

MINUTES

BLEOST MEETING

May 12, 2022

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m. by Chairman Brad Carter.

Roll Call:

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

Officer Brad Carter
Hon. Kassie Coleman
Chief Michael Hall
Sheriff Jim Johnson
Constable Glenn McKay
Sheriff Greg Pollan
Chief Vance Rice
Hon. Lindsay Watts
Mr. Windy Swetman

Board members not present were:

Col. Randy Ginn
Dr. Steve Mallory
Mayor Gary Rhoads
Candice Rucker – Board Counsel

Introduction of Guests, Introductory Remarks:

The guests introduced themselves and they were welcomed. A G Deputy Director Lindsay Watts has been designated to represent the Attorney General on the Board.

Speakers/Guests present were:

Lt. Mike Cowan – DeSoto Co. S.O.
Director Dean Bearden – NMLETC
Director Britt Thomas – Hinds CC
Director Amy Vanderford – MDCCLETA
Sgt. Jeremy Gordon – JPD/GTS
Interim Director Alfred Cooper – JPD Academy
Director Dan Rawlinson – MLEOTA
Capt. Edgar Gibson – Greenwood P.D.
Mrs. Tressa Sanford
Officer Jamario Sanford – Greenwood P.D.
Ms. Shamillia Foster

Staff Members Present were:

Program Supervisor Robert Davis
Program Team Leader Bob Morgan
Program Specialist, Michael Nash
Program Specialist, Donna Rogers
Administrative Assistant, Mary Ann Crawford

Approval of Minutes:

A copy of the minutes from the meeting on March 10, 2022, were emailed to each member. Sheriff Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. McKay seconded the motion. The motion passed without opposition.

OLD BUSINESS

In-Service Training – Request for Approval:

1. Presentation by Instructor Jeremy Gordon
2. Drug Identification – Deputy Chief Charlie Hill, Jr., Vicksburg P.D.; 8 hours
3. Juvenile Justice Symposium 2022 – Justice Programs; 12 hours
4. Chief’s Summer Conference 2022; 20 hours
5. Sheriff’s Summer Conference 2022; 15 hours
6. 2022 MS Trauma Informed Care Conference, Dept. of Mental Health; 13.5 hours

Sheriff Pollan made a motion to approve the training as presented by Sgt. Jeremy Gordon. The training included a 40-hour class for instructor development and a 36-hour class for pre-academy physical fitness. Mrs. Coleman seconded the motion and it passed without opposition. Sheriff Johnson made a motion to approve items 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. Sheriff Pollan seconded the motion and it passed without opposition.

Discuss Recommended Policy Changes in Chapter 9 Concerning UROLA and MFFA. Vote to Amend for Final Adoption:

Based on the advice of the Attorney General’s Office the proposed policy changes have been made to be in compliance with the UROLA and MFFA. The underlined language is proposed to be added and the language that has a strike-out is proposed to be remove from policy. Since the last meeting, the proposed document has been amended to reflect concerns of the members.

Rule 9.1 Purpose

1. This section establishes policy and procedures governing the certification of law enforcement officers.² These procedures are established to review the record of those officers whose certification has lapsed and those officers who have training and experience in another jurisdiction (i.e., out of state, military, federal service). The Board will establish procedures to verify such applicants can demonstrate an adequate degree of knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the essential functions of the job.

Source: Miss Code Ann. § 45-6-7, 45-6-11, 73-50-1, 73-50-2

Rule 9.2 Policy

1. The Board shall evaluate each applicant's documented record of experience, education, and training. The accomplishments in each area shall be weighed to compare the applicant's credentials with the current standards for professional certification.
 - A. The certification status of any law enforcement officer shall lapse after a break in service of more than two years. Time of Service will be determined by official Board records (applications, rosters).
 1. Officers, certified in this state, who have had basic as in Chapter 9, Rule 9.2, Subsection-C and meet the employment guidelines, with a break in service of more than two (2) years, are required to complete the hands-on skill tests and law courses of the refresher course and provide verification of First Aid/CPR certification to restore their certification. The skill tests and law courses must be completed within one year for full-time status and two years for part-time status of their date of hire. The skill tests must be conducted by a certified instructor or at a Board accredited academy. The law courses must be conducted at a Board accredited academy.
 2. Officers, certified in this state, who have had basic as in Chapter 9, Rule 9.2, Subsection-C and meet the employment guidelines with a break in service of five (5) years or more are required to complete the refresher course and provide verification of First Aid/CPR certification to restore their certification. The refresher course must be conducted at a Board accredited academy within one year for full-time status and two years for part-time status of their date of hire.
 - B. All transfer applicants from another state, military, or federal jurisdiction that meet the employment guidelines applying for certification under Equivalency of Training must have completed training ~~and the required on-the-job training~~ as defined in Chapter-9, Rule 9.2, Subsection-B ~~C. Applicants who were excluded or "grand fathered" under the provisions of another state are not eligible for any exclusion in Mississippi.~~
 1. The Board shall issue certification to applicants who establish residence in this state if the following conditions are satisfied:

- a. The applicant holds a current and valid law enforcement license in good standing in another state, and has held this license from the occupational licensing board in the other state for at least one (1) year; and
 - b. There were minimum education requirements and, if applicable, work experience, examination and clinical supervision requirements in effect, and the other state verifies that the applicant met those requirements in order to be licensed in that state; and
 - c. The applicant has not committed any act in the other state that would have constituted grounds for refusal, suspension, or revocation of a license to practice that occupation in Mississippi at the time the act was committed, and the applicant does not have a disqualifying criminal record as determined by the BLEOST in Mississippi under Mississippi law; and
 - d. The applicant did not surrender a license because of negligence or intentional misconduct related to the applicant's work in the occupation in another state; and
 - e. The applicant does not have a complaint, allegation or investigation pending before an occupational licensing board or other board in another state that relates to unprofessional conduct or an alleged crime. If the applicant has a complaint, allegation or investigation pending, the occupational licensing board in Mississippi shall not issue or deny a license to the applicant until the complaint, allegation or investigation is resolved, or the applicant otherwise satisfies the criteria for licensure in Mississippi to the satisfaction of the BLEOST in Mississippi; and
 - f. The applicant pays all applicable fees in Mississippi; and
 - g. The applicant passes a jurisprudential examination specific to relevant state laws and administrative rules in Mississippi administered by the Board.
2. The Board shall issue certification to applicants who establish residence in this state based on work experience in another state, if all the following apply:
- a. The applicant worked in a state that does not issue law enforcement license/certification to regulate the occupation; and
 - b. The applicant worked for at least three (3) years in law enforcement as determined by the BLEOST; and
 - c. The applicant satisfies the provisions of paragraphs (c) through (f) of subsection B (1) of this section; and
 - d. The applicant passes a jurisprudential examination specific to relevant state laws and administrative rules in Mississippi administered by the Board.

3. The Board shall issue certification to an applicant who is a member of the military, or an applicant who is married to or is a dependent of a member of the military, if, upon application to the Board, the applicant satisfies the following conditions:
 - a. The applicant has been awarded a military occupational specialty, completed a military program of training, completed testing or equivalent training and experience, and performed in the occupational specialty; or
 - b. The applicant holds a current and valid law enforcement license in good standing in another state, and has held this license from the occupational licensing board in the other state for at least one (1) year; and
 - c. The applicant has not committed any act in the other state that would have constituted grounds for refusal, suspension, or revocation of a license to practice that occupation in Mississippi at the time the act was committed, the occupational licensing board in the other state holds the applicant in good standing, and the applicant does not have a disqualifying criminal record as determined by the BLEOST in Mississippi under Mississippi law; and
 - d. The applicant did not surrender a license because of negligence or intentional misconduct related to the applicant's work in the occupation in another state; and
 - e. The applicant does not have a complaint, allegation or investigation pending before an occupational licensing board or other board in another state that relates to unprofessional conduct or an alleged crime. If the applicant has a complaint, allegation or investigation pending, the occupational licensing board in Mississippi shall not issue or deny a license to the applicant until the complaint, allegation or investigation is resolved, or the applicant otherwise satisfies the criteria for licensure in Mississippi to the satisfaction of the occupational licensing board in Mississippi; and
 - f. The applicant pays all applicable fees in Mississippi; and
 - g. The applicant passes a jurisprudential examination specific to relevant state laws and administrative rules in Mississippi administered by the Board.
4. The Board shall issue a license to an applicant who is a member of the military, or an applicant who is married to or is a dependent of a member of the military, upon application based on work experience in another state, if all the following apply:
 - a. The applicant worked in a state that does not issue law enforcement license/certification to regulate the occupation; and
 - b. The applicant worked for at least three (3) years in the lawful occupation; and

- c. The applicant satisfies the provisions of paragraphs (c) through (f) of subsection B (3) of this section; and
 - d. The applicant passes a jurisprudential examination specific to relevant state laws and administrative rules in Mississippi administered by the Board.
5. ~~All individuals applying for certification under this chapter from federal jurisdictions must have completed a law enforcement training program as defined in Chapter 9, Rule 9.2, and Subsection C.~~
The passing score for the jurisprudential examination is 70%. This examination must be successfully completed within 120 days of the date of the application. For applicants not successfully completing the test or applicants that did not take the test within 120 days of the date of the application, the applicant must complete the refresher course. Applications are due within thirty (30) days of the date of hire. Transfer Applicants are required to complete the refresher course and must provide verification of First Aid/CPR certification to receive certification. The refresher course must be conducted at a Board accredited academy within one year for full-time status and two years for part-time status of their date of hire.
6. Upon application, applicants must present an acceptable form of identification to verify Mississippi residency, if residency in this state is required. Applicants must provide verified documentation to satisfy the conditions of this section.

The Board reviewed and discussed the amended proposed policy changes. Sheriff Johnson made a motion to approve the policy change as amended for final adoption. Mrs. Coleman seconded the motion and it passed without opposition.

NEW BUSINESS

Discuss Full-Time Academy Tuition; Request to Increase Rate:

The rate for full-time tuition has not been increased in more than twenty years. This rate was established at \$300.00 per week. Operation costs for academies have constantly gone up. Academies are requesting the Board to assist them with these increasing costs.

The Board discussed this issue. It was determined that a \$400.00 increase per student would cost the Board from \$160,000.00 to \$180,000.00 per year.

Sheriff Johnson made a motion to increase the amount of tuition charged for the full-time basic course. The motion raised the current rate of \$3600.00 to \$4000.00. The motion was seconded by Mr. McKay, and it passed without opposition. The new rate would go into effect for basic classes beginning after July 1, 2022.

Discuss Municipal In-Service Training:

Because of Covid 19, the Board voted to allow municipalities to use online training for all 24 hours of required in-service training. With the new training year approaching, the question was raised whether the Board should continue this practice or go back to the pre-covid days and only allow 12 hours to be obtained by online courses. Sheriff Pollan made a motion to require 12 hours of the training to be in-person training. The other 12 hours may be online. Chief Rice seconded the motion and it passed without opposition.

Certification of Officers:

Director Davis presented five full-time academy classes and five part-time academy classes for certification pending completion of all requirements.

Thirty-one full-time and five part-time equivalency of training candidates were presented for certification pending completion of all requirements. The Chair entertained a motion. Chief Hall made a motion to approve the equivalency candidates for certification subject to meeting all requirements. Mrs. Coleman seconded the motion. The motion was adopted without opposition.

Certification Review Hearing – Officer Jamarion Sanford:

The Board was provided information that Officer Jamarion Sanford was dismissed from his employing law enforcement agency for conduct or action that violates the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics or greatly diminishes the public trust in the competence and reliability of a law enforcement officer. According to the record, he was certified by the BLEOST as a law enforcement officer, certificate number 23306. While he was employed as a law enforcement officer for the Ruleville Police Department, he was dismissed for being out of control when he opened a jail cell and slapped a prisoner twice.

The Board received an application from the Greenwood Police Department requesting his certification. Based on the information received from Ruleville, the Board staff determined that he was not eligible for certification. Officer Sanford requested to appear before the Board to request his certification.

The Ruleville Police Department provided the Board with a video of his actions on the day in question. This video showed Officer Sanford enter a jail cell and physical assault a subject sitting on a bed and again after the suspect stood up.

Officer Sanford told the Board that he had a lot going on in his life at that time. He admitted that he lost control and entered the cell. He has since received professional counseling and had rehabilitated himself. He requested that the Board give him another chance. His mother spoke on his behalf as well as Captain Gibson of the Greenwood P.D.

The Board asked him several questions about the incident.

The Chair entertained a motion. Sheriff Pollan made a motion to enter into closed session to consider entering into executive session. Chief Rice seconded the motion and it pass without opposition. Mrs. Coleman made a motion to enter into executive session to consider the allegations

of misconduct and evidence produced during open proceedings, and the possible issuance of an appealable order. Sheriff Johnson seconded the motion and it passed without opposition.

Everyone was called back into the meeting room and the Chair announced that all members of the Board who were present before deliberations are present now. The Chair did invite a motion to come out of executive session. Sheriff Johnson made the motion; Mr. Swetman seconded the motion and it passed without opposition.

The Chair announced that in closed session the Board entered into executive session without opposition for the following reasons: to consider the allegations of misconduct and evidence produced during open proceedings, and the possible issuance of an appealable order. The Chair announced that after deliberations in executive session, the Board on a 9 to 0 vote made the following findings and took the following action:

After deliberations in Executive Session, the Board on Law Enforcement Officer Standards & Training finds that:

1. The Board has promulgated policy and procedure whereby: the Board may reject any unqualified applicant for certification by a classification of not eligible for certification, and reserves the right to reprimand, suspend or cancel and recall any certificate when any conduct or action violate the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics or would greatly diminish the public trust in the competence and reliability of a law enforcement officer.
2. Clear and convincing evidence was placed before the Board that you, Jamario D. Sanford committed actions that violated the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics, and that these actions would greatly diminish the public trust in your competence and reliability as a law enforcement officer, and that you were dismissed by your law enforcement agency for these reasons.
3. The Board on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Training issued the professional certificate number 23306 in the name of Jamario D. Sanford.

Upon consideration of the testimony presented today, and pursuant to Mississippi Code, Section 45-6-7, the Board on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Training has promulgated policy for the administration of the Law Enforcement Officers Training Program (LEOTP) allowing the Board the authority to reject any unqualified applicant for certification by a classification of not eligible for certification. Any conduct or action that violates the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics or would greatly diminish the public trust in the competence and reliability of a law enforcement officer would be actionable as due cause for reprimand, suspension, recall or cancellation of a certificate.

In Executive Session, after considering the facts presented, the Board voted unanimously (9-0) to cancel certificate number 23306 in the name of Jamario D. Sanford. This action is effective on May 12, 2022.

Director's Report:

Director Davis stated that a 54-year-old female cadet at the Leake County Part-Time Academy passed out after completing physical training. She was diagnosed with an aneurism and died.

There were 8 names added to the Fallen Officer's Monument this year.

Tonya Tucker has come back on contract to assist with the back log of work. She has really made a difference.

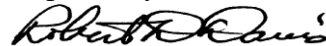
Next Scheduled Meeting:

The next regular meeting is scheduled for July 14, 2022.

Concluding Remarks; Adjournment:

The Chair entertained a motion to adjourn. Sheriff Johnson made a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Coleman seconded the motion and it passed without opposition. The meeting adjourned at 12:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Director, Board on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Training