

MINUTES
BLEOST MEETING
May 26, 2016

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 9:09 a.m. by Chairman Snyder.

Roll Call:

Chairman Snyder called the roll and a quorum was established. Board members present were:

Chief Matt Barnett
Assistant Chief Ray Hawkins
Sheriff Jim Johnson
Constable Glenn McKay
Ms. Leslie Scott
Mr. Ed Snyder

Mr. James Dale, Board Counsel

Board members not present were:

Sheriff Billy McGee
Mayor Gary Rhoads
Major Thomas Tuggle

Staff members present were:

Mrs. Bebea Boney
Mr. Robert Davis
Ms. Melissa Harvey
Ms. Geneva Hill
Mr. Bob Morgan
Mrs. Tonya Whitehead

Speakers/guests present were:

Captain Christopher Russell, Hancock Co. S.O.
Sheriff Victor P. Mason, Hinds Co.
Director Richard Lawrence, Rankin Co. S.O.
Sgt. Emma Baptiste, Harrison Co. S.O.
Director Clint McMurry, Columbia Law Enforcement Academy
Major Louis Elias, Harrison Co. S.O.
Officer Winston Ragland, Hinds Co. S.O.
Officer Melvin Alexander, Jackson P.D.
Cmdr. Stephen Wells, Jackson P.D.
Attorney Gregory Barnett, Jackson P.D.
Captain Todd Stewart, Director SRPSI
Mrs. Kristy Daniels, MS Run to Remember
Capt. Donald McCain, MHP Retired

Introductory Remarks:

The guests introduced themselves and they were welcomed by Mr. Snyder.

Mrs. Kristy Daniels helps sponsor the MS Run to Remember to honor fallen officers. The Run raises funds to help the families of fallen officers. Mrs. Daniels presented a check for \$1991.00 to the Board to be deposited into the Fallen Officer's Monument Fund. This is the second donation made to this fund by the Run to Remember. The Board and guests thanked Mrs. Daniels for her work with this organization and for her donation to our fund.

The Board viewed photos of the monument that included the six names of the officers killed in the line of duty in 2015.

Approval of Minutes:

A copy of the minutes from the previous meeting was emailed to each member. Mr. McKay made a motion to approve the minutes as presented without reading. Chief Hawkins seconded the motion and it carried without opposition.

Old Business

Request for Approval of In-Service Training:

1. The Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Program; CPI; 6 hrs; requested by Ruleville P.D.
2. Juvenile Justice Symposium; Office of Justice Programs; 12 hrs.
3. Terrorism Response and Mass Causality; Coahoma CC, Rhett Nelson; 16 hrs.
4. Crime Stopper's Coordinator Training; Central MS Crime Stoppers; 2 hrs.
5. Trauma Informed Victim Interviewing and Investigating Training; MS Coalition Against Sexual Assault; 7 hrs.
6. Hurricane Awareness; Southwest MS CC; 4 hrs.
7. Working K9 Care for Law Enforcement; MS State University Veterinary Medicine, Dr. Carla Huston; 4 hrs.
8. Level 1 Instructor Certification Course; Gracie Survival Tactics; 30 hrs.; requested by Lee Co. S.O.
9. Domestic Violence Investigations; District Attorney Fifth Circuit Court District; Marcus Purnell; 8 hrs.
10. MS Association of Chiefs of Police Summer Conference; 24 hrs.
11. MS Sheriffs' Association Summer Conference; 11.5 hrs.

12. Distracted Driving and Speed Course; MS S&T Law Enforcement Training; 4 hrs.
13. ? Executive Level Courses provided online by V-Academy; 1 to 4 hrs.
14. First Responder Courses (catalog); Global Training Institute.
15. National Center for Biomedical Research and Training (catalog); LSU Grant Based.

Sheriff Johnson made a motion to approve the proposed training programs. Chief Barnett seconded the motion and it carried without opposition. The Board agreed to continue the current reimbursement policy for Chiefs and Sheriffs.

New Business

Review and Discuss “Applicant’s Background Investigation Review” Form:

The Board reviewed page 3 of 4 on this form and discussed question number 3, which states “Have you ever declared bankruptcy?”. This question does not affect an applicants eligibility for certification. The staff spends a lot of time dealing with this question because applicants many times answer no to the question, but at some point in their career have answered yes. The Board discussed this issue and Sheriff Johnson made a motion to remove this question from the application. Ms. Scott seconded the motion and it passed without opposition.

Review and Discuss Certification Request of Officer Melvin D. Alexander:

Melvin Alexander applied for his military training to be equivalent to our academy in September, 2014. The Board voted to stop accepting military training as equivalent to the academy in November, 2014, but did agree to honor the request that were submitted before the vote. In January, 2015, the Board voted to only certify military trained officers that were hired before November, 2014.

Officer Alexander was hired by the Jackson Police Department in June of 2015. He was unaware of the Board vote that required him to be law enforcement employed before November, 2014, since that wasn’t in place at the time his training was deemed equivalent to the academy. He requested that the Board allow him to be certified based on his military training and completing the refresher course with the Jackson Police Department. He completed two military police academies and had training hours above our 480 hour course.

After discussion, Sheriff Johnson made a motion to accept his military training equivalency and refresher course and certify Officer Alexander based on the amount of time that the Jackson Police Department takes for their hiring process and not realizing that the November date was in place. Chief Barnett seconded the motion and it passed without opposition.

Certification Hearing on Officer Winston Ragland:

The Board on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Training recalled the law enforcement certification of Officer Winston Ragland on November 14, 2013. According to Mississippi Code Ann. § 45-6-11 (3) (c), “ No person shall serve as a law enforcement officer in any full-time, part-time, reserve or auxiliary capacity during a period when that person’s certification has been

suspended, cancelled or recalled pursuant to the provisions of this chapter.” Mississippi Code Ann. § 45-6-11 (10) states that “Any full- or part-time law enforcement officer whose certification has been cancelled pursuant to this chapter may reapply for certification, but not sooner than two (2) years after the date on which the order of the board cancelling such certification becomes final.”

The Hinds County Sheriff’s Department has made application requesting his certification. Officer Ragland requested this hearing based on the law that allows him to reapply for certification since it was recalled over two years ago.

Mr. Snyder asked Officer Ragland to confirm that he understood the potential outcome of the hearing and to confirm that he received notice of the procedures for this hearing. Officer Ragland stated that he understood and was ready to proceed. The Court Reporter issued the oath to Officer Ragland, Sheriff Mason and Director Davis.

Director Davis began by stating that the Board has been provided information that Officer Ragland did engaged in conduct that would breach the established minimum standards, violate the *Law Enforcement Code of Ethics*, or would greatly diminish the public trust in his competence and reliability as a law enforcement officer. He was arrested in 1993 while serving as a Jackson Police Officer, discharged from the Jackson Police Department on January 27, 1994, charged with the crime of Receiving Stolen Goods, and pled guilty on or about April 15, 1994. Adjudication of guilt was withheld and he was ordered to participate in two years of supervised probation, pay a fine of \$250.00, pay restitution in the amount of \$200.00, and participate in forty hours of community service.

He fulfilled all the requirements of the restitution order and the period of probation was successfully completed and the charge was dismissed on July 2, 1996. All official records of this incident were expunged on November 8, 2006.

Officer Ragland asked the Board for a second chance because law enforcement was what he felt like he should do with his life and that he was a changed man and had made a mistake in his younger life. This was over 20 years ago and he has grown and matured. Sheriff Mason also spoke on behalf of Officer Ragland and believes in second chances.

Officer Ragland completed his presentation to the Board. The Chair entertained a motion to enter into closed session to consider whether to declare an executive session. Mr. McKay made that motion and it received a second from Chief Barnett and passed without opposition.

In closed session, Mr. 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 and it received a second from Ms. Scott. The vote was unanimous to enter executive session.

At the conclusion of the executive session, everyone was invited back to the meeting. The Chair entertained a motion to come out of executive session. Chief Hawkins made the motion, it received a second from Chief Barnett. The vote was unanimous to come out of executive session.

The Chair announced that Ms. Scott participated in the executive session, but had to leave the meeting due to a prior commitment. The Chair announced that a motion was passed unanimously 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. After deliberations in executive session, the Board, on a vote of 4 to 1, made the finding that Officer Ragland engaged in conduct that: constituted a felony offense which resulted in judicial non-adjudication; breached the established minimum standards; violates the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics, and greatly diminished the public trust in his competence and reliability as a law enforcement officer. The Board declined to reinstate his professional certificates numbered 8135 and 23010, and that action is effective on Thursday, May 26, 2016.

Certification of Officers:

Director Davis presented 5 F/T basic academy classes and 4 P/T basic academy class for certification pending completion of all requirements. A list of 38 F/T equivalency candidates, and 6 P/T equivalency candidate was presented for certification pending completion of all requirements. Sheriff Johnson made a motion to approve the academy classes and equivalency candidates for certification subject to meeting all requirements and Chief Barnett seconded the motion. The motion carried without opposition.

The Board agreed to hold a special meeting for hearings only, if there is a need to schedule several. Mr. Davis reviewed some cases that may need hearings.

Director's Report:

Beginning July 1, 2016, the Law Enforcement Fund will no longer be a special fund. From this point on, all funds for the Board will come from the general fund.

There are 412 new full-time officers that will complete training during this fiscal year. There are many others that are in progress that will not finish until after July 1st. Our training has not slowed down nor been affected by the additional hours. Of that number, 68 have been self-sponsored. This does save a considerable amount of money. There will be 90 officers that complete refresher training during the fiscal year.

The Board discussed officer training and the length of service concerning years out of law enforcement.

The staff maintains officer files, the question has come up on whether or not documents can be removed or changed at the request of the person that submitted the document. The Board discussed this matter and was of the opinion that documents should not be removed, but other documents could be submitted that may be different from the first document.

The Board is now short by 4 members, hopefully they will be appointed before the next meeting.

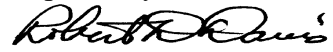
Next Scheduled Meeting:

The next meeting was set for July 14, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. at the Public Safety Planning Building.

Concluding Remarks; Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:32 p.m. by the Chairman.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Davis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "R".

Director, Board on Law Enforcement
Officer Standards and Training