

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, December 15, 2020
5:00 p.m., via Zoom

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

Others: Ken Barone (CCSU), Karen Boisvert (POSTC), C.J. McGuffey (POSTC), Andrew Clark (CCSU), Deb Blanchard (Judiciary Committee), Renee LaMark Muir (CCSU), Peter Siegelman (UCONN Law), Peter Kochenburger (UCONN Law), Brian Anderson (AFSCME Council 4), Sharad Samy (CCSU)

I. Convene meeting and welcome

a. Chair Hall convened the meeting at 5:03pm. At the request of the chair, members and guests introduced themselves.

II. Approve December 1, 2020 meeting minutes

a. The minutes were not available, and this agenda item was tabled by the Chair until the next meeting.

III. Old Business

a. Liability insurance update

Ken Barone informed members that CIRMA responded to the additional questions submitted by the subcommittee, but staff and our partners at UCONN Law only had limited time to review the response. Peter Kochenburger informed members that based on his reading of the material provided many of the questions asked were not answered. CIRMA did provide pages of insurance policy language, which will be reviewed by UCONN Law. Peter Kochenburger believes that additional information would be helpful but based on the information that has been provided we can begin

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to make an assessment regarding the impacted changes to governmental immunity on municipal liability insurance costs. Peter Siegelman mentioned that when asked if CIRMA would change their underwriting standards, they simply provided a boilerplate response and when asked if they planned to make any modifications to their law enforcement liability coverage form, CIRMA responded not in the next year. Peter Siegelman and Peter Kochenburger will provide an additional assessment at our next meeting.

b. Decertification recommendation

The recommendations regarding mandatory decertification of officers was tabled by the full task force and sent back to the subcommittee for additional modifications. Based on the discussion at the full task force, Chair Hall informed members that the recommendations were simplified. The goal of the revised recommendation was to simply respond to the question presented by the legislature. Additionally, the recommendation was broken up into two recommendations. Ken Barone shared the revised recommendations, which read as follows:

Recommendations 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”

Recommendation #1:

It is recommended a conviction for a felony, while employed as a police officer, shall be grounds for mandatory decertification by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POSTC).

Recommendation #2:

It is recommended a conviction for a drug possession violation pursuant to Connecticut General Statute §21a-279, while employed as a police officer, shall be grounds for mandatory decertification by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POSTC).

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Ken Green asked for clarification regarding the drug possession, 21a-279 offense. Ken Barone responded by outlining what the law currently prohibits. John Szewczyk expressed concern that this recommendation was not fundamentally different from the previous recommendation. He highlighted concerns he had regarding the due process rights of officers. Chief Wright asked if POSTC would continue to hold a hearing for felony convictions if the law requires mandatory decertification but is silent on the process. Karen Boisvert stated that she believes they would still offer a hearing based on guidance she has received from DESPP legal counsel. Mel Medina asked POSTC if they have data on how often an officer is decertified as a result of a drug possession conviction. Karen Boisvert said that she would look to see if the POSTC database captures that information. Mel Medina stated that he understood the concerns previously raised about injustices in the larger criminal justice system. He stated that the police profession is not a protected class. He also discussed his perspective that there is a high bar needed to convict police officers. Mel said that what is before the committee is a professional question, not a legal question.

Chair Hall asked for a motion regarding recommendation 1. A motion was made by Ken Green and seconded by Stephen Saloom to recommend that a conviction for a felony while employed as a police officer, shall be grounds for mandatory decertification by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POSTC).

6 Yes 1 No 1 Abstention

Chair Hall asked for a motion regarding recommendation 2. A motion was made by Chief William Wright and seconded by Melvin Medina to recommend that a conviction for a drug possession violation pursuant to Connecticut General Statute §21a-279, while employed as a police officer, shall be grounds for mandatory decertification by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POSTC).

5 Yes 3 No 0 Abstention

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- c. Police union presentation follow-up discussion

Members briefly discussed their feedback on the presentations made by union representatives during our December 1, 2020 meeting.

IV. New Business

- a. Identify subcommittee priorities for 2021

Chair Hall indicated that members would need to begin thinking about subcommittee priorities for the coming months. The original priorities outlined by the subcommittee were shared with members via email. Chair Hall requested that members be prepared to share the priorities they would like to work on at our next meeting.

V. General Discussion

There was no general discussion.

VI. Announcement of time and date of next meeting.

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for December 29th at 5:00 p.m.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:43 p.m.