

MINUTES

BLEOST MEETING
September 14, 2023

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m. by Chairman Greg Pollan.

Roll Call:

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

Chief Anjuan Brown
Hon. Nancy Chambers
Hon. Kassie Coleman
Hon. Lindsay Cranford
Chief Michael Hall
Deputy Charles Harris
Sheriff Jim Johnson
Dr. Steve Mallory
Constable Glenn McKay
Sheriff Greg Pollan
Chief John Mark Quaka

Board Counsel Luke Williamson

Board members not present were:

Col. Randy Ginn
Chief Daniel Sanford

Introduction of New Board Member, New Board Counsel, and Guests:

The president of the Mississippi Municipal League appointed Mayor Nancy Chambers of Forest as the MML representative for the Board. Mayor Chambers introduced herself stating she is a retired schoolteacher, past president of the MML, and has been Mayor of Forest for 22 years. Mr. Luke Williamson of the Attorney General's Office has been appointed as Board Counsel. Mr. Williamson is replacing Sam Goff who left the AG's Office to work for the U.S. Attorney's Office. Mr. Williamson introduced himself to the Board. He serves at the Deputy Director of the AG's Public Integrity Division. The Board welcomed Mayor Chambers and Counsel Williamson as well as the guests.

Speakers/Guests present were:

Major Jackie Moreno - Director SRPSI
Deputy Macaleb Lovvorn – Lee Co. S.O.
Major Bobby Riggs – Southaven P.D.
Captain Brandon Hendry – Harrison Co. S.O.
Deputy Lauren Rhea – Lowndes Co. S.O.

Director Amy Vanderford – MDCCLETA
Officer Tyrone Gordon – Humphreys Co. S.O.
Captain Christian Vance – Director, Jackson P.D. Academy
Ms. Corine Bankhead Harris – Hearing Witness
Mr. Carl Young – Hearing Witness

Staff Members Present were:

Program Supervisor Robert Davis
Program Specialist Donna Rogers-Perkins
Program Specialist Risa Turpin
Program Specialist Marie Fivecoat

Approval of Minutes:

A copy of the minutes from the meeting on July 13, 2023, was emailed to each member. Sheriff Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Dr. Mallory seconded the motion. The motion passed without opposition.

OLD BUSINESS

In-Service Training – Request for Approval:

- 1. Leadership Skills for Law Enforcement (8 hours); De-Escalation and Emotional Intelligence Skills for Law Enforcement (8 hours); Juliet Lima Solutions.**
- 2. One Loud Voice Conference (11.5 hours); Childrens Advocacy Centers of Mississippi**
- 3. Statement Analysis Interviewing Techniques (8 hours); Advanced Interviewing Concepts; Southaven PD**
- 4. Effective Victim Interviewing and Evidence Based Investigations (16 hours); End Violence Against Women International**
- 5. MS Association for Drug Court Professionals Conference (11.5 hours); FTC Prevention Services**
- 6. National Child Protection Task Force (22 hours); MBI**
- 7. Crime Stopper Conference (10 hours); Crime Stoppers**
- 8. Hostage Negotiations (40 hours); Columbia Law Enforcement Training Academy**
- 9. Human Trafficking Investigations (32 hours); Investigator Nick Brown, Human Trafficking Division Supervisor/ FBI Taskforce Officer**

These topics were presented to the Board for approval. DA Coleman made a motion to approve, and Constable McKay seconded the motion. The motion passed without opposition.

NEW BUSINESS

Jackson Police Training Academy Request for Residential Accreditation:

Several months ago, the Jackson Police Academy requested to be changed to a non-residential academy because they were not able to secure a meal vendor. The request was approved, and they held one class as a non-residential academy. Jackson is now requesting to return to residential status since they now have secured a meal vendor. New director of the academy, Captain Vance, introduced himself and spoke of this request. The Chair entertained a motion and Sheriff Johnson made a motion to approve residential accreditation. DA Coleman seconded the motion, and it passed without opposition.

Election of Board Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson:

The Chair opened the floor for nominations for Chairperson. Dr. Mallory made a motion to retain Sheriff Pollan as the Chair. DA Coleman seconded the motion. There were no other nominations. Sheriff Pollan was elected for another term. The Chair opened the floor for nominations for Vice-Chair. Sheriff Johnson made a motion to retain Dr. Mallory as Vice-Chair. AG Cranford seconded the motion. There were no other nominations. Dr. Mallory was elected for another term.

Review and Discuss Chapter 4: Hearings, Denial or Other Sanctions of Certification:

The standard operating procedure of the Board for the past 20 years has been to require an officer that needs a hearing to have an agency send in an application for certification with background check. This process was discussed. The Board was given several examples of officers needing hearings, but unable to get an agency to send in the necessary paperwork. Examples were given where officers with conduct needing Board action are dismissed from one job, and go to work for another agency and work for several months before a hearing can be scheduled. The Board discussed holding hearings before an officer with issues is rehired. AG Cranford made a motion to allow hearings for certification before an officer is hired back into law enforcement. Chief Quaka seconded the motion, and it passed without opposition. DA Coleman made a motion to accept written statements from character witnesses so they can be reviewed by the Board to help in the hearing process. Chief Hall seconded the motion, and it passed without opposition.

Certification of Officers:

Director Davis presented 6 full-time academy classes and 4 part-time academy classes for certification pending completion of all requirements.

Twenty-six full-time and nine part-time equivalency of training candidates were presented for certification pending completion of all requirements. The Chair entertained a motion. Dr. Mallory made a motion to approve the full-time classes, the part-time classes, and the equivalency candidates for certification subject to meeting all requirements. D.A. Coleman seconded the motion. The motion was adopted without opposition.

Director's Report:

The Director reported that at the last meeting a hearing was held for a potential candidate that had a "less than honorable discharge" from the military. The Board ruled that he was not eligible for

certification based on policy. Since that hearing, this candidate was successful in getting his discharge upgraded to “honorable” and he is currently in the training academy. The Director also reported that the staff’s vacancies have not been filled and that some tasks are slower in getting completed and some other functions have been placed on hold.

Certification Eligibility Hearing for Officer Tyrone Gordon:

The Board on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Training (BLEOST) received a “Full-Time Law Enforcement Application for Certification” from the Humphreys County Sheriff’s Department, indicating that Tyrone Gordon was hired as a law enforcement officer on 12-13-22. Based on the information received, the BLEOST staff has determined that he is not eligible for certification. Tyrone Gordon requested a Board hearing.

The Board on Law Enforcement Officer Standards & Training (BLEOST) has been provided information that he is not qualified for employment as a law enforcement officer because he does not meet the standards and requirements of employment and has engaged in conduct or action that would greatly diminish the public trust in the competence and reliability of a law enforcement officer.

Mr. Davis presented a 19-page document to be marked as exhibit 1 taken from his file to back up the allegations. Mr. Gordon pled guilty to Credit Card Fraud in Sunflower County Circuit Court. Mr. Gordon was found guilty of burglary in Washington County Circuit Court. He presented expungements for both charges. A flash drive was marked as exhibit 2. This flash drive was on social media showing Mr. Gordon assisting at a traffic detour, where he was displaying conduct unbecoming an officer. Director Vanderford stated that she received several calls for citizens with negative remarks on Mr. Gordon after he applied to attend her academy.

Mr. Gordon explained his actions in his younger life concerning the charges he faced to the Board and stated that he ran for constable and people were saying things about him during the race; which he lost. He said he is not the person that some people say he is. Ms. Corine Bankhead Harris and Mr. Carl Young spoke on behalf of Mr. Gordon concerning his character.

The Chair entertained a motion. Constable McKay made a motion to go into closed session to consider whether to declare an executive session, D.A Coleman seconded the motion. The motion passed without opposition. Eleven members were present. Constable McKay 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. Dr. Mallory seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

After executive session was completed, the Chair invited everyone back to the meeting room. Constable McKay made a motion to come out of executive session, seconded by DA Coleman. The motion passed unanimously.

The Chair announce that after deliberations in Executive Session, the Board on Law Enforcement Officer Standards & Training finds that:

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 any conduct or action that 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 (under condition), recall or cancellation of a certificate. The Board has established standards for employment.

Clear and convincing evidence was placed before the Board that you, Tyrone Gordon, are not qualified for employment as a law enforcement officer because you do not meet the standards and requirements of employment and have engaged in conduct or action that would greatly diminish the public trust in the competence and reliability of a law enforcement officer.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

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. To be qualified for employment as a law enforcement officer, the applicant must meet certain standards and requirements. Any conduct or action that would violate 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 (11-0) that you are not eligible for certification. This action is effective on September 14, 2023.

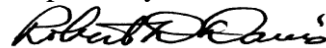
Next Scheduled Meeting:

The next regular meeting will be decided at a later date.

Concluding Remarks; Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Director, Board on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Training