

POLICE OFFICER STANDARDS AND TRAINING COUNCIL

SPECIAL MEETING

MINUTES OF MEETING

JUNE 11, 2020

CONNECTICUT POLICE ACADEMY

MERIDEN, CONNECTICUT

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THIS DOCUMENT IS AN ABRIDGED VERSION OF THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 11, 2020 POST COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING. THE ORIGINAL MINUTES ARE IN THE FORM OF A DIGITAL RECORDING AND AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST FROM THE ACADEMY ADMINISTRATOR.

Council Members Present: Town Administrator Michael Freda; First Selectman Laura Francis; Dr. Amy Donahue; Chief John Daly; Chief Ronnell Higgins; Chief Thomas Kulhawik; Chief Paul Melanson; Chief Keith Mello; Chief Mark Palmer; Chief Vernon Riddick, Jr.; Chief James Viadero; Commissioner James Rovella; Chief State's Attorney Richard Colangelo, Kurt Cavanaugh, Douglas Glanville, Dir. Guy Vallaro.

Other Attendees: Police Academy Administrator Karen Boisvert; Field Services Director William Steck; Basic Training Director Marc Fasano; Barbara Fullenwiley (POSTC) Administrative Staff; Pamela Hayes, CPCA Executive Director; Attorney Colin Milne, DESPP Legal; CTN; Chief John Klett and Cynthia Isales.

Council Members Absent: State Victim's Advocate Natasha Pierre; Patrick Rittmon and Special Agent-in-Charge Dave Sundberg.

CALL TO ORDER

Chief Keith Mello, POST Council Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. via Zoom

ACTION ITEMS

CHIEF/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Chief Mello, Chairman of POST Council opened up the meeting by expressing outrage over the death of George Floyd by former Minneapolis police officers and on behalf of this Council would like to have his statement put into the records:

"We have all seen the videos where a man has lost his life during an encounter with police as well as the aftermath of those actions. These images are beyond disturbing and has cast a stain over the law enforcement profession and the dedication of men and women who strive to protect and serve their communities with honor. As law

enforcement officers, we recognize that the behavior in these videos reflects failures of police tactics, judgement and training. Of equal concern is the lack of intervention by police officers on the scene. We are reminded that we are leaders of our communities especially during the time of crisis. Our oath and our ethics require us to act whenever we are witnessing an unjust act even by another police officer. Unfortunately these actions in Minnesota unroll the layers of trust, confidence and good will that so many police officers have built within their communities especially those who lead agencies in fragile communities. Every person deserves to be treated with dignity and respect and this is the foundation of our profession. Any violation of these core tenets is inexcusable.”

Chief Ronnell Higgins commented on the amazing work the Council has done with an opportunity to continue to lead the way – we have the brain power, the ideas, and people are looking to us for leadership and leaders lead from the front line.

Doug Glanville talked about how we all bring unique tools out of our experience whether it be law enforcement and beyond and would like to request of this Council to write something seconding what Chief Higgins just remarked.

Laura Francis thanked Chief Mello for convening a meeting to address and discuss current events.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Establish a subcommittee to draft Use of Force model policy

Chief Mello gave a brief history of the makeup of the Council. He explained that POST has statutory requirements to review and insure that every agency has and adheres to policy. Chief Mello indicated that he was going to establish a subcommittee to draft a use of force policy. Chief Mello called upon members of the CPCA and members of the public to serve on the subcommittee to draft the said policy.

2. Discussion of Use of Force and Connecticut General Statute Section 7-294d(c)(2), Cancellation or Revocation of Certification

Chief Mello entertained a motion to request the addition of the use of excessive force and bias related offenses to the statute that allows us to decertify. Chief Vernon Riddick made a motion, seconded by Chief Kulhawik. Motion passes.

3. Add to CLESP Standard use of force policy banning of chokeholds/neck restraint

Chief Mello presented and explained two revised versions (A & B) of the CLESP Standards.

Chief Mello entertained a motion to accept amended language found in version B under item "C" that stated "the use of chokehold or another neck restraint may only be used when deadly physical force is authorized" and also to strike the word prone position, neck restraints, or holds with a knee or other object is prohibited.

Chief Riddick made a motion to accept version B amended language of CLESP standards #16 "C" to read as follows:

(C) A prohibition against the intentional use of a chokehold or other method of restraint applied to the neck area of another person, including but not limited to, (1) Arm bar hold, (2) Carotid artery hold, (3) Lateral vascular neck restraint, (4) Neck restraint or hold with a knee or other object is prohibited. The use of a chokehold or neck restraint may only be used when the use of deadly physical force is authorized.

Seconded by Chief Viadero. Motion passes.

4. Add to CLESP Standard: use of force standard and Duty to Intervene and Report Misconduct by a Law Enforcement Officer

Chief Mello discussed adding version B to the language of CLESP Standard #16 a duty to intervene; (H) A requirement that an officer will act to intervene and stop the unreasonable, excessive, or illegal use of force by another police officer; (I) A requirement that officers who have knowledge of excessive, unreasonable, or illegal use of force against a person shall notify a supervisor and submit a written incident report to a supervisor in a timely fashion; and (J) A prohibition against retaliation for any officer that intervenes against excessive use of force, reports misconduct, or cooperates in an internal investigation, with the understanding that these are contained in your use of force policy.

Chief Viadero made a Motion to add version B language to CLESP Standard #16 H, I & J to be included in the CLESP Standards. Seconded by Chief Higgins. Motion passes.

Chief Melanson made a motion to add language found in version B, to CLESP Standard #16 section A&B; "A) A guideline, use of force response matrix or other continuum where an individual/suspect/offender's actions dictate responsive use of force levels;

and B) A requirement that officers deploy de-escalation/calming strategies and/or verbal warnings prior to the use of force when feasible.”

Seconded by Chief Viadero.

Motion passes.

Chief Melanson made a motion to add language found in version B, section G to CLESP Standard #16.

“A requirement that an officer who directly observes a use of force that is unreasonable, excessive or otherwise in violation with the agency’s use of force policy and/or a violation of state or federal statute (illegal), shall contact a supervisor as soon as practicable.”

Seconded by Chief Riddick. Motion passes.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10:37 a.m., Chief Daley moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Chief Viadero.

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,


Barbara Fullenwiley
Administrative Assistant
DESPP - POSTC