

**MINUTES**

**BLEOST MEETING**  
**January 20, 2022**

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Vice-Chairman Brad Carter.

**Roll Call:**

The Vice-Chair called the roll, and a quorum was established. Board members present were:

Officer Brad Carter  
Col. Randy Ginn  
Chief Michael Hall  
Sheriff Jim Johnson  
Dr. Steve Mallory  
Constable Glenn McKay  
Chief Vance Rice  
Mr. Windy Swetman

Hon. Candice Rucker, Board Counsel

**Board members not present were:**

Hon. Kassie Coleman  
Sheriff Greg Pollan  
Mayor Gary Rhoads

**Introduction of Guests, Introductory Remarks:**

The guests introduced themselves and they were welcomed.

**Speakers/Guests present were:**

Lt. Jackie Moreno – SRPSI  
Director Dean Bearden - NMLETA  
Lt. S. Richardson - Hattiesburg P.D.  
Director Bo Blanks - MS State Hospital  
Director James Rayborn – Rankin Co. Part-time Academy  
Director Amy Vanderford – MDCCLETA  
Major Louis Elias - HCLETA  
Hon. Jordan McMichael – DPS Attorney  
Director Phylis Collsom – NEMCCLETA  
Chief Lucky – MS State Hospital  
Hon. Scott Newton – Attorney  
Ms. Julie Levanway

**Staff Members Present were:**

Bureau Director Robert Davis  
Division Director Bob Morgan  
Training Director, Michael Nash  
Certification Officer Donna Rogers

**Approval of Minutes:**

A copy of the minutes from the meetings on October 7 and November 18, 2021, were emailed to each member. Sheriff Johnson made a motion to approve the October minutes as presented. Chief Rice seconded the motion. The motion carried without opposition. Dr. Mallory made a motion to approve the November minutes as presented. Chief Rice seconded the motion. The motion carried without opposition.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**In-Service Training – Request for Approval:**

1. MS Division of the International Association of Identification 2022 Educational Conference, 20 hours
2. MS Association of Chiefs of Police Winter Conference, 20 hours
3. New Chief’s Training, 40 hours
4. One Loud Voice Conference, 10 hours

Sheriff Johnson made a motion to approve the training as presented. Col. Ginn seconded the motion, and it was approved by unanimous consent.

**Discuss Request from the MS State Hospital Concerning Officers in Default of their Educational Leave Obligations to the Department of Mental Health:**

MS Code Ann. § 41-4-23 states “Failure to meet repayment obligations may result in revocation of law enforcement certification in the same manner provided in Section 37-101-291, which states in part, “Failure to meet the terms of an educational loan contract shall be grounds for revocation of the professional license which was earned through the paid educational leave compensation granted under this section.”

The State Hospital loses officers that they have trained to higher paying law enforcement agencies. The Hospital requests that the Board apply these statutes, when their officers violate the terms of their contract by finding that officers that default on their agreements be considered as having unprofessional conduct and therefore issue a revocation of the officer’s certification.

Chief Lucky and HR Director Bo Blanks with the MS State Hospital told the Board that the hospital pays for the training of their uncertified law enforcement officers within a year of their date of hire. In order to work as a law enforcement officer at the hospital, the officer is required to sign a contract agreeing to work for the hospital for at least two years after their training is

completed (certified as an officer). They stated that often officers will leave their employment shortly after certification and take jobs with agencies paying higher wages. They meet with these officers and discuss the contract which requires them to reimburse the hospital for the training expenses. On many occasions they do not receive this reimbursement according to the terms of their contract.

After much discussion, Sheriff Johnson made a motion that would require that an officer leaving employment in violation of their contract be counselled and given a time period according to a contract to reimburse the hospital for the cost of training the officer, require the hospital to send a demand letter to an agency hiring this officer within 30 days of their termination and request a transfer reimbursement for the appropriate training expenses (if this reimbursement is received, it would reduce the amount the officer owes), require the hospital to notify the Board at the end of the allotted time period that the officer did not fulfill his payment obligation, and at that time the Board would make a decision on the officer's certification. Chief Rice seconded the motion and it passed without opposition. The staff will work out the details with the hospital.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Presentation by Attorney Scott Newton and Julie Levanway Concerning the Funding of Training Weapons:**

Attorney Scott Newton with the Baker Donelson Law Firm introduce Ms. Julie Levanway. Ms. Levanway formed the John Gorman Foundation and requests the Board to support her foundation. Her brother John Gorman was the head of investigations for the MS Gaming Commission. He was a gun expert. In January 2015 he was involved in a role-playing training exercise with the Gaming Commission in Robinsonville. A live weapon was somehow placed in this training exercise. Investigator Gorman was shot with this weapon and killed in the line of duty. Her foundation is set up with the hope of receiving funding from the Legislature to provide training weapons to all agencies, so this type of tragedy will not happen again.

Mr. Newton explained all the expenses with a line of duty death to show that it would cost much less to provide training tools to help reduce deaths. He intends to request funding from the Legislature. He expects that \$120,000.00 to \$150,000.00 would fund this project. He asked for support of this project from the Board and all associations affiliated with the Board.

Mr. Swetman made a motion to support this initiative of providing training weapons to agencies that request them. Vice-Chair Carter seconded the motion and it passed without opposition. Mr. Newton stated that he would write the letter of support and provide it to the Board and any other interested association.

### **Election of Officers:**

The time has come to elect a new chairman and vice-chairman. Mr. McKay nominated Officer Carter for Chairman. Mr. Swetman seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations and Officer Carter was elected without opposition. The position of Vice-Chair was not considered and will be taken up at the next meeting. Members will be given the opportunity to place their

name in the running for this position.

**Certification of Officers:**

Director Davis presented 23 F/T equivalency candidates and 11 P/T equivalency candidates for certification pending completion of all requirements. The Chair entertained a motion. Mr. McKay made a motion to approve the equivalency candidates for certification subject to meeting all requirements and Chief Rice seconded the motion. The motion was adopted by unanimous consent.

**Director's Report:**

The director stated that Bebea Boney, after 11 years of service, resigned her position. The office now has 3 vacancies. The Jordan Walters case has been appealed to the DeSoto County Chancery Court. Board Counsel Rucker was thanked for her work preparing the final order to the Walters hearing. We have received notice that Mr. Snyder and Chief Gammage have resigned from the Board. Their service is appreciated, and they will be missed. Certain legislative bills concerning the Board were mentioned.

**Next Scheduled Meeting:**

The next regular meeting is scheduled for March 10, 2022.

**Concluding Remarks; Adjournment:**

Mr. Swetman and Chairman Carter mentioned that Mr. Snyder should be recognized for his long service to the Board. The Chair entertained a motion to adjourn. Dr. Mallory made a motion to adjourn. Chief Rice seconded the motion and it passed without opposition. The meeting adjourned at 10:46 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Director, Board on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Training