



Arizona Peace Officer Standards and Training Board

2643 East University Drive Phoenix, Arizona 85034-6914 Phone (602) 223-2514

MINUTES OF THE MARCH 19, 2025, MEETING OF THE ARIZONA PEACE OFFICER STANDARDS AND TRAINING BOARD PHOENIX, ARIZONA

A public meeting of the Arizona Peace Officer Standards and Training Board was convened on March 19, 2025, at the Arizona Peace Officer Standards and Training Board, located at 2643 E. University Drive, Phoenix, AZ.

Members Present (in person):

Sheriff Mark Dannels, Cochise County Sheriff's Office, Chairman
Detective Yvette Bro, Phoenix Police Department
Detective Benjamin Cook, Pinal County Sheriff's Office
Chief Ken Cost, Mesa Police Department
Colonel Jeff Glover, Arizona Department of Public Safety
Chief Deputy Bill Mundell, representing Attorney General Kris Mayes, Arizona Attorney General's Office

Members Present (via online video/telephone conferencing):

Sheriff Doug Schuster, Mohave County Sheriff's Office
Ms. Leesa B. Weisz, Public Member

Members Absent:

Jail Commander Matthew Figueroa, Coconino County Sheriff's Office
Chief Araceli Juarez, Somerton Police Department
Professor Kevin Robinson, Arizona State University
Mr. Randy Schoch, Public Member
Director Ryan Thornell, Arizona Department of Corrections Rehabilitation & Reentry

Staff in Attendance (in person):

Matt Giordano, Executive Director
Sean Donegan, Deputy Director
Michele Blanco, Compliance Specialist
William Caldwell, Compliance Specialist
Mike Deltenre, Compliance Specialist
Marissa Escandon, Administrative Assistant
Mike Giammarino, Compliance Manager
Arlene Heckel, Compliance Specialist
Brandon Keomaka, ADCRR Compliance Specialist
Mark Post, Compliance Manager
Mike Rodriguez, Training Specialist
Tim Shay, Compliance Specialist
Sandy Sierra, Executive Assistant

Mike Thorley, Compliance Specialist
Dave Toporek, Compliance Specialist
Rick VanKeuren, Training Specialist
Dale Wyman, AZPOST Specialist

Legal Counsel:

Mark Brachtl, Assistant Attorney General
Joe Dylo, Assistant Attorney General
Ben Norris, Independent Legal Advisor

A. Call to Order

Chairman Dannels called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. and asked Colonel Glover to lead everyone in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Introductions, Presentations and Announcements

Matt Giordano, Executive Director

- Roll-call was conducted. Eight Board members are present: six attending in person and two are participating via telephone/video conferencing. Mr. Schoch, Commander Figueroa, Professor Robinson, Chief Juarez and Director Thornell are absent.
- Assistant Attorney General Ben Norris is our Independent Legal Advisor for all final action cases.

C. Executive Director's Report

Matt Giordano, Executive Director

- Over the past year and a half, we have been working diligently on updating our rules. Two weeks ago, we held our final meeting with the Governor's Regulatory Review Council (GRRC), during which they approved all of our proposed changes. Some of these changes will take up to six months to take effect. The most significant change pertains to the pre-employment use of marijuana, which will be implemented sometime in September. As a result, starting in September, we will no longer include these petitions in the consent agenda.
- The second week of the Executive Leadership Program will be held next week.
- The Mesa Police Department hosted the Frontline Leadership class last week and this class was extremely successful.
- We held a NextGen Field Training class last week at AZPOST. This training is extremely beneficial as training, hiring and compliance issues continue to change on a regular basis.
- The Basic Training Unit is conducting Active Assailant Instructor Training this week at a local school.
- We continue to assess new physical fitness standards for the academies. As previously mentioned, we are working to replace the POPAT and will provide the Board with additional information as we gather data and evaluate the associated costs.
- We are in the final month of conducting annual training audits. We have conducted 3,000 audits so far. As to date, we have not had any firearms issues brought to our attention.

D. Consent Agenda

Colonel Glover moved to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Chief Deputy Mundell and carried unanimously.

The following items were approved:

1. Minutes of the Board meeting held on February 19, 2025.
2. Consent Agreements for Voluntary Relinquishment/Denial of Peace Officer Certification. The following individuals, without admitting to any misconduct, request the Board accept their request to permanently relinquish their Arizona peace officer certification:

1. 2024-177	Matthew E. Evanson	Gila River Police Department
2. 2024-200	Mark A. Porter	Graham County Sheriff’s Office
3. 2024-218	Zachary O. Torriente	Gila River Police Department
4. 2025-019	Cody R. McKinney	Jerome Police Department
5. 2025-028	Christopher L. Humphrey Jr.	Quartzite Police Department
6. 2025-048	Gage F. Tucker	Northern AZ University PD

3. Petitions for Waiver pursuant to R13-4-105(C). The Applicant’s only disqualifying conduct is legally consuming marijuana more than six months, but within two years of appointment, in violation of R13-4-105(A)(10):

1. Applicant Christopher Bortness	AZ Department of Public Safety
2. Applicant Matthew Ebuhardt	AZ Department of Public Safety
3. Applicant Chase Keating	AZ Game & Fish Department
4. Applicant Zachary Lunow	AZ Game & Fish Department
5. Applicant Brittany Smith	AZ Game & Fish Department
6. Applicant Matthew Waunch	AZ Game & Fish Department
7. Applicant Kristopher Hansford	Maricopa County Sheriff’s Office
8. Applicant George Castro Leon	Maricopa County Sheriff’s Office
9. Applicant Michael Campobasso	Phoenix Police Department
10. Applicant Alexander Heimbuch	Phoenix Police Department

4. Firearms Range Certification. The following facility was inspected by AZPOST staff and was determined to meet or exceed the current minimum recommendation for an AZPOST approved firearms range:

- Eastern AZ College Law Enforcement Training Academy – Outdoor Firearms Range
2675 N. Bixby Road, Globe, AZ 85635

E. Final Action Cases:

1. 2023-152 – Ryun J. Deming – Clarkdale Police Department
The Board heard oral argument on the Administrative Law Judge’s (ALJ) Decision dated December 19, 2024, from Assistant Attorney General Joe Dylo, attorney for the Arizona Peace Officer Standards and Training Board. Mr. Dylo recommended that the Board adopt the ALJ Decision as to Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law with the modifications proposed by the State in its Response to the ALJ Recommended Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law dated January 23, 2025. Mr. Steven Serbalik, attorney for Mr.

Deming, also addressed the Board. Mr. Serbalik recommended that the Board decline to modify the ALJ Decision and approve it as written. He asked the Board to determine a sanction consistent with the ALJ Decision dated December 19, 2024.

Colonel Glover moved to go into executive session to receive confidential legal advice from the Board's attorney. The motion was seconded by Ms. Weisz and passed unanimously.

The Board entered executive session at 10:35 a.m. and the regular meeting resumed at 11:04 a.m. When the regular meeting resumed, all Board members were still present.

Detective Bro moved to adopt the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law in the December 19, 2024, Administrative Law Judge's Decision, without any modifications. The motion was seconded by Colonel Glover and passed with one nay vote recorded for Ms. Weisz.

Discussion ensued regarding discipline. Ms. Weisz asked about prior staff recommendations as to range of discipline for a case similar to this one. Executive Director Giordano stated the rule violation presented by staff was that this was a post-Garrity lie, and believes that the ALJ Decision reflects that POST met its burden of proof. As this is an unprecedented case, the Board will need to determine an appropriate course of disciplinary action.

After additional discussions and deliberations by the Board, Chief Cost moved to close this case with no action. The motion was seconded by Detective Cook and passed with two nay votes recorded for Ms. Weisz and Sheriff Schuster.

2. 2024-075 – Brian Alvarado – Phoenix Police Department

Detective Bro recused herself from this case. The Board considered comments from Assistant Attorney General Joe Dylo, attorney for the Arizona Peace Officer Standards and Training Board, who presented a brief summary of the proposed consent agreement. Ms. Cassidy Bacon, attorney representing Mr. Alvarado, also addressed the Board. Brian Alvarado and Compliance Specialist Mike Deltenre provided statements to the Board as well. After additional discussion, including follow-up questions, Detective Cook moved to approve the proposed consent agreement, imposing a 6-month suspension of Mr. Alvarado's peace officer certification, beginning March 19, 2025, and ending September 19, 2025. The suspension will exclude the 40 hours of suspension time previously served. The motion was seconded by Colonel Glover and passed unanimously.

3. 2024-179 – Orlando R. Ramirez – Gila River Police Department

The Board considered comments from Assistant Attorney General Joe Dylo, attorney for the Arizona Peace Officer Standards and Training Board, who presented a brief summary of the proposed consent agreement. Mr. Chad Smith, attorney representing Mr. Ramirez, was available to answer any questions. Colonel Glover moved to approve the proposed consent agreement, imposing an 18-month suspension of Mr. Ramirez's peace officer certification, beginning June 3, 2024, and ending December 3, 2025. The motion was seconded by Chief Deputy Mundell and passed unanimously.

4. 2024-181 – Ronnie L. Jaques – Surprise Police Department

The Board considered comments from Assistant Attorney General Mark Brachtel, attorney for the Arizona Peace Officer Standards and Training Board, who presented a brief summary of the proposed consent agreement. Mr. Jaques was not present. Detective Cook moved to approve the proposed consent agreement, imposing a 12-month suspension of Mr. Jaques' peace officer certification, beginning July 9, 2024, and ending July 9, 2025. The motion was seconded by Chief Cost and passed unanimously.

5. 2022-229 – Ricardo L. Garcia – Pima County Sheriff's Department

The Board considered comments from Compliance Specialist Michele Blanco, who presented a brief summary of the case. This is a mandatory revocation case. Colonel Glover moved to revoke Mr. Garcia's peace officer certification. The motion was seconded by Detective Bro and passed unanimously.

6. 2024-207 – Brandon J. Bergen – Pinal County Sheriff's Office

Detective Cook recused himself from this case. The Board considered comments from Compliance Specialist William Caldwell, who presented a brief summary of the case. Mr. Bergen was not present. Chief Cost moved to accept the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law. The motion was seconded by Chief Deputy Mundell and passed unanimously.

Executive Director Giordano presented the staff's recommendation for disciplinary action, which includes temporary denial of peace officer certification.

Chief Cost moved to accept staff's recommendation to temporarily deny peace officer certification to Mr. Bergen for a period of 24 months, beginning August 12, 2024, and ending August 12, 2026, after which he may be eligible to reapply for certified status. The motion was seconded by Chief Deputy Mundell and passed unanimously.

F. New Charging Cases:1. 2024-224 – Jacob F. Keah-Tigh – Navajo Division of Public Safety

The Board considered comments from Compliance Specialist Michele Blanco, who provided a brief summary of the case. Detective Bro moved to initiate proceedings against Mr. Keah-Tigh's peace officer certification. The motion was seconded by Colonel Glover and passed unanimously.

2. 2024-325 – Manuel Abeyta – Phoenix Police Department

Detective Bro recused herself from this case. The Board considered comments from Compliance Specialist Mike Deltenre, who provided a brief summary of the case. Chief Cost moved to initiate proceedings against Mr. Abeyta's peace officer certification. The motion was seconded by Colonel Glover and passed unanimously.

3. 2024-237 – Christian A. Medrano – Phoenix Police Department

Detective Bro recused herself from this case. The Board considered comments from Compliance Specialist Mike Deltenre, who provided a brief summary of the case. Colonel Glover moved to initiate proceedings to deny peace officer certification to Mr. Medrano. The motion was seconded by Chief Cost and passed unanimously.

4. 2024-246 – Joshua A. McCluskey – AZ Department of Public Safety
Colonel Glover recused himself from this case. The Board considered comments from Compliance Specialist Arlene Heckel, who provided a brief summary of the case. Detective Cook moved to initiate proceedings against Mr. McCluskey's peace officer certification. The motion was seconded by Chief Cost and passed unanimously.

G. Future Agenda Items

There are no items to add.

H. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:02 p.m.