2 But the \$1500, like a
3 refresher, a refresher does not
4 stay overnight. We don't have to
5 feed them. I will tell you right
6 now that my most expensive cost at
7 the academy is food. And we cannot
8 afford to train somebody, feed them
9 for the duration of the hours
10 they'll have to be there for \$1500.

11 And if the Board sets that
12 reimbursement at \$1500, that's all
13 the departments are going to accept
14 us charging.

15 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: What do
16 you normally charge for a
17 refresher?

18 DIRECTOR MORENO: 1500, but I
19 don't feed the refreshers.

20 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: You don't
21 feed the refreshers?

22 DIRECTOR MORENO: Huh-huh.
23 (Negative response.)

24 MR. MCKINNEY: We do 1800, and
25 we feed them lunch.

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1 DIRECTOR MORENO: But now
2 you're talking about feeding three
3 meals a day, three to four days a
4 week.

5 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: If they
6 stay.

7 DIRECTOR MORENO: If they stay.

8 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: If they
9 stay. Residential.

10 DIRECTOR MORENO: So if they
11 don't stay, it's a non-issue. But
12 if they're staying, \$1500 is not
13 going to cut it because we can't
14 afford to feed them.

15 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: If they
16 don't stay, we need to consider the
17 final PT test, then, because that
18 was the goal was to get them to
19 that 70 percent. But we know that
20 they're going to PT if they're with
21 you guys.

22 DIRECTOR MORENO: Correct.

23 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: So we may
24 need to do like the regular
25 refreshers and test them at the

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1 beginning at 50 percent and be done
2 with it.

3 DIRECTOR MORENO: Either that
4 or they don't stay at night, but
5 they have to show up for PT in the
6 morning. That's one of their
7 classes. I mean, Louisiana does --
8 all their academies are, you know,
9 nonresidential.

10 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD:
11 Nonresidential.

12 DIRECTOR MORENO: So they show
13 up in the morning, do PT in the
14 morning, do all their training all
15 day, and then they go home. So, I
16 mean, that's not out of the realm.
17 And that alleviates the financial
18 burden on the academies of having
19 to feed these people three meals a
20 day.

21 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: So you could
22 do nonresidential and not have to
23 feed them for the 1800 and just
24 give them a schedule that this is
25 what time you show up on

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1 Wednesday --

2 DIRECTOR MORENO: Correct.

3 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: -- and it's
4 their job to get there and leave.

5 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: And add
6 PT in there.

7 DIRECTOR MORENO: Yes. And
8 they could do PT in the morning
9 just with a basic class, and then
10 they still would be responsible for
11 getting the 70 percent at the end
12 of the academy because they're
13 still participating in PT.

14 It's just another training
15 class in addition to any other
16 class that they would show up for.

17 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: If they
18 do residential and they do have to
19 eat, is there another amount we
20 could come up with or they could
21 present what it would cost them if
22 they did that that we could look
23 at? Because they're all going to
24 run you the same thing.

25 DIRECTOR MORENO: Or if you put

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1 something saying the Board will
2 reimburse for their training.
3 Departments are responsible for
4 paying for meals.

5 So, like, our refreshers, if I
6 have a refresher that's from far
7 off, two, two and a half hours,
8 sometimes they will stay, and they
9 pay additional to house them and
10 feed them on top of their regular
11 tuition. And they know they're not
12 going to get reimbursed that by the
13 State. So there's that option, as
14 well.

15 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: The 1800
16 gets them to class, but no
17 benefits.

18 CHIEF QUAKA: 1500.

19 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: 1500.
20 Tupelo does 1800.

21 DIRECTOR MORENO: And that's
22 just lunch, right? That's only one
23 meal.

24 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Lunch
25 only. It's expensive to feed

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1 people.

2 DIRECTOR MORENO: It is a very
3 big expense.

4 MR. MCKINNEY: You can ask
5 Chief Quaka; our biggest expense is
6 food by thousands.

7 DIRECTOR MORENO: And since
8 COVID, it has exponentially gotten
9 more expensive.

10 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: We can work
11 on the financial side of it. So --

12 MR. MCKINNEY: I think we can
13 do it as a refresher. That would
14 make it easier on us.

15 DIRECTOR MORENO: That
16 alleviates his housing issue, too.

17 MR. MCKINNEY: Yeah.

18 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Are there
19 any other questions concerning
20 these two directors, what they
21 brought up?

22 (NO RESPONSE.)

23 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All right.
24 This is John Bishop from Monroe
25 County.

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1 CPT. BISHOP: Just got a quick
2 question. Would the part-time
3 academies be able to participate in
4 that program like we do the
5 refreshers or anything?

6 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: No. They
7 would have -- that was one of the
8 stipulations for them to go to a
9 basic academy. To a full-time --
10 excuse me. To a full-time academy.

11 CPT. BISHOP: Got you.

12 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: And not
13 Hattiesburg and Jackson, but two of
14 the other five.

15 CPT. BISHOP: Yes, ma'am.
16 Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.
18 Director Carlton, do you have --

19 DIRECTOR CARLTON: No, I was
20 the same. We're at 1800, and we
21 feed them lunch. So I'm in
22 agreeance with what we already
23 talked about earlier. So
24 everything -- ditto.

25 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Any other

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1 academy people that want to comment
2 on any of this before we look at
3 it?

4 All right. The first
5 requirement is five years
6 experience, and there is a question
7 about how that is proven. It's
8 been brought up that it can't be
9 someone that stands at a popcorn
10 machine for five years at a
11 ballgame. It's got to be active,
12 continuous service.

13 And how is that proven? And
14 it's been mentioned through
15 payroll, through radio log, through
16 a certified letter, an affidavit.
17 So that's up for discussion of how
18 y'all feel that the five years of
19 continuous service is proven to be
20 valid.

21 SHERIFF JOHNSON: I would think
22 an affidavit from the sheriff or
23 the chief of police or whatever, or
24 maybe the bookkeeping for the
25 county.

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1 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Like
2 payroll?

3 SHERIFF JOHNSON: Yes, ma'am.

4 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: And we don't
5 have to discuss what is continued.
6 Is that one day a week, or is that
7 ten hours a week, or is that --

8 MS. COLEMAN: I think you're
9 going to have to set that
10 standard --

11 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: You're going
12 to have to.

13 MS. COLEMAN: -- of what you
14 consider active service. Like
15 you're saying, not standing at a
16 popcorn machine, but if they're
17 paying somebody to stand at the
18 popcorn machine at ballgames, it's
19 still going to be on payroll.

20 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Right.

21 MS. COLEMAN: I think we need
22 to define what that looks like for
23 us so that y'all have some
24 guidance.

25 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Right.

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1 MS. COLEMAN: I think our
2 intent is to make sure that the --
3 and I guess -- and I may need to
4 kind of make sure that I'm
5 understanding. I kind of thought
6 that the five-year thing was to the
7 argument that the residential sort
8 of put a little pressure on people
9 that you could see where they
10 landed under pressure, and your
11 hope would be that in five years,
12 you've already seen that, if
13 there's an issue with that.

14 Now it sounds like we're
15 talking about both, the five years
16 and that they're staying there?

17 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: I think
18 that what we wanted to do was offer
19 something. And if we do have
20 people, such as from Lauderdale
21 County, who want to get into this,
22 do we want to make it so hard? Do
23 we want to offer -- you know.

24 And that's sort of -- that's
25 why the residential part was

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1 highlighted in that email, because
2 I really wanted to take that into
3 consideration, we all did, about
4 what stipulations we did want to
5 put on them.

6 Because we are testing them. I
7 mean, that's -- that's going to be
8 a big deal, those two tests, the
9 equivalency and the part-time.

10 MS. COLEMAN: And theoretically
11 the five years of service.

12 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Yes,
13 uh-huh. (Affirmative response.)
14 Right.

15 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: I think the
16 five years of service has got to be
17 something of it was enforcement
18 service. It's not --

19 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Shift
20 work.

21 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: -- shift
22 work or whatever. It's got to be
23 an enforcement side. They have got
24 to be doing for five years what
25 they're asking to be able to do.

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1 If they're not doing that, after we
2 give them certificates is not the
3 time to learn it, and that's just a
4 proven fact.

5 SHERIFF JOHNSON: You know, I
6 got a problem with having to stay
7 for five weeks. I got a guy that's
8 been with me since I've been in
9 office. Going on 12 years now. He
10 was there before I got there. He's
11 part-time. He works every weekend.

12 But he's got a job, and he
13 makes good money at what he's --
14 what he's got. But he likes to
15 come out and helping enforce. And
16 we were talking about the bridge
17 from part to full, and he would
18 love to go full-time, and maybe,
19 you know, later quit that job and
20 become full-time.

21 But he's not going to leave his
22 job now, I think, to go stay in an
23 academy five weeks to do that. And
24 he's got as much experience as any
25 guy I got and does probably other

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1 jobs than most of my full-time
2 guys, seriously.

3 So he's got the training, and
4 he's gone through the stuff, you
5 know. Why make him go sit at an
6 academy and do bookwork that he's
7 learned for the past 15 years out
8 here?

9 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: And
10 that's where we were. We discussed
11 that.

12 SHERIFF JOHNSON: I mean, what
13 would -- I mean, I don't know. I
14 don't think we ought to make them
15 go to an academy and stay just for
16 the idea of, well, you stayed, and
17 you can do PT.

18 Do PT, and when you get out at
19 70 percent, how many of them are
20 going to get out and keep that up?
21 Nobody. None of them will do --
22 there you go, Sheriff. Not a lot
23 of us do.

24 I just -- I don't -- you know,
25 these guys have done it for a long

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1 time, and they're good at what
2 they're doing. I don't think we
3 need to make it harder for them to
4 come on full-time. I don't think
5 they should be punished because
6 they have another job somewhere.

7 CHIEF ROGERS: 50 percent is
8 hard.

9 SHERIFF JOHNSON: Yeah. And
10 you can do 50 to get in, I mean,
11 you know.

12 CHIEF ROGERS: You're talking
13 70 percent, I mean, it's -- and I
14 work out like the sheriff, I mean.
15 And I've got guys now that have
16 probably been out of academy four
17 years that probably struggle to
18 do -- to get to the 50 percent mark
19 right now.

20 SHERIFF JOHNSON: My guy's in
21 good shape. He's probably in his
22 mid-40s.

23 CHIEF ROGERS: 50 percent is a
24 good benchmark. I mean, it really
25 is. I don't know -- you know,

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1 they've been working for five
2 years, and we're trying to hold
3 them to a 70 percent standard, I
4 mean, how many do we have in our
5 departments now that have been
6 working for five years can meet
7 that 70 percent standard?

8 SHERIFF JOHNSON: And, you
9 know, another thing, with the
10 retirement that they've done, it's
11 going to be harder for small
12 departments like me to get
13 full-time guys to come in. So I
14 need part-time. And if I can work
15 them long enough to get them where
16 they can come over, that would
17 benefit a small department.

18 With the retirement like it is,
19 I don't have a lot of full-time
20 guys wanting to come. I've got
21 more part-time that want to keep a
22 good job, help me on the weekends.

23 And I think over time, they
24 would probably say, okay, I've been
25 at this job long enough, I want to

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1 come over full-time and try to help
2 people. I think that would benefit
3 smaller departments anyway.

4 CHIEF ROGERS: See, for me --
5 for me -- and we're talking about
6 having personnel to meet. I just
7 think about our game day Saturdays.
8 I mean, a lot of what the people
9 that come and help us are part-time
10 certified people.

11 And so, you know, I think the
12 standard needs to be there, but
13 then the question is what we're
14 discussing now is how do we get
15 there, you know.

16 SHERIFF INGRAM: Yeah.
17 Speaking to Sheriff Johnson,
18 actually I know exactly who you're
19 talking about. I trained --

20 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry.
21 Can you tell me your name?

22 SHERIFF INGRAM: Eddie Ingram,
23 Jones County.

24 THE COURT REPORTER: Thank you.

25 SHERIFF INGRAM: I'm sorry.

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1 And don't get me wrong. I totally
2 agree that officers should be in
3 some kind of shape. Okay? But
4 when we're talking about this
5 bridge, they've already passed the
6 PT. They qualified that.

7 And I think they should say --
8 be able to show that they do have
9 some semblance, because there's
10 really a whole lot of truth to what
11 Sheriff Johnson said.

12 They get out of the full-time
13 academy, they come back to us and
14 they say, I'm not running another
15 step I don't have to, you know.
16 And we're shooting ourselves in the
17 foot by making that a tremendous
18 priority when it should be him
19 learning a job.

20 Should they have to pass a 50
21 percent? Personally, I think so.
22 But 70 percent, like this gentleman
23 he's talking about, he may work to
24 6:00, 7:00, and he doesn't have
25 time to get his body in shape to go

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1 and do a 70 percent minimum. Maybe
2 he suffered an injury, maybe even
3 on the job, that prevents him to be
4 able to do that, you know. I just
5 think that they've already done
6 that, okay?

7 On the PT part, I think they
8 should show something, but use some
9 common sense. We've already put a
10 badge and a gun on them, you know.
11 If we can't trust them to get in
12 enough shape to do 50 percent, why
13 are we putting a gun on their side?
14 It just doesn't make any sense.

15 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Thank
16 you.

17 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.

18 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: Talking
19 about that, showing the work
20 itself, one thing we do at Rankin
21 is when they go to a part-time
22 academy, even full-time academy,
23 when they come back to work on the
24 road with us, we have an FTO sheet
25 that they have to fill out.

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1 They have to work so many
2 cases, so many crash cases, so many
3 domestic violence cases, narcotic
4 cases. It's just a checkpoint.
5 Some of them you have to do five to
6 ten; some of them you just have to
7 do one. That's a checkoff list
8 showing that the type of cases and
9 how familiar you are with
10 Mississippi law and the procedures,
11 mechanics of arrest, everything
12 like that.

13 And then every year, through
14 our log, we pull down log on each
15 one of our -- especially our
16 reserve officers of what they've
17 done, how many hours and stuff they
18 worked out on patrol, how many
19 hours they worked out on ballgames,
20 whatever else.

21 So it has our hours on patrols,
22 and it also has a listing of all
23 the reports and stuff that they've
24 actually taken. One thing that I
25 think would be good, Lauderdale

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1 County has the same FTO sheet, at
2 least, in order for them to qualify
3 for that bridge program is have
4 that checkout sheet that they
5 are -- and the sheriff and the
6 police chief signs off on it, they
7 have done each and every single one
8 of these type of cases, they're
9 familiar with it, and we're good to
10 proceed on to the next level.

11 That's just my opinion.

12 SHERIFF JOHNSON: Like Brian
13 Fortenberry, Brian's done what
14 Brian needed to do at the time to
15 get full-time certified. So, you
16 know, as far as I'm concerned, he's
17 already done what he's done. He
18 did his PT back then. He did his
19 training and stuff. Are we going
20 to start making everybody go back,
21 all right, you've been working here
22 20 years, now we've got to get
23 another PT test to keep moving
24 forward?

25 SHERIFF CALHOUN: Just waiting

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1 to be recognized.

2 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Sure, go
3 ahead, Sheriff.

4 SHERIFF CALHOUN: So to your
5 point, sir, these guys -- and I'm
6 speaking as the sheriff now. If
7 you've got an individual who's
8 already got a part-time
9 certificate, they've already done
10 the PT test. They've already done
11 70 percent. Now we're going to go
12 back 5 years, 10 years, 15 years
13 later, and they're going to have to
14 do it all over again.

15 And I'm for it if we want to
16 mandate that every department and
17 everybody, every state agency, such
18 as the highway patrol and everybody
19 else, we give everybody a PT test
20 every year. But there's going to
21 be a problem with that, folks, and
22 y'all know what that problem is
23 going to be. We won't be able
24 to -- we'll never be able to make
25 that work right.

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1 Reality is you would like to
2 think most people are going to keep
3 themselves in good enough shape
4 that they, you know, feel like they
5 can do the job. Truth of the
6 matter is we can't -- we can't do
7 that.

8 I would say that, hey,
9 participation in some PT if someone
10 was there for five weeks, but I'm a
11 lot like the fellow from Jones
12 County; you're going to have a
13 program that's not simple, and if
14 they have to go do that, you're
15 going to have next to none. I
16 don't think they're going to do
17 that. I just don't think it will.
18 I could be wrong.

19 But I just think doing it in
20 the evenings and on weekends, like
21 some of us have done in the past
22 for those kind of programs, will be
23 a much better way of doing that
24 than trying to make people go.
25 That's just my two cents' worth.

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1 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Thank
2 you.

3 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.
4 Anybody else from the audience want
5 to speak?

6 DIRECTOR CARLTON: I will.
7 Tony Carlton, again, with MLEOTA.
8 I do think that it's a -- I do
9 think we have a due diligence of
10 making sure that there is a
11 standard, though, that we --
12 possibly it's not 70 percent, but
13 we do have to recognize there is
14 some sort of standard that the
15 Board is going to set and that the
16 academies are comfortable with
17 letting someone pass through there.

18 I don't think that we can just
19 say, no, they've already done that
20 in the past. I think we have a due
21 diligence to make sure that
22 they're -- if we're going to allow
23 them to have a full-time
24 certification, that they have to
25 have some proof that they can do

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1 the job.

2 Because I believe if they're
3 going to put on the badge and go
4 out there and do it, they're
5 fighting that already, I know. But
6 still if we're going to say, yes,
7 they're allowed to do it every day,
8 then we have to set a standard. I
9 don't think we can just overlook
10 it.

11 SHERIFF JOHNSON: They do it
12 every day now.

13 DIRECTOR CARLTON: Well, if
14 it's part-time, they don't do it
15 every day.

16 SHERIFF JOHNSON: Well, every
17 day they work, they do it now.

18 DIRECTOR CARLTON: Okay. I'm
19 just saying I feel like there
20 should be a standard that we set,
21 not to just let it pass through.
22 We're looking at a bridge.

23 MS. COLEMAN: Director, may I
24 ask, is there one for the refresher
25 class right now?

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1 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: PT.

2 MS. COLEMAN: PT?

3 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Uh-huh.

4 (Affirmative response.)

5 MS. COLEMAN: What is it?

6 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: 50 percent.

7 MS. COLEMAN: 50 percent upon
8 entering the refresher class?

9 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: You can
10 only take it one time. If the
11 class starts, you can take it one
12 time. If you fail it, you have to
13 cycle. You have to go to the next
14 class. If you take a pre-entrance
15 test, you can take it twice.

16 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Well, the
17 elephant in the room is that there
18 was ever a part-time academy. I
19 will tell you that. I'll stand
20 here by myself and drive this
21 machine by myself.

22 But where there was opportunity
23 to go to a different or lesser
24 trained opportunity to basically do
25 the same thing a full-time person

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1 does is just based upon the hours
2 you work or the money that you
3 make.

4 But you go to a bank robbery,
5 there ain't no part-time bank
6 robbery. It is the same danger,
7 threat that everybody else does.
8 And we do have a program that was
9 invented that allows you to do that
10 on a part-time basis with a
11 different standard of training than
12 full-time. That's where the
13 elephant was created.

14 Now, we're having to deal with
15 how do we fix this, how do we -- do
16 you just completely do away with
17 part-time? And I don't think
18 anybody on this Board agrees with
19 that, because I've got them, and
20 you've got to have them. What
21 we're talking about is the
22 training.

23 If I decide to become a CDL
24 truck driver, there are
25 requirements that I've got to meet.

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1 And if that's the full-time job I
2 want, I may have to quit my other
3 one to go do that. That's reality.
4 That's where you're at.

5 The one thing I don't -- will
6 not support is weakening the
7 training to a point that there's an
8 alternative to becoming full-time
9 versus the way that we, as this
10 Board, have already set. This is
11 the standards that it takes to be
12 full-time, and for us to weaken
13 that or bridge a gap that allows
14 you to do that, I won't support it.
15 I mean, I may be the only one that
16 stands here and tells you.

17 I don't mind there being a gap.
18 But I think the training has to
19 match equivalent to what we've got
20 to become full-time now. Now,
21 that's my free speech, and now
22 we'll take up an offering, and be
23 through with it.

24 So, you know, as far as the 50
25 percent, I do think that we need to

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1 set it to where it's manageable,
2 and it's doable, and it's fair to
3 everybody. I do agree with that.
4 70 percent may be too much. May
5 need to be 50.

6 But we don't want to weaken it
7 to the point that we begin to see
8 that, well, you know what? I can
9 get a full-time academy -- or I can
10 get a full-time certificate going
11 this route instead of doing it the
12 way it's supposed to be done.
13 That's what we can't do.

14 Is there any other discussion
15 on the items that we discussed?
16 We've talked about the 50 percent
17 instead of 70. We've talked a
18 little bit about what five years of
19 consistent service is.

20 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD:
21 Residential and non-residential.

22 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: And
23 residential and non-residential.
24 That's still on the table. We've
25 heard that residential and feeding

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1 is going to cost more than what
2 we're allowing. We've definitely
3 got to look into that.

4 DIRECTOR CARLTON: Can I ask a
5 question about that? If we run the
6 bridge gap with the full-time
7 academy, if they're only there for
8 two days, or they -- or they --
9 they come for one class and then
10 they leave, that's going to be an
11 issue to where it's possibly not
12 the full week that they're staying.

13 DIRECTOR MORENO: Our
14 refreshers and refresher schedule,
15 they're there those weeks three and
16 four days, because it's 200 hours.
17 I mean, it's almost half the basic
18 academy.

19 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: The same
20 thing for Mississippi Delta, and I
21 think Tupelo, as well.

22 DIRECTOR CARLTON: Well, what I
23 was just saying is that -- I just
24 wanted to take that under
25 consideration that if it's that

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1 way, are we going to make them stay
2 one night? Just a thought.

3 (OFF THE RECORD DISCUSSION.)

4 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Is there any
5 question on the testing that will
6 be done where they've got to pass
7 the test? I mean, that mandated
8 just about for anybody.

9 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: Question on
10 testing: You've mentioned pretest
11 and posttest --

12 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: That's
13 separate.

14 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: Separate?

15 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Uh-huh.

16 (Affirmative response.)

17 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: Okay.

18 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Are you
19 talking about the physical, the PT
20 test? Oh, okay, pretest, posttest,
21 that's for basic. That's separate,
22 but it is on the agenda. The
23 pretest PT test is what we're
24 talking about here.

25 (OFF THE RECORD DISCUSSION.)

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1 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: What
2 we're going to do is I'm going to
3 draft a policy for -- it's probably
4 going to be two different options.
5 Option 1 will have everything we
6 discussed, five years, PT entrance
7 at 50 percent, the equivalence
8 exam, and residential.

9 The second option will be five
10 years, PT exam, equivalency, and
11 non-residential. Okay?

12 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: And work on
13 the reimbursable amount.

14 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: And we'll
15 talk about the money, as well. If
16 it's 1800 -- is that what you both
17 are doing, or are you doing 1500?

18 MR. MCKINNEY: We do 1800
19 because we feed them lunch.

20 DIRECTOR MORENO: But that's
21 just one meal.

22 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: And I
23 will include that --

24 DIRECTOR CARLTON: We're doing
25 the same, 1800.

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1 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: 18?
2 Okay. So that's what we'll do, and
3 I'll have that ready for May.
4 Probably I will reconvene with the
5 directors at some point in time
6 between now and then and discuss it
7 again.

8 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Okay. So
9 the second --

10 MS. COLEMAN: Mr. Chairman,
11 could I make a motion that we go
12 into executive session before we go
13 on from this item, please?

14 MS. CRANFORD: Yeah.

15 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Sure. We
16 have a motion to go into executive
17 session to discuss this matter. Do
18 I have a second?

19 MS. CRANFORD: Second.

20 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Any
21 discussion?

22 (NO RESPONSE.)

23 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All in
24 favor, say aye and raise your right
25 hand.

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1 ALL: Aye.

2 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Any opposed?

3 (NO RESPONSE.)

4 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: There are

5 none. All right. We're in

6 executive session till further

7 notice.

8 (BOARD ENTERS EXECUTIVE SESSION.)

9 (OFF THE RECORD.)

10 (BOARD ENTERS EXITS EXECUTIVE SESSION.)

11 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: We're out of

12 executive session. Quick item is,

13 I need a motion to amend the

14 schedule from 10A and B to 10A, B,

15 and C.

16 CHIEF QUAKA: I make that

17 motion.

18 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Okay. Have

19 a second?

20 MS. COLEMAN: I'll second it.

21 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All in favor

22 say aye and raise your right hand.

23 ALL: Aye.

24 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Any opposed?

25 (NO RESPONSE.)

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1 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All right.
2 Back on the regular schedule, we
3 are at 9G, pretest, posttest for
4 basic academies.

5 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: In the
6 meeting that I had with the basic
7 academies last week, we discussed
8 pretest and posttest. The
9 Commissioner called right after the
10 last board meeting and said can we
11 do this, what does this look like.

12 And in talking with the
13 academies, they said either
14 pre-entrance test date or the first
15 week there would not be a problem
16 giving the equivalency exam. Same
17 situation that we were talking
18 about in the executive session,
19 giving the equivalency that first
20 week.

21 What he wanted to do, and the
22 academies agreed with, is to make
23 sure that that 480-hour curriculum
24 is exactly what it needs to be, how
25 many hours we're focused on, and

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1 then do a posttest.

2 So for the pretest, we might
3 have 50s and 60s, maybe have 70s in
4 the grades. But for the posttest,
5 we want to see 80s, 90s, and higher
6 to make sure that that 480-hour
7 curriculum is working. And the
8 academies agree.

9 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: That's
10 information only, so there will be
11 no vote. Correct? Okay. Anything
12 else on item G?

13 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: That's
14 it.

15 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Okay. All
16 right. We are at number 10, the
17 Honorable Williamson, A.

18 MR. WILLIAMSON: You should
19 have received two potential policy
20 changes for the Board's
21 consideration. One of them
22 concerns discovery in light of
23 House Bill 611, which is still
24 alive in the senate, that would
25 require the office and this Board

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1 to conduct discovery under the
2 Rules of Civil Procedure.

3 Knowing how burdensome that
4 would be and how difficult that
5 would be to comply with, I proposed
6 a policy change under existing
7 Policy 4.3, which governs the
8 process for hearings. It ends in
9 4.3, subsection H, subsection 1.e.
10 So we'd be adding an F that reads,
11 "The Board attorney shall send a
12 copy of the investigation file and
13 all exhibits, if any, to the
14 officer/individual, or his or her
15 attorney, at least 30 days prior to
16 the date of the hearing."

17 That would comply with
18 discovery and would be similar to
19 discovery in criminal cases, which
20 we're all familiar with, being law
21 enforcement or prosecutors.

22 The only potential addition
23 that I would suggest that I did not
24 think of when I initially wrote
25 this was whether or not redactions

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1 to take out anyone's personal
2 identifying information that could
3 be in the file would be necessary.
4 So I would propose that we say,
5 "Redactions to remove personally
6 identifiable information may occur
7 at the Director's discretion."

8 MS. COLEMAN: I would agree
9 with that, Luke. Do we -- and I
10 apologize if I wasn't listening
11 closely enough. Do we want to make
12 it upon request we will provide
13 this information --

14 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yes, yes.

15 MS. COLEMAN: -- just so
16 that --

17 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yes, yes.

18 MS. COLEMAN: Okay. Y'all
19 aren't having to track people down.

20 MR. WILLIAMSON: So we'll do
21 upon request.

22 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: That will be
23 what's added to F; is that correct?

24 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yes. So I'll
25 read you all, then, with these two

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1 amendments. Letter F, "The Board
2 attorney shall send a copy of the
3 investigation file and all
4 exhibits, if any, to the
5 officer/individual or his or her
6 attorney upon request at least 30
7 days prior to the date of the
8 hearing."

9 Next sentence: "Redactions may
10 occur to remove personal
11 identifying information from these
12 materials at the Director's
13 discretion."

14 We would need to file this with
15 the secretary of state's office if
16 the Board thinks that's a good
17 change. So I would just need you
18 to approve that change and direct
19 me to file it.

20 MS. CRANFORD: Okay. This is
21 in response to just A, the
22 discovery --

23 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yes.

24 MS. CRANFORD: -- and House --
25 response to House Bill 611?

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1 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yes, that's
2 correct. And I was made aware
3 today that there may be a proposed
4 amendment to House Bill 611, but I
5 don't think it's been offered yet.

6 MS. CRANFORD: I think it has
7 been offered.

8 MR. WILLIAMSON: Okay.

9 MS. CRANFORD: And so, my
10 suggestion would be to perhaps
11 table this until we determine the
12 outcome of that amendment, because
13 the amendment language is going to
14 address some of the things that
15 you've added here.

16 And I think if it goes through,
17 you may alleviate having to go
18 before the secretary of state and
19 getting things approved, because if
20 it's statutory, then it's going to
21 take effect immediately or, you
22 know, whatever date. July 1.

23 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yes.

24 MS. CRANFORD: So maybe see
25 where it goes, and then if -- are

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1 we in a bind right now on anything
2 with discovery?

3 MR. WILLIAMSON: We're not. We
4 did -- I complied with this policy
5 for everything that was set for
6 hearings this week that would have
7 been held. Of course, we know we
8 had one voluntary surrender and
9 then several that were rescheduled.

10 The only thing that the Board
11 may want to do, other than table
12 it, is just comment on whether or
13 not this policy would be acceptable
14 in lieu of House Bill 611 so that
15 that could be conveyed to the
16 legislature. That's the only
17 additional thing.

18 MR. MCCARTY: House Bill 611
19 got passed or (indiscernible) on
20 the calendar day during session.
21 So they didn't hear House Bill 611.

22 MS. CRANFORD: There's been an
23 amendment.

24 COLONEL PITTS: Yeah. They'd
25 offered -- it's going to have to be

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1 offered on the senate floor. When
2 they bring it up, they'll offer it
3 then.

4 MS. CRANFORD: That's right.

5 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Or the
6 senate is not -- would they
7 consider if we did it in policy,
8 they just wouldn't worry about the
9 law because it was taken care of
10 here if we voted on it? Or what?

11 I guess the timing, is it
12 better to do this first, or let
13 them do theirs first?

14 MS. CRANFORD: Well, we're
15 going to be bound by what they do.
16 So it's kind of like we can do all
17 we want to with policy, but if they
18 pass something that conflicts in
19 some way, then we're going to have
20 to change again to reflect, I
21 think, what the statutory
22 requirements are.

23 MS. COLEMAN: But do we think
24 we could have the bill die if they
25 felt like we had addressed it with

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1 our policy?

2 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: That's what
3 I'm talking about.

4 MS. CRANFORD: That, I don't
5 know. I mean, it's had some teeth,
6 I think.

7 COLONEL PITTS: I mean, the
8 language I think we had input on.
9 If you like what they're doing and
10 you like the amendment, I would let
11 it roll.

12 MS. CRANFORD: Let me read you
13 this language. All right. For any
14 hearing that is provided, a law
15 enforcement officer or a part-time
16 law enforcement officer may request
17 and shall be provided any
18 documentary evidence which could be
19 introduced at the hearing to
20 substantiate the reprimand,
21 suspension, cancellation of, or
22 recalling the certification of the
23 officer in question.

24 "Any confidential information
25 contained in the documentary

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1 evidence may be redacted by the
2 Executive Director of Office of
3 Standards and Training." So it's a
4 little simpler worded.

5 CHIEF QUAKE: So have they
6 pulled back from the Rules of Civil
7 Procedure?

8 MS. CRANFORD: Yes. So this is
9 simply going to just entitle them
10 to a copy of the file that we hold,
11 whereas the civil procedure rules
12 are going to open the scope of this
13 up to where they could have civil
14 discovery. They could propound
15 admissions and interrogatories and
16 hold depositions.

17 MS. COLEMAN: Yeah. They're
18 going to have to hire a lawyer.

19 MS. CRANFORD: We'll never --
20 we'll never have the ability to
21 bring things to conclusion, I mean,
22 within a reasonable period of time
23 if we did it that way.

24 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Then why
25 don't we do this? Somebody convey

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1 whatever this is -- why don't we
2 just take a vote that we're in
3 support of that senate bill, and
4 we'll call the bill number as
5 amended and read on the record and
6 let somebody know that, hey, we're
7 good with it if y'all want to pass
8 it?

9 CHIEF QUAKE: I just want to
10 make sure I'm clear, because the
11 house bill, Luke, you sent me two
12 weeks ago was extremely different.

13 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yes, right.

14 CHIEF QUAKE: And I reached out
15 to every person on that committee
16 to say I'm against it completely.
17 So I want to make sure whatever I'm
18 voting for today is not what's --

19 MS. CRANFORD: Not what's in
20 there.

21 CHIEF QUAKE: -- was in there
22 two weeks ago.

23 MR. WILLIAMSON: It would be a
24 proposed amendment to that bill.

25 MS. CRANFORD: It's an

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1 amendment to that bill.

2 COLONEL PITTS: It'd have to go
3 back to the house for them to
4 approve it.

5 CHIEF QUAKA: Okay.

6 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: That's what
7 they're looking at. But if they
8 needed, they had our blessings, it
9 may --

10 MS. CRANFORD: Pass and move
11 on.

12 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: I mean,
13 that's just my thoughts.

14 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: Is it just
15 a difference in the discovery items
16 or what?

17 MR. WILLIAMSON: Well, it's
18 different -- it's an entirely
19 different process, because
20 discovery under civil procedure,
21 you can take depositions.

22 They can send the office
23 requests for production of
24 documents. They can send the
25 office requests for admissions that

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1 then we would be bound by, even if
2 we don't answer them, if we don't
3 answer them timely. It's an
4 extensive process.

5 So this is just, hey,
6 everything that is going to be
7 presented against you at the
8 hearing, you get a copy of in
9 advance, which is a lot --

10 CHIEF QUAKA: Well, they didn't
11 even put 30 days in there, did
12 they?

13 MR. WILLIAMSON: They did not.
14 They didn't put a reasonable --
15 they didn't put a timeframe in
16 there.

17 CHIEF QUAKA: Yeah.

18 MR. WILLIAMSON: But, I mean,
19 we would comply as -- I mean, I
20 think 30 days --

21 MS. CRANFORD: I think 30 days
22 is reasonable, I mean, just
23 depending, I guess, on the volume
24 of the case.

25 MR. WILLIAMSON: Right.

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1 MS. CRANFORD: I mean, I think
2 that's something that you can make
3 a determination on depending on if
4 you had an extraordinary
5 circumstance.

6 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Can we
7 entertain a motion that --

8 MR. WILLIAMSON: To express
9 support --

10 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: -- to
11 express support for House Bill 611
12 as read --

13 MS. CRANFORD: As amended.

14 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: As amended
15 and read by Ms. Cranford on 3/5/26
16 at our Board meeting? Can I get
17 a --

18 MS. COLEMAN: I make that
19 motion.

20 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: I have a
21 motion. Do I have a second?

22 CHIEF QUAKA: Second.

23 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Any more
24 discussion?

25 (NO RESPONSE.)

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1 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All in
2 favor, say aye and raise your right
3 hand.

4 ALL: Aye.

5 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Any opposed?

6 (NO RESPONSE.)

7 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: There are
8 none. Now, Luke, you good with
9 that?

10 MR. WILLIAMSON: No, that's
11 good.

12 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Okay. B is
13 travel reimbursement.

14 MR. WILLIAMSON: Transfer.

15 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Or transfer.
16 I'm sorry.

17 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yes. This was
18 a requested change. Rule 6.2
19 governs transfer reimbursement,
20 which is basically if an agency
21 hires somebody, sends them to the
22 academy, pays for a portion of
23 that, and then they leave that
24 agency within the first three years
25 and within 30 days take another job

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1 somewhere else, then that second
2 agency that hires them has to
3 reimburse the first agency for a
4 proportional amount of what they
5 spent sending the person to the
6 academy.

7 Right now, the policy says it's
8 only if they leave and take other
9 law enforcement employment within
10 30 days. This proposed change
11 would make it if they leave and
12 take other law enforcement
13 employment at any point within the
14 first three years after their
15 initial employ.

16 And, again, there's a formula
17 that shows what the proportion is,
18 but it's basically you're closing a
19 loophole is the way that this was
20 discussed with me, where if you
21 leave a sheriff's office and you
22 wait 31 days and get hired at the
23 police department, the police
24 department owes zero dollars to the
25 sheriff's department versus if you

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1 get hired 29 days, then there's a
2 share that they'd have to pay.

3 So this change was proposed so
4 that it would be essentially, if
5 you sponsor somebody to go to the
6 academy, you know you're going to
7 get three years out of them, or
8 you're at least going to be
9 reimbursed.

10 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: We've heard
11 the recommendation by counsel. Do
12 I have a motion to accept it?

13 CHIEF HALL: I'll make the
14 motion to accept.

15 MS. COLEMAN: I will second it.
16 On the -- same agreement, they've
17 got to prove they paid it in the
18 first place. You know what I mean?
19 Because you'll have people getting
20 reimbursed for something they never
21 paid for to begin with.

22 CHIEF QUAKA: I do have a
23 question. So are we seeking
24 reimbursement for something the
25 state has paid for? Because I've

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1 gotten a bill before from another
2 agency that someone left at two
3 years, and they sent me a bill for
4 the cost of the academy. Well,
5 they've already submitted that.

6 MR. WILLIAMSON: There's a
7 formula that's in the policy that
8 sets out exactly what they would
9 owe, the second agency would owe,
10 and it's based on how much of that
11 first three years they have already
12 worked. It's decreased by the time
13 period that they already worked.
14 Ms. Amy, is that your
15 understanding?

16 MS. COLEMAN: I have one other
17 question. This is assuming the
18 agency didn't terminate the person,
19 correct? I mean. . .

20 MR. WILLIAMSON: Right. This
21 is --

22 MS. COLEMAN: Because if I fire
23 the person I just sent to the
24 academy, I'm also effectively
25 making it where no other agency

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1 might hire that person for three
2 years.

3 So I do think it has to be that
4 as long as they were not
5 involuntarily terminated from that
6 position.

7 MR. WILLIAMSON: I don't think
8 the policy speaks to how they left.
9 So we may need to -- we may need to
10 look at that issue, because you
11 don't -- I would agree. You don't
12 want that situation.

13 MS. COLEMAN: Right.

14 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: I wouldn't
15 want (indiscernible) personally if
16 they were fired, and then pick up
17 their tab.

18 MS. COLEMAN: Well, but you've
19 got to remember, there's a lot of
20 these towns --

21 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: I know.

22 MS. COLEMAN: -- that have got
23 some political aspects to it
24 that --

25 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: (Indiscernible;

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1 talking simultaneously) --

2 MS. COLEMAN: -- you posted a
3 picture that they graduated from
4 the academy, and one of your
5 constituents calls up and says,
6 Can't believe you hired him. And
7 so, then they fire him and try to
8 get their money back just because
9 somebody else is willing to take
10 him. I don't think that's --

11 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: But with
12 ACADIS now, you're documenting all
13 your stuff right there. If you're
14 the chief that fired them, it's
15 your responsibility to put it on
16 there.

17 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Most
18 states do not reimburse for
19 training. The departments pay the
20 4,000 whatever it is for training,
21 and there's no reimbursement. That
22 is your job to send people to the
23 training academy. So we could just
24 stop reimbursements altogether.

25 MR. WILLIAMSON: Except for the

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1 statute.

2 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Except
3 for that.

4 MR. WILLIAMSON: Except for
5 that. Well, again, this was a --
6 this was a request to change that I
7 present to the Board. So I've
8 presented it at the request of a
9 Board member.

10 I understand it to be about
11 investment in an officer. I think
12 that's reasonable. I also see
13 Amy's point that it is part of the
14 job, part of the job training,
15 specifically.

16 If we were going to add
17 anything, I think -- I think
18 Kassie's point about how the person
19 left should matter so that we can
20 remove the possibility of punitive
21 measures for firing.

22 CHIEF ROGERS: Can I ask a
23 question?

24 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yes, sir.

25 CHIEF ROGERS: What happens if

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1 the second agency doesn't pay?

2 MR. WILLIAMSON: That's a good
3 question.

4 CHIEF ROGERS: Because you send
5 the bill, and you follow the
6 formula, but they don't pay.

7 MR. WILLIAMSON: They would
8 be --

9 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: That's where
10 they would have to go back into
11 this, they're not going to get
12 reimbursed for anything else --

13 MR. WILLIAMSON: Right.

14 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: -- until
15 they make that right. Isn't that
16 right? I mean, that's the only
17 thing I would know.

18 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yes, sir,
19 that's true.

20 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All right.
21 I think we had it read. I think we
22 had a first and ten seconds with
23 some contention. So --

24 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Okay.
25 But wait a minute. What if --

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1 okay? So somebody called the other
2 day and they got a \$9,000 bill
3 from -- what?

4 CHIEF HALL: It shouldn't be
5 that high.

6 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: It should
7 be -- we should -- can we not set a
8 cap? Can we not say \$4,000?
9 That's what the tuition is.

10 DIRECTOR MORENO: I don't think
11 it's tuition. I think it includes
12 pay and allowances and all.

13 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Oh,
14 there's a formula. I know. That's
15 the formula I wanted to get rid of.

16 MR. WILLIAMSON: Okay. We can
17 table, if you want to, and deal
18 with all those things and present a
19 new policy.

20 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Okay.
21 Because I think it's got the great
22 rate at \$9.

23 MR. WILLIAMSON: In the
24 example. In the example with the
25 formula, right.

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1 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: So do we
2 want to table it?

3 MR. WILLIAMSON: That's y'all's
4 decision.

5 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: That
6 agency used the \$9, though, is what
7 I'm saying.

8 MR. WILLIAMSON: Oh, they did?

9 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: They did.
10 And I was like, but no, that's not
11 how -- so -- but it also has
12 tuition at 3600. So that does need
13 to be reviewed.

14 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: With actual
15 numbers in it.

16 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: With
17 actual numbers, yeah. Pay rate.
18 It should say pay rate.

19 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah. Okay.

20 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Or base
21 rate.

22 MR. WILLIAMSON: I'm looking at
23 it.

24 CHIEF QUAKA: That example
25 is -- is not --

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1 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD:

2 Convoluted. It's convoluted.

3 CHIEF QUAKA: -- easy. It is.

4 MR. WILLIAMSON: Okay. So
5 then, what if we take up how
6 reimbursement should be figured, if
7 any. I mean, do y'all want to -- I
8 think y'all need to vote on, since
9 there was a motion and a second,
10 and to vote on what was proposed
11 and then deal with what's left. Is
12 that the proper -- under Roberts
13 Rules of Order is that the
14 proper --

15 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Well, we've
16 had a motion and a second. So
17 we've either got to vote or kill
18 it. So he's read it. There's been
19 some discussion over how the
20 formula is calculated that might
21 need to be tweaked. But as far as
22 the original motion and second, all
23 in favor say --

24 CHIEF QUAKA: Can you remind me
25 what the original motion was?

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1 MR. WILLIAMSON: It was your --
2 Kassie, it was your motion.

3 MS. COLEMAN: I think I made a
4 second, but with condition. So I
5 don't know if that counts as a real
6 second.

7 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Who made the
8 original motion?

9 CHIEF HALL: I did.

10 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: You made the
11 original motion?

12 CHIEF HALL: Yes.

13 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Chief
14 Hall.

15 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Didn't you
16 second? If nothing else, we had a
17 motion and a second with a
18 condition. We know that much. So
19 all in favor of the motion with the
20 condition, raise your right hand
21 and say aye.

22 (NO RESPONSE.)

23 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All opposed?

24 MS. CRANFORD: Can you restate
25 the motion just so everybody will

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1 know what the language is?

2 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Here it is.

3 MR. WILLIAMSON: So the motion
4 was for the proposed change with a
5 condition added if the person is
6 involuntarily separated from their
7 initial employ.

8 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: That the
9 agency hiring them has a
10 responsibility of paying or getting
11 paid for their training that
12 they're out.

13 COLONEL PITTS: We're not
14 addressing the rate or anything
15 like that?

16 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Huh-huh.
17 (Negative response.) He's going to
18 re-look at that. Just the process.
19 All right. The process with that
20 condition of making sure that an
21 agency is not out for training
22 under the three years, I've got a
23 motion and second. All in favor
24 say aye and raise your right hand.

25 ALL: Aye.

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1 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Any opposed?

2 (NO RESPONSE.)

3 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: There are
4 none. And, Luke, if you could work
5 on the calculation and bring it
6 back, we'll do it.

7 MR. WILLIAMSON: I will. Yes,
8 sir.

9 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All right.
10 Now the added to, or the amendment
11 to the agenda is the November
12 policy for final approval.

13 MR. WILLIAMSON: The Board
14 approved policies for filing in
15 November 2025. Those were filed
16 with the secretary of state's
17 office. Those have been published
18 on the website for Standards and
19 Training. They were given
20 instructions for public comment.

21 Executive Director Broman, was
22 there any public comment that was
23 offered?

24 EXEC. DIR. BROMEN: No, sir.

25 MR. WILLIAMSON: So based on

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1 that, it could be proper now for
2 the Board to direct me to submit it
3 for final filing and approval by
4 the secretary of state and OLRC.

5 MS. COLEMAN: I make that
6 motion.

7 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: We have a
8 motion.

9 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: Second.

10 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Have a
11 second. Any discussion?

12 (NO RESPONSE.)

13 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All in
14 favor, say aye and raise your right
15 hand.

16 ALL: Aye.

17 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Any opposed?

18 (NO RESPONSE.)

19 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: There are
20 none.

21 MR. WILLIAMSON: Thank you,
22 Mr. Chair.

23 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Yep. All
24 right. Item 11 is discussion, A is
25 meeting time for hearing cases,

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1 30-day notice that they should at
2 least give a 15-day notice for a
3 continuance.

4 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Okay. So
5 we are planning on two days prior
6 to the next Board meeting in May,
7 which would be the 13th and 14th, I
8 believe.

9 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: That's
10 correct.

11 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Y'all
12 have got your calendar that I gave
13 everybody a copy of, and I do not
14 foresee those two days going like
15 it did this time. Okay? Because
16 all -- we're saying that most of
17 these guys have attorneys.

18 We found out yesterday that two
19 of them who have attorneys are
20 going to wait until July because
21 actually we're waiting -- we
22 discussed it with the attorneys.
23 We're waiting on grand jury,
24 correct?

25 And so -- which would be great.

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1 So we're looking at the 12th and
2 13th days for hearings. What I
3 would like -- I'm sorry. Go ahead.

4 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: The 12th,
5 13th for hearing, and then the 14th
6 on a regular meeting day.

7 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Uh-huh.
8 (Affirmative response.)

9 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: So that's
10 three days. Okay.

11 MS. CRANFORD: I'll say one
12 thing about that. I think that's
13 Police Week.

14 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: It is.

15 MS. CRANFORD: So if that
16 factors into anybody's travel
17 abilities or events and whatnot --
18 I know that I will be out that
19 week.

20 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: The 15th
21 is the officers memorial, isn't it?

22 MS. CRANFORD: Yeah. The
23 Fallen Officers Memorial is, I
24 think, the 12th.

25 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: The 12th?

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1 MS. CRANFORD: Yeah. That's
2 what I have down right now.

3 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: I will be at
4 that one, the 12th.

5 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Is that
6 for Mississippi, or is that D.C.?

7 MS. CRANFORD: So I'm talking
8 about the one that's right there at
9 the Capitol that our office puts
10 on, but I don't know about the D.C.
11 one.

12 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Okay.

13 MS. CRANFORD: I just know
14 there's a bunch of events usually
15 that week.

16 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Is it before
17 or after lunch?

18 MS. CRANFORD: It's usually in
19 the evening.

20 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: 5:00.

21 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: So do we
22 want to meet that day and quit at
23 3:00 and come back the next day?

24 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: You
25 talking about the 12th?

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1 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Yeah.

2 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: We can
3 review that -- we can go back -- I
4 hate to bring y'all here two
5 different times. I would rather
6 y'all come. . .

7 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: I'll be here
8 for that anyway, if we can get out
9 in time to get there.

10 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: So the
11 12th through 13th, still have
12 hearings but just get out early on
13 the 12th?

14 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Yeah, that'd
15 be my suggestion. I'm here anyway.
16 We could just quit, like, at 3:00
17 or 3:30, make them understand, and
18 then pick it back up the next day.
19 Where we're at at 3:30, we're
20 stopping.

21 MS. CRANFORD: Maybe don't plan
22 but, like, one hearing after lunch,
23 because, you know, they tend to
24 drag on.

25 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: That

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1 brings up another -- that brings up
2 another issue. It is: Can we put
3 a time limit on how this --

4 MS. CRANFORD: I've been
5 waiting for this question.

6 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: I mean,
7 for real.

8 MS. CRANFORD: I mean, Luke and
9 I have debated this a number of
10 times. I would be curious to hear
11 what everybody else thinks.

12 But I think that there is a
13 reasonable amount of time that they
14 can be given to kind of put their
15 case up that won't be violative of
16 due process and things like that.

17 Just even at court, you know,
18 you're sometimes limited to your
19 argument time and your ability to
20 put on cumulative evidence and
21 things like that. I mean, time is
22 a factor.

23 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Well, we
24 talked about -- we tried the fact
25 that, you know, instructing them

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1 we're sticking to why we're here.
2 We're not talking about, you know,
3 having perfect attendance in Sunday
4 School. That didn't work.

5 So you're going to have to put
6 a time limit.

7 CHIEF QUAKA: I mean, do we
8 feel like any of them have exceeded
9 this time? I mean, I can't think
10 of anyone that really just has
11 abused our time.

12 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: I tell you
13 one. That one where they decided
14 who owned the furniture in the
15 trailer --

16 MS. CRANFORD: That one went on
17 for a while.

18 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: -- went on
19 forever. I can remember that one.

20 MS. COLEMAN: Well, that's what
21 I was about to say. I feel like
22 sometimes -- and I'll say "us." We
23 used as much as time as they take
24 up. So perhaps, you know, the
25 chairperson -- you know, if we

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1 needed to be redirected.

2 I do have concerns about saying
3 we're about to take your
4 certificate for ten years. And if
5 it is extensive that we need to
6 give that extra time, but I think
7 we could generally say hearings are
8 going to be limited to this amount
9 of time unless the chairman finds
10 reason.

11 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Yep.

12 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: And the
13 reason being is because with the
14 attorneys coming in, it helps with
15 scheduling if I can do -- we can do
16 four cases in a day if we have
17 attorneys present, because the
18 attorneys are going to want that
19 time.

20 The other ones are going to
21 be -- where they do not bring
22 counsel are going to be easier.

23 MS. CRANFORD: Another thing
24 you can do is you could say, all
25 right, Luke can estimate how much

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1 time it's going to take for us to
2 put on that side of the house. And
3 then when you're scheduling with
4 the attorneys -- I don't know who's
5 having that conversation, I'm just
6 looking at both of you -- say how
7 much time do you need, you know, to
8 proceed in your case in chief, how
9 many witnesses do you anticipate
10 having for scheduling purposes.

11 And that way, you have an idea
12 on the front end about how long
13 different things are going to last
14 so you know when to schedule them.
15 Because I do think it's
16 frustrating. If I were an attorney
17 and I came here and sat down, and
18 I'm like, thinking that I'm going
19 to get done today, and then it's
20 late in the afternoon, and we're
21 still on, like, hearing two.

22 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: I would
23 like to set a schedule for them,
24 too, because there was that one guy
25 who came and sat from 8:00 a.m.

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1 until that afternoon. Oh, it was
2 Hunter, remember?

3 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Uh-huh.
4 (Affirmative response.)

5 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: And he
6 sat here all day.

7 MS. CRANFORD: Yeah.

8 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: So I
9 would like to be able to give them
10 an approximation that they're going
11 to be at 1:00, they're going to be
12 at 3:00.

13 MR. WILLIAMSON: I know Lindsey
14 and Kassie, y'all are familiar with
15 the way that arguments -- oral
16 argument's done in front of
17 appellate courts. Do other
18 boards -- does anyone know, do
19 other boards just limit each side
20 to a set amount of time, and the
21 chair can extend the time, if
22 necessary, to complete a thought or
23 something?

24 Because a lot of these it does
25 seem like if you were bound to 30

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1 minutes per side, that's an hour.
2 That's a lot of time for a single
3 matter, but it's more time than
4 some of them. So you can do that,
5 but you would need a timekeeper and
6 things like that.

7 MS. CRANFORD: And you could
8 put the stipulation on it, too,
9 that when you send the letter out
10 to them for scheduling, that if
11 they think that they're going to
12 need time, you know, to go ahead
13 and let you know so those
14 considerations can be had.

15 I just think the regular case,
16 it shouldn't take more than an
17 hour. I mean, to me, that's plenty
18 of time for one of these hearings.

19 MR. WILLIAMSON: Right. There
20 is -- there is one incident that
21 has two officers that is upcoming
22 that does have some longer media
23 that will need to be played. I
24 still think even just the media
25 component would probably only be 20

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1 to 25 minutes. So it could still
2 be an hour and a half tops for both
3 sides.

4 So I think that that's -- I
5 think that's realistic. And that's
6 something, Amy, potentially we'll
7 get together on some language in
8 the letter that says if you
9 anticipate needing more than 30
10 minutes or 45 minutes to present
11 your case, please inform the
12 director no later than a certain
13 date, something like that.

14 We do have existing policies
15 that require them to send us their
16 documents two weeks before the
17 hearing that nobody's ever complied
18 with. So we can make more than
19 that to enforce those policies.
20 We're going to be bound by what's
21 fair ultimately since the chancery
22 court's going to hear the appeal.

23 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Okay. We
24 think we've got it worked out?

25 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: We are on

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1 the 12th and 13th for hearings
2 beginning at 8:00 a.m.

3 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: 12th and
4 13th for hearings beginning at
5 8:00. We will leave on the 12th at
6 3:30 so you can go to the memorial.

7 CHIEF ROGERS: So I just texted
8 highway control headquarters, DPS
9 headquarters. We're going to have
10 the memorial the 12th, which is
11 going to be at the new
12 headquarters.

13 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Correct.

14 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: What time?

15 MS. CRANFORD: Theirs is during
16 the day.

17 COLONEL PITTS: It's in the
18 morning.

19 MS. CRANFORD: Yeah. See, ours
20 is in the evening, so people
21 usually go to both.

22 CHIEF ROGERS: So that'll cause
23 issues.

24 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: That's
25 going to be a long one, too,

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1 because it's in the new place,
2 right?

3 CHIEF ROGERS: Yeah. It'll be
4 till lunch time.

5 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: Dedication.

6 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Okay. So
7 the 13th --

8 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: 13th and
9 14th?

10 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: 13th,
11 14th.

12 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: How long
13 will the 14th regular Board meeting
14 be?

15 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Don't ask
16 me. It's just going to be in the
17 morning time.

18 MS. COLEMAN: She said this
19 morning we're going to be quick
20 today.

21 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: I was
22 going off of Luke.

23 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: If we did
24 all day the 13th --

25 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: What if

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1 we did the 12th?

2 CHIEF ROGERS: You could start
3 after -- I would say after lunch.

4 MS. COLEMAN: We just said
5 we've got to be done at 3:30 to
6 go --

7 MS. CRANFORD: See the AG's
8 fallen officer --

9 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Oh,
10 that's where we got 3:30, then.

11 MS. CRANFORD: Yeah.

12 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Because it's
13 always, like, at 5:30 at night.

14 MS. CRANFORD: Yeah.

15 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: So the
16 12th is out.

17 MS. CRANFORD: I wouldn't do
18 the 12th, because I think you're
19 going to run into people trying to
20 get back and forth to one or the
21 other or both.

22 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: What
23 about Friday the 15th? Could we do
24 13th, 14th, 15th?

25 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: That's fine

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1 with me. Three days is three days.

2 MS. CRANFORD: I'm out that
3 week because I'm going to have to
4 be on a work trip. Yeah.

5 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Only thing
6 we'll need is a quorum -- we'll
7 need a quorum on the 14th. The
8 hearing only has to have three
9 people.

10 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Oh,
11 that's right.

12 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: So how many
13 can be here for the 14th meeting?
14 Okay. Then we've got a quorum. So
15 the only thing you got to worry
16 about is can three people be here
17 Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. I
18 can be here.

19 CHIEF QUAKA: I can be here.

20 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Okay.

21 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: So what
22 we'll do is the 13th and 15th, we
23 will start at 8:00 a.m., and if we
24 can get done early on the 15th,
25 we'll try to have lawyers done --

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1 or those cases done on the 13th
2 that we know are going to take at
3 least two hours apiece. And then,
4 the other possibly easier ones on
5 the 15th.

6 MS. COLEMAN: Or even the
7 afternoon on the 14th.

8 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: And then,
9 we can do that, as well, because
10 y'all don't work either, okay? If
11 y'all are here. Okay.

12 MS. CRANFORD: If y'all don't
13 have this on your calendar, that
14 following week is the public safety
15 summit. So for anybody that's
16 planning on attending that, I think
17 that's the 19th through the 22nd.

18 And if you hadn't been, I would
19 encourage you to go. It's free,
20 and it's pretty good training.
21 19th through the 22nd.

22 CHIEF QUAKA: Has anything been
23 pushed out on that? Because
24 someone asked me last week, and I
25 said I haven't seen anything yet.

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1 MS. CRANFORD: I haven't seen
2 anything come out. I just know
3 that the AG. . .

4 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All right.
5 That handles the meeting times and
6 hearing cases. Now, we got the
7 30-day notice, and they're asking,
8 since they get a 30-day notice for
9 the hearing, like this week, we had
10 them cancel at the last minute,
11 should we only allow them 15 days
12 before the hearing to cancel? Put
13 them on a timeline.

14 MS. CRANFORD: I don't think
15 it's bad, but having been in this
16 situation a number of times in my
17 own career, stuff comes up. And
18 it's kind of like, what are we
19 going to do? They can't be here,
20 and then we're going to have the
21 hearing, and the lawyer has already
22 told us he can't be here for some
23 reason.

24 I think that has to be a
25 case-by-case deal. But I get it,

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1 because it's like, if they can't --

2 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: Put on the
3 notice, I guess, we're asking you
4 to give at least --

5 MS. CRANFORD: 15 days' notice,
6 but that way, you know, it'll be
7 courteous, but notice -- realize
8 that sometimes stuff's going to
9 come up. I mean, sometimes stuff's
10 just going to happen.

11 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah. And
12 some of these we did know -- I
13 mean, as soon as I sent them the
14 file, they asked for a continuance.
15 But one that was supposed to be
16 today, we didn't find out until --

17 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: The day of.

18 MR. WILLIAMSON: Right.

19 MS. CRANFORD: And sometimes it
20 may come up that it's our benefit,
21 right? That we want the
22 continuance, too, for another
23 reason. And so, I just hate to box
24 in and say it has to be.

25 Like, I think it's just better

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1 to say this is the guideline and
2 realize that sometimes we have to
3 deviate from that depending on the
4 facts.

5 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: We can
6 just say out of courtesy --

7 MS. CRANFORD: Yeah.

8 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Yeah.
9 Okay. That's fair.

10 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All right.
11 We're going to B, allowing school
12 districts to create police
13 departments.

14 MS. COLEMAN: I thought they
15 already were.

16 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: It is
17 after that Board meeting last time,
18 it was two days later someone
19 called and says, We want to be a
20 police department, and I just told
21 them no. I said we're not
22 discussing this right now.

23 And I just kind of told them
24 that it was going to become an
25 issue or going to come up at this

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1 Board meeting, and I'm sure they
2 will call tomorrow.

3 Because -- and Amite County,
4 that's the school district that
5 Anna Hatter is dealing with right
6 now, where we have an issue with
7 their police chief at the time, who
8 also runs a security service, and
9 it is -- how these guys are working
10 and not being trained as an SRO to
11 be in these school districts in the
12 first place, I think that the
13 liability is enormous.

14 And I tried to talk to the
15 superintendent about it. The guy
16 who -- but it is -- it is -- and
17 I'll tell you, the one who called
18 was from Leake County. I'll throw
19 them under the bus. And they don't
20 get along with the sheriff or the
21 chief, and that's why they want to
22 become their own --

23 MS. CRANFORD: Wait. Say that
24 again. They couldn't get along
25 with them?

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1 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: They
2 don't get along with the sheriff or
3 the chief.

4 CHIEF QUAKE: They need to
5 learn how to.

6 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: The one
7 at Amite, the school district falls
8 partly in a city and partly in the
9 county, and there's different
10 schools. That's the same
11 situation.

12 CHIEF ROGERS: A lot of
13 counties have that, though. In our
14 county, the city handles the
15 municipal and then --

16 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: That's
17 it. And I think that that's the
18 way it should be, is that the city
19 handles the city -- the SROs,
20 and --

21 MS. CRANFORD: The county
22 handles the ones that are in the
23 county.

24 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: That's
25 it. Because I asked who holds the

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1 certificate. Well, the
2 superintendent holds the
3 certificate. And if you look at
4 the law, it says that they cannot
5 hold that certificate.

6 MR. WILLIAMSON: There's
7 specific statutory authority for
8 how you can create a police
9 department, who can do it, et
10 cetera. Most school districts do
11 not fall in that. You have to have
12 special -- you have to go through
13 special hoops.

14 And typically -- I know the
15 prior Director Johns asked me to
16 research that, and the easiest,
17 most effective way, if a police
18 agency or sheriff's office is not
19 just going to send their own
20 officers, is to do some sort of
21 interlocal agreement with them, but
22 you're still not -- that's way
23 short of creating your own
24 department.

25 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Right. I

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1 told them that there are instances
2 where the city pays part of that
3 salary, and the school district
4 pays the other part, and that's
5 that agreement that you're talking
6 about.

7 And I mentioned that to that
8 man, but it's this -- they're not
9 getting along. So we can say that
10 we can still table that.

11 MS. CRANFORD: Can I ask you
12 this, Amy? Are they giving you any
13 reasons that -- like, what are the
14 reasons, other than the sheriff and
15 the chief don't like me?

16 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: That was
17 it.

18 MS. CRANFORD: Are there any
19 other reasons that are legitimate
20 sounding or something that we
21 should consider, or they're just --
22 they're not giving reasons, they
23 just want to be their own separate
24 entity?

25 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: That is

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1 it.

2 CHIEF QUAKA: They don't want
3 to have to answer to the chief or
4 the sheriff.

5 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: They
6 don't want to have to deal with the
7 chief or the sheriff, and make
8 their own decisions --

9 MS. CRANFORD: I don't think
10 that's a good enough reason.

11 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: -- and
12 that's how we end up with cases
13 that are going to come before this
14 Board, because this guy should not
15 have been in that district.

16 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: But what you
17 end up with -- I mean, where I'm
18 at, I run the entire SRO program.
19 The school reimburses me for it.
20 But they're deputies. You can take
21 the SRO and put them out there
22 working a wreck. It's the same
23 certification.

24 The problem we ran into was,
25 when we didn't do that, what the

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1 authority the SRO had. Kid goes
2 down the hall, won't put his
3 backpack on the wall, that's not a
4 law enforcement issue. The schools
5 are wanting that to become law
6 enforcement.

7 They want the SRO to handle
8 discipline issues in the school,
9 and that's where your problem is.

10 MS. CRANFORD: I think
11 that's --

12 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: The sheriff
13 says we don't do that --

14 MS. CRANFORD: -- a huge
15 problem.

16 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: -- the
17 school says that's what we want,
18 and that's where we ran into it.

19 MS. CRANFORD: Yeah. I don't
20 think that's going to fly.

21 DIRECTOR MORENO: What about
22 the existing entities that are
23 already on their --

24 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: I've got one
25 right now that the school --

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1 MS. COLEMAN: Yeah, what she
2 said.

3 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: -- he works
4 for the school.

5 DIRECTOR MORENO: The greater
6 Hattiesburg area has five school
7 district chiefs.

8 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: I think
9 that it should be part of this
10 assessment where we're going around
11 to the full-time academies and the
12 part-time academies, let's go into
13 these school districts and see what
14 these superintendents are running.

15 MS. COLEMAN: See who's signing
16 off on their form.

17 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Yeah.
18 Where's the continuing ed and. . .
19 It's a mess.

20 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Does the law
21 prohibit a school from -- even
22 though they're doing it, does the
23 law prohibit them from it?

24 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: What
25 establishes agents?

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1 MR. WILLIAMSON: So I'm going
2 to be a lawyer and say it depends.
3 There is a statute that allows
4 certain municipalities or municipal
5 groups to form a police department.

6 And if you are a municipality
7 or a subdivision or whatever, you
8 comply with the requirements and
9 statutes. But if you are a school
10 district that's not its own
11 municipality or something like
12 that. I don't see how you can
13 legally comply with the
14 requirements of the law.

15 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: So if
16 you're a school district in the
17 county --

18 MR. WILLIAMSON: Right. That's
19 what I'm saying.

20 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: -- you
21 can't do it anyway.

22 MR. WILLIAMSON: You should not
23 be able to do that based on my
24 reading of the law. But we do need
25 to find out -- to Amy's point, we

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1 do need to find out who's operating
2 already and what they -- what they
3 think their authority is, and then
4 investigate it further.

5 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Who's doing
6 the training, who's the department
7 head, supposedly.

8 DIRECTOR MORENO: One thing to
9 answer Kassie's question, and this
10 just popped in my head, so we have
11 Lamar County School District. They
12 cover four different municipalities
13 in the county. So that may be, you
14 know, so that they have a
15 consistent throughout all their
16 schools and not having -- you know,
17 Sumrall's over here. Purvis is
18 over here. These are all little
19 towns. And Lumberton splits Lamar
20 and Pearl River right in the middle
21 county-wise.

22 So that may be one thing. I
23 would say the ones that we have,
24 out of the five, three of them I
25 know are good departments that do

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1 their training and all that kind of
2 stuff. The other two I just don't
3 have any interaction with.

4 But Hattiesburg, Petal, and
5 Lamar County, they do all their
6 in-service training. We do their
7 active shooter training. I train
8 their cadets.

9 But that's the only thing I
10 think that maybe -- like, the Lamar
11 County specification is because
12 they cover so many municipalities
13 that it makes it more streamlined
14 to have one administration running
15 the entire school district SROs.
16 But the county sheriff could do the
17 same thing.

18 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: That's what
19 happened to ours. If the school
20 was in a municipality, a police
21 officer did it, even though it was
22 a county school. And the policy
23 for Guntown's police department may
24 be different than Saltillo's, and
25 they wasn't on the same page.

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1 So they wanted a uniform.
2 That's the whole reason all that
3 come up was what you're talking
4 about.

5 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: And
6 there's a file box that's probably
7 this long, and that's our school
8 districts that have law
9 enforcement. They're separate.
10 It's huge. I thought there was
11 maybe ten.

12 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: I think if
13 you looked at --

14 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Probably
15 50.

16 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: If you
17 looked in that box and had them
18 check to see who is in compliance,
19 you might write the number in that
20 box now, because they're not going
21 to -- they're not going to be doing
22 the training. They're not going to
23 be doing -- you know. There'll be
24 a lot of it that. . .

25 MS. CRANFORD: I'm going to

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1 tell you an interesting problem
2 that somebody brought to me here
3 recently that had to do with SR0s.
4 You know, we have these school bomb
5 threats, and we had one that
6 happened at a school, and the SR0s
7 were working the case.

8 Their email address was not a
9 .gov. Because they worked for the
10 school, it was a .org address. So
11 when they started issuing their
12 legal process to the entities --
13 you know, the social media entities
14 and where the threat had first
15 appeared to try to gain
16 information, the companies would
17 not recognize them as law
18 enforcement actors, because they
19 did not have an email address
20 associated with an agency.

21 And so, therefore, they would
22 not respond with the information
23 that was needed to make an
24 assessment about the threat. And
25 so, that's another little area

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1 where, you know, if they're not
2 under an agency, they're not
3 necessarily going to be recognized
4 as law enforcement.

5 I think that extends into other
6 areas, as well, but that's just one
7 area that I thought was interesting
8 that was creating a problem.

9 COLONEL PITTS: So that means
10 they were running the
11 investigation?

12 MS. CRANFORD: What's that?

13 COLONEL PITTS: They were
14 running the investigation on the
15 threat?

16 MS. CRANFORD: Yeah.

17 COLONEL PITTS: Through the
18 school?

19 MS. CRANFORD: Yep, yep.

20 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: We've got to
21 do something. I don't know what.

22 MS. CRANFORD: And that's the
23 problem because then, you know,
24 you're trying to go ask the sheriff
25 or the municipal chief what's going

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1 on, and they're not looped in.
2 That's problematic for a number of
3 reasons.

4 But not just the investigative,
5 but to me, like, the investigative
6 lane is -- those cases, y'all know,
7 you've got to act immediately.
8 Like, sometimes that stuff is
9 disappearing. Stuff that's so --
10 it may be a credible threat. You
11 may need to put security measures
12 in place right then.

13 If they're not getting
14 responded to, and they're having to
15 go through processes to be
16 recognized as law enforcement by
17 these outside entities, that
18 creates a whole new level of
19 problem for their ability to
20 respond to those type of incidents.

21 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: The only
22 thing we can look at is we've got
23 to have some clarity on the law and
24 whether it can actually be done.
25 If they do it, there ain't nothing

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1 we can do about it. Then our job
2 is going to be are they in
3 compliance. Who is -- you know,
4 what agencies are in compliance.
5 No different than a police
6 department or a sheriff's
7 department or anything else.

8 But we've got to get clarity on
9 is this even legal for them to do
10 it.

11 MR. WILLIAMSON: I can get with
12 Amy and get the memorandum that I
13 prepared when Director Johns asked
14 me. We can get together, and we
15 can figure out both of those
16 answers and report back.

17 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Okay. Let's
18 do that.

19 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: School
20 districts are very hard on
21 accreditation. So would it be
22 beneficial to say that all the
23 police departments (indiscernible)
24 and the school district to be
25 accredited from CALEA within a

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1 minimum of two years? Is that
2 something that would be beneficial
3 to it? Kind of help clean up some
4 of that, get them online and on
5 track a little better?

6 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: And that
7 takes statutorily. . .

8 MR. WILLIAMSON: I'd be worried
9 about singling out one group for
10 that.

11 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Yeah. Why
12 don't you get the -- what we're
13 currently working clear, and we'll
14 go from there. Okay?

15 MR. WILLIAMSON: Uh-huh.
16 (Affirmative response.)

17 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All right.
18 Letter C on 11 is hearing letters,
19 emails, and non-certified mail.

20 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: What we
21 ran into in early February after
22 the last Board meeting was that
23 last year, November, some of those
24 people who had hearings never
25 received the letter, which is a

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1 problem.

2 So Luke sent me some letters.
3 We ended up emailing them to the
4 attorneys and the officer, and we
5 think that that's going to work
6 better. Because no one does
7 certified mail anymore, really, and
8 a lot of them had offered up post
9 office boxes, which they will not
10 deliver to, and it wasn't caught.

11 And so, we decided that at that
12 point, because we were trying to
13 play catch up, that emailing those
14 letters was the best avenue, and I
15 vote that that's what we do from
16 this point forward. They are
17 receiving them. We put them on
18 there, the read receipts, the
19 sender receipts. We can tell
20 exactly when it hits their inbox,
21 when they read it. It's got a high
22 importance on there, and it works
23 just fine.

24 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Okay.

25 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: All good?

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1 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Let's do it.

2 COLONEL PITTS: We're not
3 required by statute, like we are
4 for driver's licenses and things,
5 we're not required to mail it out,
6 right? Are we?

7 MR. WILLIAMSON: I don't think
8 so.

9 COLONEL PITTS: Because we had
10 to change our language in the
11 statutes to go to emails. Yeah.
12 The bail agents' language was the
13 same way. When they had to enter
14 the NCIC, it required the mailing
15 to be to the bond agency.

16 You might double check and make
17 sure that it's not saying we have
18 to mail, because we can get that
19 changed.

20 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All right.
21 D, omitting first aid/CPR as a
22 requirement before certification.

23 MR. WILLIAMSON: Is this
24 anybody that's got a new
25 certification, or is this --

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1 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: They have
2 to prove that they've had first
3 aid/CPR before we can issue a
4 certificate, and we were discussing
5 that, that it's sometimes hard for
6 them to get the training before
7 they get to the training academy or
8 during the training academy.

9 And then, we're looking at
10 deals with the certifications.
11 Some of them are online, and it
12 takes an hour. And some of them
13 are going to classes, and it takes
14 16 hours. And the whole program
15 has been dumbed down.

16 I have not been recertified on
17 first aid/CPR since 1998. So it's
18 not something -- what I was
19 proposing is that they don't do it
20 necessarily to get their
21 certification, but within the first
22 year or two, if the sheriff or
23 chief requires them to do it, then
24 they do it.

25 The changes in first aid/CPR --

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1 or really the CPR part has changed
2 pretty substantially over the
3 years. One state -- actually
4 there's only -- Mississippi
5 requires it to be certified, but
6 the other states, if they've got
7 unions, they require it.

8 But other states, it's almost
9 like a -- they can refuse to do it.
10 They can refuse. But I think that
11 making it part of, like on a
12 three-year cycle, that way we are
13 making them to re-up, that's part
14 of their continuing ed hours. If
15 they can do it in two hours, that's
16 two hours that they can use towards
17 their 24.

18 Because right now, it is so
19 hard. These guys get hired on a
20 Friday, they go to the training
21 academy on Sunday, and then we're
22 trying to catch up during that 11
23 or 12 weeks to get them certified
24 in first aid/CPR before they
25 graduate.

Transcript of Meeting 3/5/2026

1 MR. WILLIAMSON: So do you want
2 to change it to within the first
3 year or first three years or --

4 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: We just
5 want to put it out there that
6 within -- for their CEUs, during
7 that first year of service, that
8 they can have that class. Now,
9 where are they going to get it?
10 Are they going to go to the 16
11 hour, or are they going to go to
12 the two-hour online?

13 It's really -- because we don't
14 mandate a specific hour that they
15 have to have for it.

16 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: They've just
17 got to be certified.

18 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: When they
19 started the online stuff several,
20 several years ago and started
21 accepting the online stuff, we
22 dumbed it down pretty well.

23 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Are the
24 academies using CPR as part of
25 their 480 hour class?

Transcript of Meeting 3/5/2026

1 DIRECTOR MORENO: It is not
2 part of the 480. We do it during
3 the pre-PT test.

4 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: They have
5 to have it before they get to the
6 training academy, or they can do it
7 while they're there. If they want
8 to go to a class on a Friday or
9 Saturday, they can.

10 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: But it's
11 over and above? That's over and
12 above what --

13 DIRECTOR MORENO: Yes.

14 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Right,
15 uh-huh. (Affirmative response.)

16 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All right.
17 So we are proposing to omit it from
18 certification, but require it
19 within the first -- what'd you say?
20 Year?

21 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Uh-huh.
22 (Affirmative response.)

23 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: And they can
24 do it as part of their continuing
25 education. All right.

Transcript of Meeting 3/5/2026

1 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Major
2 Moreno, do you have anything that
3 you want to add? I'm reading your
4 face.

5 DIRECTOR MORENO: I don't know
6 about throwing cops out there on
7 the road without CPR. I mean,
8 we're generally the first one to
9 show up on the scene and stuff, and
10 medical is not. And cops save
11 people's lives all the time using
12 CPR.

13 I mean, I just had a cadet save
14 a guy on I-55 with a tourniquet
15 that just -- he just graduated.

16 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: And
17 they're still doing their
18 tourniquet.

19 DIRECTOR MORENO: Right. But,
20 I mean, CPR's a good thing, and
21 you're throwing a bunch of cops out
22 there with no CPR training. And
23 your community expects it. I mean,
24 you show up at somebody's house and
25 they're having a medical emergency,

Transcript of Meeting 3/5/2026

1 and they're like -- and you're
2 looking at them standing there,
3 going, well, I can't do CPR,
4 because I don't know how.

5 I mean, that -- I don't know.
6 I don't like it. And it's not an
7 issue -- we have never had an issue
8 getting people CPR certified. And
9 departments that don't have
10 instructors, we offer it the same
11 day we do the pre-PT test. It
12 costs them the cost of the card.

13 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Okay.

14 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Was there
15 somebody wanting to do something --

16 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: This is
17 coming from the office of the
18 requirements of having that card in
19 there before we can even put them
20 on this list, which you guys get.

21 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: That they've
22 got to produce that card?

23 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: They do.

24 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: And so many
25 don't have it?

Transcript of Meeting 3/5/2026

1 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Correct.

2 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Is it
3 because they don't have the
4 training or --

5 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: Can they
6 just rephrase it as must receive
7 training prior to and not receive
8 the card? That's what you're
9 talking about.

10 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: We had
11 cadets who would turn in a letter
12 saying that they received the
13 training, the card had not been
14 mailed, or something like that, and
15 now you can print a certificate. I
16 mean, that's easy. That was an
17 old-school instructor who ordered
18 his cards.

19 DIRECTOR MORENO: There were
20 some issues in the past where it
21 took a minute to get those cards
22 from American Red Cross, but it's
23 getting pretty -- almost --

24 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: It's all
25 digital now.

Transcript of Meeting 3/5/2026

1 DIRECTOR MORENO: Yeah. It's
2 getting all automated now.

3 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: Well,
4 that's what I was saying --

5 DIRECTOR MORENO: But if you
6 have an instructor roster showing
7 who was in the class signed by the
8 instructor, I think that is
9 sufficient documentation showing
10 that they received the training,
11 pending their card being populated.

12 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: Because all
13 you have to do is say that you
14 received the training prior to.
15 And you have to have that
16 certification card prior to
17 graduation.

18 DIRECTOR MORENO: Right. And
19 we always have cards.

20 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Well, it
21 may be that all full-time academies
22 need to have someone who they can
23 call to come do a two- or
24 three-hour class on a night or
25 something and certify all of these

Transcript of Meeting 3/5/2026

1 people and just go by a roster.

2 DIRECTOR MORENO: All of mine
3 are instructor certified. I mean,
4 I thought that was normal at all
5 the academies.

6 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: And Dan's
7 not here. Do you know if y'all
8 have --

9 MR. MCKINNEY: We do it during
10 the 12 weeks.

11 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: All
12 right. Then we'll just table it,
13 and I'll talk to the academies
14 again and see what they say.

15 MS. CRANFORD: What is it that
16 they're -- it's just the idea that
17 they don't have the Red Cross card?
18 Is that it?

19 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: No. It's
20 all of these -- it's more of a
21 certification process of Risa
22 Turpin, who you've seen in here,
23 it's required, and it's -- you've
24 got this company, they've sent in
25 this random company.

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1 She's having to stop what she's
2 doing to verify if that company is
3 teaching first aid/CPR according to
4 our standards. And the course
5 could be an hour, and they do it
6 online. How much are they getting
7 out of that?

8 It's not all -- not everybody's
9 going through -- to me, you need to
10 be sitting in a class. You need to
11 be doing those preps.

12 MS. CRANFORD: It needs to be a
13 practical class.

14 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD:
15 Absolutely. But we've dummed it
16 down.

17 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: UMC, they
18 will come in and tailor a class for
19 each individual academy, and it
20 won't cost the academy a dime.

21 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: It's
22 scheduling them.

23 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: Yeah.
24 Kevin King will come out here and
25 do that, as well as the tourniquet.

Transcript of Meeting 3/5/2026

1 DIRECTOR MORENO: Can you
2 adjust the language and say in
3 person?

4 MS. CRANFORD: Yeah.

5 DIRECTOR MORENO: CPR/first
6 aid --

7 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: I think
8 we need to do that, and that way --
9 and do the roster, and that way
10 when Risa is certifying the classes
11 as a whole and certifying all of
12 those people that go on this list,
13 it's going to be a blanket document
14 and say this is what --

15 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: You'll
16 automatically know.

17 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: -- they
18 already have it. Okay. It'd be a
19 lot easier than us waiting to get a
20 picture of a card, if that's okay.

21 MS. CRANFORD: Yeah, I tend to
22 agree. I don't think you should
23 take first aid and CPR off of
24 certification requirements. I
25 mean, I'm not an officer, but I

Transcript of Meeting 3/5/2026

1 think what she said kind of
2 resonated with me.

3 I think most of the public
4 expects that if a law enforcement
5 officer responds to an incident,
6 they're going to have that basic
7 training.

8 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Let me
9 ask this: Should we put it in
10 somewhere that during -- on a cycle
11 basis, every three years, that they
12 need to have first aid/CPR?
13 Because no one's getting
14 recertified in first aid/CPR.

15 MS. COLEMAN: I would say yes,
16 and it's for one reason -- and I'll
17 be quick, but tell me to slow down.
18 We just presented a case to the
19 grand jury where the guy just fell
20 out.

21 We actually had an officer that
22 is an EMT and is certified. Got
23 his bag out, did all of the things,
24 but we happened to have a large
25 number of medical professionals

Transcript of Meeting 3/5/2026

1 that were on the grand jury that
2 wanted to critique what he was
3 doing and what everybody else was
4 doing.

5 And it almost turned a lot more
6 sideways than I thought that it
7 would have. And so, that's one of
8 those that maybe is a different
9 insight than what y'all have. But
10 I would echo what she said. They
11 very much expected a lot more of
12 that officer.

13 And we did not at all think it
14 was going to be an issue. I mean,
15 just seemed pretty straightforward.
16 But when they do got -- and we do
17 have a high population in Meridian
18 of medical professionals because of
19 the hospitals, but it was
20 surprising.

21 MR. BOYD: Amy, I've got a
22 question -- or I have a statement.
23 So for CPR certification, you have
24 to get recertified every two years,
25 and if you go beyond that two

Transcript of Meeting 3/5/2026

1 years' certification mark, you have
2 to retake a whole certification
3 class.

4 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: That's
5 the --

6 MR. BOYD: That's for any
7 CPR --

8 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: -- any
9 CPR certification. All right. So
10 every two years they need to do it.

11 DIRECTOR MORENO: Yeah.
12 CPR/first aid is good for two
13 years.

14 MR. BOYD: To go beyond that
15 two-year mark, they have to retake
16 a class again. Just do a re-cert
17 class.

18 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Okay.
19 Two years for CEUs, then.

20 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: What we need
21 to do is get a motion that it be an
22 in-class training, in-person
23 training, not online.

24 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: And we're
25 going to certify the roster --

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1 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: As a whole.

2 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: -- as a
3 whole for every officer on there to
4 suffice -- to meet that
5 requirement.

6 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Yeah. And
7 make sure every academy is teaching
8 it like that.

9 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Correct.
10 Every academy.

11 CHIEF QUAKA: I would like to
12 interject this. I agree with you
13 on certification, should be in
14 person, but I think
15 recertification, we should allow
16 online classes to suffice.

17 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Right.
18 Okay.

19 MR. BOYD: Normally, with a
20 recertification, you can do that
21 online, but you have to go in
22 person to do a skills checkoff.

23 THE COURT REPORTER: A skills
24 what?

25 MR. BOYD: Checkoff.

Transcript of Meeting 3/5/2026

1 THE COURT REPORTER: Thank you.

2 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: And

3 that's T.J. Boyd.

4 MR. BOYD: And they normally

5 require that for any --

6 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Okay.

7 And, you know, if they're getting

8 credit for it for their 24, then

9 we'll sell it that way, and they

10 probably won't have an issue with

11 that.

12 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Motion for

13 it to be in person, and then the

14 recertification can be done online,

15 plus the testing.

16 MS. COLEMAN: So moved.

17 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Got a

18 motion.

19 CHIEF QUAKA: Second.

20 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Second. Any

21 more discussion?

22 (NO RESPONSE.)

23 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All in

24 favor -- hold it.

25 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Full-time

Transcript of Meeting 3/5/2026

1 and part-time?

2 DIRECTOR MORENO: Yes.

3 MS. CRANFORD: They're the same
4 now.

5 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Okay.

6 Now vote.

7 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All in
8 favor, say aye.

9 ALL: Aye.

10 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Any opposed?

11 (NO RESPONSE.)

12 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: I need CPR
13 after all this. All right. Item E
14 is the curriculum meeting in the
15 fall.

16 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Okay. We
17 are going to start discussing -- we
18 talked -- Robert Davis, that's how
19 long ago it was.

20 There was a discussion with
21 Director Davis two and a half years
22 ago, I believe, about changing PT
23 standards and adding and
24 subtracting from the curriculum.
25 And so, that's what we're going to

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1 discuss. When I talked with the
2 academies last week, I told them
3 that I would like to meet with them
4 in the fall. I'm thinking -- I
5 mean, August starts the fall, so
6 I'll probably start in August, and
7 then we'll have something for
8 y'all.

9 And I do know that if we add --
10 if we go up in hours, which means
11 that our reimbursement goes up, as
12 well, so we'll have to be cognitive
13 of how much we go up and how much
14 we reimburse.

15 CHIEF QUAKE: Are we going to
16 count these first aid hours towards
17 additional hours at the academy?

18 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: What
19 eight hours?

20 CHIEF QUAKE: The first aid/CPR
21 hours.

22 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Oh, first
23 aid. I thought you said first
24 eight.

25 CHIEF QUAKE: Because obviously

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1 right now, we're not. Do we
2 incorporate that into 480 hours?

3 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Uh-huh.
4 (Affirmative response.) Yep, yes.
5 Because we're going to do it in the
6 academy, so it'll be part of it.
7 And in person.

8 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All right.
9 That's information only.

10 DIRECTOR VANDERFORD: Eddie
11 Ingram. You've been very patient.
12 I thought we were going to be
13 through at 12:00, so I'm sorry.

14 MR. INGRAM: No, that's okay.
15 I'm retired. I don't know if all
16 the Board members got to look at
17 the proposal that I made up. I'm
18 here to answer any questions you've
19 got, but I would like to say
20 something.

21 If you've been in law
22 enforcement any amount of time, you
23 know somebody that's come to you
24 and said, you know, I'd like to be
25 a cop, but I cannot quit my day

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1 job, go to the academy, and take a
2 chance at getting hurt. I can't
3 leave my family for that long. I
4 got a sick mom I got to take care
5 of.

6 And in today's climate, I guess
7 you'd say, we are scraping the
8 bottom of the barrel with a lot of
9 our recruits. People just aren't
10 beating our doors down anymore.
11 And this type proposed academy has
12 been in service in the State of
13 Ohio for nearly 40 years. Many
14 other states have part-time night
15 classes, which is the same way that
16 I do our part-time academy.

17 It takes a long time to do it,
18 yes, but there's a lot of
19 advantages to it. I don't know. A
20 lot of people just -- a lot of this
21 is what I want to do is just see if
22 it works, you know. It may not for
23 all I know, but I don't see why it
24 wouldn't.

25 The legislature yesterday just

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1 said that apparently we're not that
2 important. It's hard enough to
3 recruit us now. This would make --
4 possibly make things easier. I
5 don't know. Again, it's something
6 new.

7 But we've been doing the same
8 thing for, what, 44 years now? And
9 as times went by, myself as an
10 example, when I started in law, I
11 took the civil service test. There
12 were 170 applicants. Now they're
13 lucky to get six or eight.

14 CHIEF QUAKA: Sir, can you tell
15 us what this thing is? I don't
16 know what you're talking about.

17 MR. INGRAM: It would be a
18 full-time academy done on a
19 part-time basis. Night classes,
20 basically. We'd run it three
21 nights a week, Monday, Tuesday, and
22 Thursday. Every other Saturday
23 would be a PT day where we put in
24 PT time with them.

25 And we've got everything in

Transcript of Meeting 3/5/2026

1 place. We've got some really,
2 really good instructors in Jones
3 County. We've got everything it
4 takes. We would not house them.
5 We would not feed them. Okay?

6 Now, one of the biggest things
7 to me, being a previous
8 administrator, is I hire this
9 gentleman here and, dadgum, he's
10 going to be gone for three months,
11 and I need somebody today. Well,
12 with this, they can work eight
13 hours in the daytime, and then go
14 four hours at night. Make their
15 12-hour shift. The next day they'd
16 be there all day.

17 And at the same time that
18 they're going to school, they're
19 going to be able to see things on
20 the street and come back to class
21 and say, "Hey, look, how do we
22 handle this?" And that's what our
23 instructors are for.

24 You know, guys, our job is to
25 teach these guys, not just run them

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1 through something. And that's what
2 happens a lot of times, simply for
3 time constraints. I get that.

4 But this is just another way of
5 doing things is all. They'll get
6 everything that they get in a
7 full-time academy, other than
8 housed and fed. Drawbacks to it,
9 we're going to serve a very small
10 area because you got to drive to
11 us, you know.

12 But there's been -- I have had
13 quite a few chiefs, sheriffs
14 contact me and say, If you could
15 get it, I'll send you somebody, you
16 know. But that's up to the Board.
17 This is the third time I proposed
18 this over the last 20 years, and I
19 promise you it'll be the last,
20 regardless.

21 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: But now, the
22 fact that you say you're going to
23 work them till they get out, you
24 know you can't do that, because
25 they would have to be in sight and

Transcript of Meeting 3/5/2026

1 sound of a certified officer.

2 MR. INGRAM: (Talking
3 simultaneously) NTO during that
4 time.

5 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: It'd be
6 considered --

7 MR. INGRAM: They'd be with --
8 you know, they'd have to be with
9 someone. I get that. But at least
10 that's an extra manpower that you
11 don't have.

12 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Sure. So
13 you're proposing a non-residential,
14 full-time academy to be spread out
15 over -- how long would this take?

16 MR. INGRAM: I want to say it's
17 about eight and a half months.
18 Something like that. That's one of
19 the drawbacks. It takes a long
20 time, you know. The fact that you
21 got to be pretty much within
22 driving distance of Jones County,
23 you know, an hour, hour and 15
24 minutes or so, something like that,
25 to make it feasible for an

Transcript of Meeting 3/5/2026

1 administrator.

2 I just -- I think it'll work.

3 I really do.

4 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Any

5 questions?

6 MR. INGRAM: Please ask me

7 questions. I'd love to hear them.

8 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Any

9 questions whatsoever?

10 (NO RESPONSE.)

11 MR. INGRAM: And, again, we're

12 not trying to compete with

13 full-time academies. We're trying

14 to get more people in an academy so

15 we can get them out here on the

16 street. That's it.

17 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All right.

18 Thank you very much.

19 MR. INGRAM: Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: I'll

21 entertain a motion to go into

22 executive session to take this

23 matter up for a vote.

24 MS. COLEMAN: So moved.

25 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Do I have a

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1 second?

2 CONSTABLE HANCOCK: Second.

3 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: All in favor
4 say aye and raise your right hand.

5 ALL: Aye.

6 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: Any opposed?

7 (NO RESPONSE.)

8 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: There are
9 none. All right. We'll be in
10 executive session.

11 (BOARD ENTERS EXECUTIVE SESSION.)

12
13 (TIME NOTED: 2:15 P.M.)

14

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1 CERTIFICATE OF COURT REPORTER

2 I, Ella J. Hardwick, CVR-M, CCR #1749,
3 Court Reporter and Notary Public in and for
4 the State of Mississippi, hereby certify
5 that the foregoing contains a true and
6 correct transcript, to the best of my
7 ability, as taken by me in the
8 aforementioned matter at the time and place
9 heretofore stated.

10 I certify that I am not in the employ of
11 or related to any counsel or party in this
12 matter and have no interest, monetary or
13 otherwise, in the final outcome of this
14 matter.

15 Witness my signature and seal this the
16 13th day of March, 2026.

17

18


Ella J. Hardwick, CVR-M,
CCR #1749

19

20 My Commission Expires:
21 February 8, 2029

22

23

24

25