

**Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association
Pennsylvania Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission**

**Regular Commission Meeting
July 20, 2021**

Call to Order

The Regular Commission meeting of the Pennsylvania Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission was called to order on Tuesday, July 20, 2021 at 10:30 a.m. at the Kalahari Resorts and Conventions, Pocono Manor, PA. Chairman Rudzinski presided.

Members Present

Jim Adams, Chief Benson, Chief Bergmann, Executive Director Bohn, Chief Cortazzo, Captain Crone, Coordinator Dombrowsky, Chief Ficco, Chief Grimes, Chief Hendershot, Chief Hettinger, Accreditation Manager Ketchem, Chief King (Retired), Corporal Madrak, Chief Molloy, Chief Moravec, Chief Rudzinski, Chief Scalzo, Chief Steffen, Andrea Sullivan, Chief Swartz and Chief Wagner.

Chief Daly, Chief Ellis, Frank Lavery and Chief Lesko were absent.

Also present, from the Lehigh County Sheriff's Office, were Sheriff Joseph Hanna, Chief Deputy David Faust, Accreditation Manager/Lieutenant Lita Bechtold and Accreditation Manager Karl Geschwindt. From the Nether Providence Township Police Department were Chief of Police David Splain and Officer Kevin Smith. From the Plumstead Township Police Department was Chief of Police David Mettin. From the Emmaus Borough Police Department was Sergeant Jared Hahn. From the Towamencin Township Police Department was Chief of Police Timothy Troxell. From the Delaware County Sheriff's Office was Captain Michellene Conte. From the Horsham Township Police Department were Chief of Police William Daly and Deputy Chief of Police Scott Fida. From the Bensalem Township Police Department was Director of Public Safety Frederick Harran. Also present were Captain Christopher Bird (Retired), Lieutenant Craig Rudisill, Accreditation Manager Jennifer Ruggeri and Officer Madeline Lewis.

Chairman Rudzinski welcomed all to the meeting and asked Commission members to introduce themselves. Everyone stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

Corporal Madrak made a motion to accept the minutes of the March 18, 2021 regular Commission meeting with an amendment in regard to the motion for the Glassport Borough Police Department. Members from LEAS Consulting were not listed as abstaining from the vote in the original minutes. The change has been made to the minutes. Chief King seconded the motion. All agreed.

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Assessment Reports for Consent Agenda

The following agencies have been put on the Consent Agenda for approval: Spring Garden Township; Butler County Sheriff's; Emmaus Borough; Towamencin Township; Upper Southampton Township; Springettsbury Township; Delaware County Sheriff's; Kingston Township; Jenkintown Borough; Allegheny County Sheriff's; Horsham Township, Penn Township (York County) and Bensalem Township.

A motion was made by Captain Crone to accept the recommendation for the re-accreditation of these agencies. Chief Cortazzo seconded the motion. All agreed. Chief Benson, Chief Ficco, Chief Hettinger, Chief King, Chief Moravec and Chief Swartz abstained.

Chief Ficco made a motion to accept the recommendation of Premier Agency Status for the Horsham Township Police Department; seconded by Chief Swartz. All agreed.

Captain Crone made a motion to accept the recommendation of Premier Agency Status for the Penn Township Police Department (York County); seconded by Chief Hendershot. All agreed. Chief Hettinger abstained.

Chairman Rudzinski congratulated all re-accredited agencies.

Vice Chairman Benson took command of the meeting so that Chairman Rudzinski could present the Lehigh County Sheriff's assessment report.

Assessment Reports

Lehigh County Sheriff's Review – Chief Rudzinski reported that it was evident that this agency is deeply committed to improving the quality of the service they provide. Every employee that the team met along the way was proud about what they do and how they do it. The hard work paid off for the agency, and they have become a more professional agency and an example to other law enforcement agencies. The Lehigh County Sheriff's Department is a model that should be followed by other law enforcement agencies. The Lehigh County Sheriff's Department provides a quality law enforcement service to the community and is committed to maintaining a high level of quality. The agency is well disciplined, well trained, well organized and well directed. This was repeatedly confirmed with the team's observations and interactions with agency personnel. It is the recommendation of the assessment team that the Lehigh County Sheriff's Department be considered for accreditation by the Pennsylvania Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission.

Chief Hettinger made a motion to accept the accreditation of the Lehigh County Sheriff's Department; seconded by Chief Cortazzo. All agreed. Chief Rudzinski abstained.

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Vice Chairman Benson returned command to Chairman Rudzinski and commended him for presenting a good report.

Sheriff Hanna said it is a privilege and truly an honor to be recognized by the Commission. He is proud to have reached this milestone. He served previously at the Allentown City Police Department for thirty-four years but knew his goal at the Lehigh County Sheriff's Department was to become accredited, especially in today's current climate. It makes them a better agency and insulates them, as well. He thanked everyone, especially Deputy Sheriff Faust, Lieutenant Bechtold and Accreditation Manager Geschwindt. He said that they are responsible for making this come to fruition.

Chairman Rudzinski congratulated them on their accomplishment.

Nether Providence Township Review – Captain Bird reported that the Nether Providence Township Police Department demonstrated that it is a professional law enforcement agency. Their organizational and operational philosophies and practices show their continuing commitment to providing superior quality law enforcement services to the community. Agency staff demonstrated that the Department is well trained, well organized and a well-directed law enforcement agency. He said that the Accreditation Manager, Chief Splain, Accreditation Consultants Ruggeri and Lewis and the department staff did a good job preparing for and conducting the assessment. It was obvious that the department's accreditation team had the support of all department members in this task. Captain Bird said, on behalf of the assessment team, it is his pleasure and honor to recommend the Nether Providence Township Police Department be considered for accreditation by the Pennsylvania Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission.

Chief Benson made a motion to accept the accreditation of the Nether Providence Township Police Department; seconded by Chief Molloy. All agreed.

Chief Splain thanked the Commission and his agency. He said this would not be possible without the commitment of his men and women. He thanked the assessment team and the Rodgers Group. He said working through the program, this checks all of the boxes.

Chairman Rudzinski congratulated them on their accomplishment.

Plumstead Township Review – Chief Hendershot said participating in this on-site was a pleasure. It was by far one of the smoothest and easiest he has ever done. He reported that the Plumstead Township Police Department should serve as an example for other agencies to emulate. Chief Mettin has previous experience getting an agency through the accreditation process from his tenure at his previous agency. It is quite the accomplishment for the agency to have revised policies and completed an assessment

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within 15 months of a new Chief taking over an agency. He worked diligently with the staff of LEAS Consulting to accomplish this goal in a short period of time. Chief Mettin leads a fantastic group of people with the desire to do things the right way. The community outreach programs are a great testament to the relationships that have been built with the community and the support of the Township Manager and elected officials have enabled the agency to evolve into an agency that provides quality services. It is the unanimous recommendation of the assessment team, based on file review and observations while on site, that the Plumstead Township Police Department be granted accredited status by the Pennsylvania Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission.

A motion was made by Chief Ficco to accept the accreditation of the Plumstead Township Police Department; seconded by Chief King. All agreed. Captain Crone, Chief Hendershot, Corporal Madrak and Chief Rudzinski abstained.

Chief Mettin thanked the Commission for an affirmative vote. He also thanked the assessment team. His agency decided this is what they wanted and worked hard to attain it.

Chairman Rudzinski congratulated them on their accomplishment.

Committee Reports

Standards Committee – Chief King reported there was a meeting on May 25, 2021 and a complete review of the entire Standards Manual was done. All changes will be presented at the next Commission meeting for approval. Also, the PowerDMS Sample Assessment will be reviewed and changes will be rolled out in 2022 at the PLEAC Conference. He thanked the Standards Committee, Jim Adams and Andrea Sullivan. Chief Steffen said the work that Captain Crone and Corporal Madrak provided was pivotal. He thanked them. Chief Hettinger made a motion to accept the minutes from the May 25, 2021 meeting; seconded by Chief Molloy. All agreed.

Assessment Committee – Chief Hendershot reported that there are two policy recommendations regarding requiring a mock assessment (Attachment 1) and the on-site assessment schedules (Attachment 2). There was also much discussion regarding the recommendation regarding perceived assessor conflict of interest. (Attachment 3). Chief King made a motion to accept the mock assessment requirement recommendation as well as the recommended assessment schedules; seconded by Chief Benson. All agreed. Another motion was made by Chief Ficco to accept the recommendation of the Assessment Committee regarding the perceived assessor conflict of interest; seconded by Chief Hettinger. All agreed.

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Administrative Committee - Chief Benson reported there may be a potential conflict of interest with Commission members who are working as private consultants. The Committee feels that the integrity of its members is paramount. The Committee feels that we are in good shape the way things are now. Currently, there are no issues or problems and if any come to light, they will be dealt with.

Chief Swartz made a motion to accept the Administrative Committee report. Chief Cortazzo seconded the motion. All agreed.

Chairman Rudzinski thanked both the Assessment Committee and the Administrative Committee for taking the time to handle the mentioned items.

Strategic Planning Committee – Chief Moravec reported that the Strategic Planning Committee agreed that a lack of funds should not be an issue in regard to becoming accredited. Chief Ficco made a motion to accept the Strategic Planning Committee report. Chief Benson seconded the motion. All agreed.

Coordinator's Report

Jim Adams reported that accreditation anniversary dates are a moving target. For initial assessments, the date will be locked in no matter when the next on-site is performed. For re-assessments, their date will be the date of their most recent re-assessment.

A rocker has been created to accompany accreditation seals for agencies who have attained Premier Agency Status. PCPA will handle selling seals and rockers for cars, etc.

In a call with PCCD, it was suggested that any and all grants should only be awarded to accredited agencies. All individuals on the call were in favor of this. The fingerprint data has been moved to a two-year timeframe on the new dashboard. We prefer a three-year timeframe.

Chief Cortazzo made a motion to accept the Coordinator's Report. Chief Moravec seconded the motion. All agreed.

Old Business

Nothing to report.

New Business

Jim Adams reported on the rules when filing an annual report. He provided the details of the Lower Gwynedd Township Police Department in regard to their annual report being overdue and asked for guidance from the Commission. The Commission recommended

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that Jim reach out to the Chief again and give them until August 13, 2021 to file their report, which was due on May 3, 2021, or be decertified. Chief Benson made a motion for Coordinator Adams to reach out to this agency one last time; seconded by Chief Molloy. All agreed.

Chief Hettinger made a motion for Captain Crone to fill the At Large vacancy on the Commission; seconded by Chief Cortazzo. All agreed. By fulfilling the nomination, a vacancy now exists on the Commission for the Accreditation Manager seat. Chairman Rudzinski reported that Sergeant John Ross, Accreditation Manager for the Philadelphia City Police Department, is interested in filling the vacant Accreditation Manager seat on the Commission. Captain Crone made a motion to nominate Sergeant Ross to fill the Accreditation Manager seat on the Commission; seconded by Corporal Madrak. All agreed.

For the Good of the Order

Chairman Rudzinski thanked the Commission, Jim Adams and Andrea Sullivan for their hard work.

Date of Next Meeting

To be determined.

Adjournment

At 12:50 p.m., a motion was made by Corporal Madrak to adjourn; seconded by Chief Hettinger. All agreed.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea N. Sullivan

Andrea N. Sullivan, Administrative Assistant
Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association

Attachments

Requiring Mock Assessment Prior to the on-site Assessment

The assessor committee recognized the importance of a mock assessment for preparation for the on-site assessment. This has been historically the “best practice” to ensure agencies are prepared for the on-site evaluation. The assessor committee recommends that mock assessments should be a part of every agencies preparation for the on-site, but recognizes there may be logistical challenges and a diminishing return for agencies strongly committed and active in the program. The following are the conditions which we feel a mock assessment should be mandatory:

1. Initial Accreditation evaluation
2. Instances where there is a change in the Accreditation Manager
3. Instances where there in a new Agency CEO
4. Any period which the agency requests a 6 month extension
5. Any period in which the agency moved to a new facility or made substantial changes to the existing facility.

All other circumstances shall be treated as situations where a mock is strongly recommended, but not required.

Assessment Policy Recommendations**A. Initial Assessments:**

1. Initial Assessments for non-accredited agencies: Initial assessment for both paper files & PowerDMS are 2 days. Other than the Mail In Files listed in the Administrative Manual, all file review is done on-site. The assessment team for an initial on-site shall consist of at least 1 Team Leader and 2 Assessors. The Program Coordinator may choose to utilize additional assessors as needed due to the size of an agency.
2. Initial assessments for agencies currently accredited by a national police accrediting body where the agency is subject to established/ recognized crosswalk files may be done with one day on-site. Paper files or PowerDMS file review shall take place on-site for either file type. The assessment team for an initial Crosswalk on-site shall consist of at least 1 Team Leader and 1 Assessor. The Program Coordinator may choose to utilize additional assessors as needed due to the size of an agency.

B. Re-Assessments:

1. Re-Assessments for PLEAC accredited agencies utilizing paper files: Re-assessment for paper files are 2 days. Other than the Mail In Files listed in the Administrative Manual, all file review is done on-site. The assessment team for a re-assessment on-site shall consist of at least 1 Team Leader and 2 Assessors. The Program Coordinator may choose to utilize additional assessors as needed due to the size of an agency.
2. Re-Assessments for PLEAC Accredited agencies utilizing PowerDMS: Re-assessments for PowerDMS are 1 day on-site. The team members are expected to review the files for the agency prior to arriving on-site and may (after consultation with the team leader) contact the Accreditation Manager to recommend adjustments or file maintenance to bring the files into compliance. The assessment team for a re-assessment on-site shall consist of at least 1 Team Leader and 2 Assessors. The Program Coordinator may choose to utilize additional assessors as needed due to the size of an agency.
3. Re-assessments for agencies currently accredited by a national police accrediting body (in addition to current PLEAC Accreditation) where the agency is subject to established/ recognized crosswalk files may be done with one day on-site. Paper files file review shall take place on-site, but PowerDMS files for the agency shall be reviewed prior to arriving on-site and may (after consultation with the team leader) contact the Accreditation Manager to recommend adjustments or file maintenance to bring the files into compliance. The assessment team for a re-assessment Crosswalk on-site shall consist of at least 1 Team Leader and 1 Assessor. The Program Coordinator may choose to utilize additional assessors as needed due to the size of an agency.

Appearance of Conflicts of Interest

The assessor committee was asked to discuss/ review the potential for conflicts of interest as it pertains to members doing consulting work and conducting assessments for PLEAC. Several options were discussed ranging from elimination from the assessor pool to no change from the current system. The current system utilizes a random process where assessors are assigned to agencies based on a rotation where assignments are not pre-planned. The Assessor Committee carefully considered the opinions that have been expressed to the Program Coordinator, and also considered the impact exclusion would have to the wealth of knowledge in the program that might be lost.

The committee recommends that members serving as consultants should not be Team Leaders on assessments for competing consulting entities. This removes the member who may be a consultant from appearance of conflict when they raise issues with work completed by another consulting entity. While we have the utmost faith that members involved in the program would treat all agencies the same while representing PLEAC, we believe this may be an effective way to reduce any potential appearance of a conflict of interest and provide protection for members who do consulting work from allegation of bias.

The Committee would welcome the thoughts of the other members of the committee on this issue.