

Connecticut General Assembly
Logistics
Subcommittee
Police Transparency & Accountability Task Force

Rep. Joshua Hall, Chairperson



c/o Judiciary Committee, Room 2500
Legislative Office Building
300 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Ct 06106

Minutes
Tuesday, November 10, 2020
5:00 p.m., via Zoom

Attendees: Joshua Hall (Chair), Chief William Wright, John Szewczyk, Melvin Medina, Stephen Saloom, Bishop John Selders, Shafiq Abdussabur, Tanya Hughes

Others: Ken Barone (CCSU), Andrew Clark (CCSU), Deb Blanchard (Judiciary Committee), Renee LaMark Muir (CCSU), Peter Kochenburger (UCONN Law), Patrick Hulin (Governor's Office), Brian Anderson (AFSCME Council 4), Jeff Zyjeski

I. Convene meeting and welcome

a. Chair Hall convened the meeting at 5:02pm. At the request of the chair, members and guests introduced themselves.

II. Approve October 27, 2020 and November 4, 2020 meeting minutes

a. Stephen Saloom made a motion to table the October 27, 2020 minutes. The motion was seconded by John Szewczyk. Stephen Saloom requested that staff go back and provide a more detailed description of the question and answer portion of the discussion with CIRMA. The minutes were tabled without objection.

b. Upon a motion by Stephen Saloom and seconded by Bishop John Selders, the minutes were approved via voice vote.

III. Short-Term Priority Discussion

a. Chair Hall reported that members received copies of the recommendations developed by the project staff based on previous discussions of the subcommittee. Ken Barone provided a

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brief outline of each recommendation regarding decertification and Renee LaMark Muir provided additional information and responded to questions. The recommendations regarding decertification members discussed included:

- i. A recommendation in response to Section 12(a) (11) of P.A. 20-1: “whether any of the grounds for revocation or cancellation of a police officer certification under section 7-294d of the general statutes should result in mandatory revocation by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council, as opposed to discretionary revocation” Members discussed a recommendation for automatic decertification for a felony or drug possession violation pursuant to Connecticut General Statute §21a-279, while employed as a police officer.*
 - ii. POSTC should develop a best practices model for conducting internal investigations that shall be adopted by law enforcement units and DESPP, that includes but is not limited to: (1) intake, processing and classification of complaints; (2) investigation and interview protocols, reporting standards, and evidence gathering and processing; (3) investigations during lawsuits and post-resignation investigations; and (4) mediation, adjudication and disposition.*
 - iii. The other recommendation was to provide a mechanism to hold departments accountable if the police department doesn’t comply with mandatory decertification reporting. This would include allowed POSTC to recommend to OPM that state funds be withheld from non-compliant departments. Additionally, POSTC should revoke state accreditation from non-compliant agencies.*
- b. Members discussed both proposals about decertification. John Szewczyk expressed concern that automatic revocation of certification for a felony or drug possession conviction doesn’t have the same automatic process if the conviction is overturned on appeal. He expressed concern that the automatic revocation was only “one-way.” John also stated that the second recommendation regarding internal affairs was not sufficient and that we need a system that moves investigations outside of individual departments. Shafiq Abdussabur also expressed concerns with the decertification proposal and stated that he would be opposed to any automatic decertification. He stated that he preferred to focus on the modernization and improving transparency to POSTC. Shafiq was also concerned with the current internal affairs process and doesn’t believe that these proposals will change the culture of policing in Connecticut. Chair Hall agreed that additional reforms will be needed and reminded*

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members that there is an additional year for this subcommittee to complete its work. He asked members to try and stay focused on the short-term priorities established by the subcommittee. Stephen Saloom asked if a conviction for drug possession reached the threshold for automatic decertification based on what we know about drug addiction. Melvin Medina stated that he believed a conviction for both a felony and drug possession should mean automatic decertification because the case has gone through the judicial system. He expressed a concern that police officers can effectively do their job with these convictions. Brief additional discussion occurred related to the automatic revocation based on a felony or drug possession conviction.

Members discussed a concern that the draft recommendation for automatic decertification stated that the decision could not be appealed to superior court. Members agreed that this appeared to be against standard practice and the provision was removed from the draft.

- c. *A motion was made by Rep. Joshua Hall and seconded by Melvin Medina to recommend to the full state Police Transparency and Accountability Task Force that a conviction for a felony while employed as a police officer, shall be grounds for automatic decertification by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POSTC).*

5 Yes 2 No 0 Abstention

- d. *A motion was made by Rep. Joshua Hall and seconded by Melvin Medina to recommend to the full state Police Transparency and Accountability Task Force that a conviction for drug possession violation pursuant to Connecticut General Statute §21a-279, while employed as a police officer, shall be grounds for automatic decertification by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POSTC).*

4 Yes 3 No 0 Abstention

- e. *A motion was made by Rep. Joshua Hall and seconded by Melvin Medina to recommend to the full state Police Transparency and Accountability Task Force that if a municipal police department, the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection or any other department fails to comply with the Police Officer Standards and Training Council mandated reporting policy related to decertification as outlined in their general orders, the POSTC shall recommend and the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management may*

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order an appropriate penalty in the form of the withholding of state funds from such municipal police department, the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection or other departments. POSTC shall adopt standards for compliance with the mandatory reporting requirement in the Connecticut Law Enforcement Standards Policies and Practices (CLESPP). Failure to comply shall result in loss of accreditation in one or more CLESPP tiers.

7 Yes 0 No 0 Abstention

- f. A motion was made by Stephen Saloom and seconded by Rep. Joshua Hall to recommend to the full state Police Transparency and Accountability Task Force that the one-year statute of limitations for bringing an action pursuant to Section 41 be extended to three years.*

7 Yes 0 No 0 Abstention

- g. Members discussed a point raised to the subcommittee by the CBA Policing task force regarding the ban on interlocutory appeals for cases filed under Section 41 of P.A. 20-1. There was consensus not to proceed with any recommendation regarding interlocutory appeal as outlined in Section 41 of P.A. 20-1.*

IV. General Discussion

- a. There was no general discussion.*

V. Announcement of time and date of next meeting.

- a. Tuesday, November 24th at 5:00 p.m.*

VI. Adjournment

- a. Meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.*