

**MINUTES OF THE  
PEACE OFFICER STANDARDS  
AND TRAINING BOARD  
LETA  
BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA  
May 8, 2024**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Jesse Jahner  
Adrian Martinez (joined via teams later)  
Joe Cianni  
Steve Armstrong  
Erik Dietrich  
Roger Hutchinson  
Travis Stefonowicz

**GUESTS**

Josh Nelson  
Zach Reising  
Tommy Ray  
Matt Christensen  
Ethan Rode  
Jordan Schumacher  
Curt Olson  
Jason Anderson  
Eathan Newman  
Frank Senn  
Kelly Leben  
Nathan McLeish  
Jason Ziegler  
Dr. Charlie Knowlton (Teams)

**ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

Pat Helfrich  
Jessica Linder

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Matt Odermann  
Lyn James

**LEGAL COUNSEL**

Lori Mickelson (left after break)  
Megan Carmichael

Chairman Joe Cianni called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. Pat Helfrich took the roll. members Oderman and James were absent. It should be noted that Adrian Martinez appeared through the Teams platform shortly after the meeting started. There were other individuals present as guests online through the Teams platform or call in.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Executive Secretary Helfrich notified board the Michael Hull suspended license pending the outcome of his federal trial. Executive Secretary Helfrich advised Michael Hull was sentenced in Federal court to 78 months. Jesse Jahner made a motion to revoke Hull's ND peace officer's license. Steve Armstrong seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Adverse License Action on George Huff. (Not present)**

NDBCI SA Hiatt investigated an excessive use of force from George Huff against Keith Erlandson, which occurred on March 9, 2023, in Bismarck ND.

Erlandson was seen at CHI St. Alexius and the following was released to SA Hiatt:

- 1) Extensive left periorbital contusion/hematoma extending along the left frontal scalp and left premaxillary soft tissues.**
- 2) Scattered foci of air within the extraconal orbit and periorbital soft tissues, highly suspicious of associated fracture. Questionable nondisplaced fracture of the left medial orbital wall. No significantly displaced fractures.**

George Huff told officer Uhler that he had struck Erlandson with his handcuffs. George Huff was charged with Simple Assault (A Misdemeanor) on September 19, 2023. George Huff plead guilty to an A misdemeanor simple assault, on October 12, 2023.

Jesse Jahner made a motion that Huff violated the code of conduct subsection 4c. Steve Armstrong seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

### **Adverse License Action-Stipulation on James Sickinger**

James Sickinger was investigated by SD DCI for fraudulent gambling in violation of N.D.C.C § 12.1-28-02. Prosecution was declined on James Sickinger and James resigned from BCI. No vote was needed as the stipulation was signed. Chairman Cianni read the stipulation into the record.

### **Psychological Provider**

Dr. Charlie Knowlton appeared via Teams to seek approval to become a psychological provider for ND POST.

Dr. Knowlton informed the Board that she is under a federal umbrella to work in ND. Dr. Knowlton is licensed in Oregon and not in ND.

Chairman Cianni expressed concerns about Dr. Knowlton not being licensed in ND and requested Executive Secretary Helfrich to conduct research on the legality of this.

Decision is tabled for next meeting.

### **Limited Licenses and Waiver Requests**

#### **Eathan Newman-West Fargo PD**

Jason Anderson and Eathan Newman appeared in front of the board requesting a limited license for Eathan. Eathan was arrested in MN for a DUI in 2023. The DUI was expunged.

Eathan answered questions from the board about the circumstances surrounding the arrest.

Jesse Jahner made a motion to grant the limited license. Steve Armstrong seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

#### **Jordan Kellington-Burleigh County**

Sheriff Kelly Leben and Nathan McLeish appeared in front of the board requesting a waiver for Deputy Jordan Kellington. Jordan is in the National Guard and has obligations during the June academy.

The board asked questions from Lt. Martinez about how to proceed with the fact that Jordan will miss part of both academies. Lt. Martinez stated that the portion Jordan would miss could be made up before he leaves.

Steve Armstrong made a motion to grant the waiver for Jordan to attend the fall academy in 2024. Roger Hutchinson seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

#### **Vincent Storing-Benson County**

Sheriff Ethan Rode appeared in front of the Board requesting a waiver for Vincent Storing. Benson County wants to hire Vincent and have him take the FTO portion for Benson County and then in 2025 Vincent would attend the Lake Region Academy.

Executive Secretary Helfrich informed the Board that Benson County won't pay for the academy and that Vincent would be on a limited license from 2024 into 2025 until graduation from Lake Region.

Board decided that Benson must submit Vincent for a limited license and if granted should appear before the Board requesting the waiver.

Zachary Reising-Tioga PD

Chief Josh Nelson and Zachary Reising appeared in front of the board for eligibility of a limited license for Zachary Reising. Reising had a marijuana possession charge in his past.

Zachary Reising answered questions from the board about the circumstances of the charge.

Board decision was that Chief Josh Nelson should complete the application for peace officer license and the pending all the other requirements, he would be eligible to receive a limited license. No vote needed.

Jordan Schumacher-McLean County SO

Lt. Curt Olson and Jordan Schumacher appeared before the board for eligibility of a limited license based on a DUI in 2022.

Jordan Schumacher answered questions from the board.

Board decision was that he is eligible to move forward with the peace officer application.

**It should be noted that Executive Secretary Helfrich advised the board that the agencies were wanting approval before the required testing required to obtain a peace officer license. The board stated that they should not be hearing requests for waivers and limited licenses until the peace officer application has been approved and the requirements met.**

**FUNDING REQUESTS**

**Request**

Red River Valley S.W.A.T. Lt. Matt Christensen requested \$3990 for Snipercraft Basic Sniper Course.

**Motion**

Jesse Jahner made a motion to approve \$3990 and seconded by Roger Hutchinson. All in favor, motion passed.

**Request**

Frank Senn for Police Chiefs Association requested \$16000 for speakers.

**Motion**

Steve Armstrong made a motion to approve \$16000 and seconded by Erik Dietrich. All in favor, motion passed.

### **Request**

Thomas Ray-Cass County requested \$7500 for Fundamental Leadership Principles.

### **Motion**

Erik Dietrich made a motion to approve \$7500 and seconded by Roger Hutchinson. 5 yes and 1 no, motion passed

### **Meeting Minutes**

Minutes were reviewed from the February 7, 2024, regular meeting.

### **Motion**

Chairman Joe Cianni asked if there were any additions or corrections. Hearing none, the Chairman stated the minutes stand approved as distributed.

### **Board Approval for Ratification of Licenses**

Executive Secretary Pat Helfrich advised the board of the limited licenses issued from February 7 to May 2, 2024.

### **Motion**

Roger Hutchinson made a motion to ratify the licenses that had been issued by the POST Board Office. Steve Armstrong seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

### **Financial Report**

Executive Secretary Helfrich previously sent the financial statements and for discussion.

No discussion, financial statements approved as distributed.

### **Anthology Purchase with NDHP**

Executive Secretary Helfrich approached the board about joining the NDHP. The NDHP purchased Anthology/BlackBoard. POST would like to join with them and purchase the additional licenses to make Anthology the software for both LETA and POST. This would eliminate the 2 software programs currently used that are not compatible with each other. This would eliminate the PFN8, 9 and 10's and possibly all the forms. Executive Secretary Helfrich advised that if approved and if the current contract the NDHP have in place, the cost for the POST board would be \$26300 yearly, giving all licensed peace officers access to their records and help eliminate late fees as courses would be sent to officers automatically via email.

Chairman Cianni requested a committee to evaluate the software and get a demonstration of it. Steve Armstrong and Travis Stefonowicz volunteered to be on the committee.

Executive Secretary Helfrich advised the board that the 2023 financial report was completed and that the state is requesting ones for 2021 and 2022. Secretary Helfrich advised that he was having difficulty balancing the financial reports and asked for an audit if he was unable to balance those reports. Chairman Cianni stated that since 2021 and 2022 were under Secretary Stanley, that the board should okay an audit. No dissention from the board on the audit.

### **Items from Members**

Adrian Martinez spoke to board members asking for backing of having the reciprocity course in person and not online anymore. Adrian advised that it was implemented during COVID. Adrian advised that there were complaints of connectivity issues and stated that better scores are obtained on the final exam when attended in person than by online. Board stated they agreed with Adrian Martinez's concerns and stated they would back the decision.

Chairman Cianni requested changing the meeting agenda to where any adverse actions would be slated for a specific time, and they would appear at that time. This would keep the amount of people waiting to be heard shorter as they wouldn't have to sit through items that did not pertain to them.

Chairman Cianni brought up that with all the psychological fitness for duties, that if someone is relieved of duty should they have to come before the board? Should they have to visit a POST approved psychological provider? Should this be added in the administrative rules?

Jesse Jahner spoke to the board about the limitations on reserve officers' hours. Currently the administrative rules say under 109-02-01-04.1 subsection 3, that a reserve officer may not be on duty more than forty hours in any 30-day period. Jesse Jahner stated that during summer events like the state and county fairs, it would use up their hours and leave the agencies without help. Jesse Jahner is requesting the admin rule be changed to 480 per year, which would alleviate the hardship when reserve peace officers are out of hours.

Megan Carmichael stated that Lori would have to be reached in regards to changing the administrative rules.

Executive Secretary Helfrich spoke to the board about changing the fees for the POST board. Fees have been the same for decades and with the rising costs of operating expenses the board should look at raising fees. This would be an administrative rules change and Lori should be contacted.

Chairman Cianni called and adjournment to the meeting at 2:47 PM