

# CENTRAL TEXAS REGIONAL POLICE ACADEMY

## ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

Meeting of: 9:00 AM, Wednesday, September 17, 2008

Building 113, Room 104 (Academy Classroom)

- I. Meeting called to order by Chairman M. Gentry at 9:00AM.  
Members Present: M. Gentry, C. Cox, J. Portman, M. Heintzelman, D. Whitis and Ex-Officio Member Academy Director H. Anderson.  
Also Present, Lt. Eddie Wilson Copperas Cove PD & Chief Deputy Joe Blakely, Coryell County S.O.  
Members Absent: T. Ramthum, J Scharf and Ex-Officio Member CTC Chancellor J. Anderson

II – New Business:

- II – A H. Anderson advised the Board that the TCLEOSE site visit scheduled for the afternoon of 09-17 had been cancelled by the TCLEOSE agent and would have to be rescheduled.
- II – B H. Anderson briefed the Board on the two BPOC classes that graduated in 2008. For the 87<sup>th</sup> Session, 13 attended, 12 graduated, 11 passed the licensing exam on first attempt, 1 failed on all three attempts. The 88<sup>th</sup> Session had 15 attend, 15 graduate, 14 passed on first attempt, 1 failed but passed on second attempt.
- II – C H. Anderson briefed the Board on the 2008 Session of the Extended Basic Peace Officer Course. The class had 24 attend, 23 graduate and, as of 09-18, 18 passed on first attempt, 3 failed, 1 passed on second attempt, and 1 has not tested. Combining all first time attempts gives The Academy a 90% first time pass rate.
- II – D H. Anderson advised the Board that the Academy is in full compliance with all mandated requirements, to include a replacement police vehicle. The Academy also acquired an 11' equipment trailer to transport equipment and supplies to the various off-campus sites used during the BPOC and XBPOC.
- II – E The Board discussed the replacement of two (possibly three) Board Members. Board Members will recruit possible candidates and refer them to the Chairman and the Director. With Temple starting their own academy, it is doubtful that Lt. John Scharf (TPD) will continue as a member.

The by-laws require a 9 member Board. The Board discussed the possibility of reducing the number of Board members.

M. Heintzelman suggested that the Director to research the possibility of having a “window” or “range” for the number of Board Members. The Board unanimously agreed to pursue that research while new Board Members are recruited.

Director Anderson advised that at times it is difficult schedule a meeting, and have a quorum, with the conflicting schedules of the Board Members.

Chairman Gentry suggested that the Board be more active and meet at least three times per year. The Board could meet before or after each class and one strategic meeting between classes.

- II – F Director Anderson briefed the Board on the decision by the Temple Police Department to conduct their own Academy and they would not be teaching in the BPOC after the 89<sup>th</sup> Session.

Director Anderson advised that decision was based on a proposal by Temple College to have TPD trained under TPD's license but at Temple College. Temple College used to operate what used to be called a Reserve Peace Officer Course (under TPD's license), but had to cease that program due to failing to meet TCLEOSE rules and standards. Temple College then began an Alternative Licensing program which also was ceased due to failing to meet TCLEOSE standards.

Chief Smith (TPD) advised the Director that his desire was to run more than one academy a year so that he could process applicants and keep cadets in a class all year. He wanted to be able to recruit, process, hire and train cadets continuously during the year. In other words, be able to send cadets to courses beginning 3 times a year. He did state that he would probably still send cadets to CTRPA when he needed to, but would not be sending instructors after the 89<sup>th</sup> Session. He also stated that TCLEOSE had advised the Department that they must conduct a BPOC every two years if they wanted to keep the license status to teach a BPOC. That is the same thing that Killeen PD advised when they decided to conduct their own four years ago.

The Director advised that he had been in contact with TCLEOSE and was told the TCLEOSE staff, including the Executive Director, has never told anyone of that consequence and there is no standard, rule or statute requiring such.

The Director briefed the Board on the impact of Temple not providing instructors (see attached analysis). Based on historical data, area agencies will have to absorb close to 600 man-hours of sole instructor blocks, lead instructor blocks and assistant instructor blocks.

The Board discussed some of the reasoning used by Killeen and Temple to decide to conduct their own BPOCs. They used different factors including department-specific training and that the regional academy concept did not meet their particular needs.

The Board cited and discussed other factors or issues that could have lead to the two largest cities in the area to conduct their courses.

Area Growth – Chairman Gentry raised the issue that every law enforcement agency that the Academy serves has grown significantly in nearly 40 years since the Academy was licensed, and CTC has not expanded the staff of the Academy to keep pace with the service required by the agencies.

Marketing – D. Whitis raised the issue that he believes that CTC has not sufficiently marketed the Academy to draw other agencies (outside the regular service area) to increase the size of classes and the number of agencies participating. Director Anderson explained that the Academy and the College have specific areas in which they serve, and that from an advertising standpoint, we would only advertise outside that service area for in-service classes. He also advised that the Academy sends out 60+ enrollment packages to area agencies and those agencies outside the service area which have sent cadets in the past.

Support – Chairman Gentry raised the issue that CTC has not supported the Academy enough to keep pace with the growth and training needs and service, as other college and regional academies have, over the years. That lack of support is evidenced by the lack of facilities to conduct all aspects of training, vehicles, training simulators and staff.

The Board then discussed what was going to have to be done to keep the Academy in operation. The Director advised the Board that when the Academy was licensed, the agencies in the Council of Governments committed to provide instructors to keep tuition low due to small "training" budgets. It was a consensus that if the Academy did not meet their needs or became such a burden that sending their

cadets elsewhere (but not to a department-specific academy). Chairman Gentry raised the following three questions to the Board:

- Would the area agencies support and pay an increased tuition to maintain the financial stability of the Academy?
- Would the area agencies support and pay an increased tuition to increase the number of Academy staff to meet the training needs?
- Would the area agencies increase their instructional commitment to fill the voids created by Temple's departure?

The agencies represented responded yes, or they believed the agency administrator would say yes because of the agency's commitment to the Academy. The agencies represented are the agencies that contribute (or have contributed) the most hours of instruction (other than Academy staff, Harker Heights PD, Copperas Cove PD, Coryell County SO, Bell County SO). The only agency within that group of agencies supporting the Academy that was not represented was Lampasas PD.

The Board had a consensus that it was the responsibility of CTC to increase the infrastructure of the Academy to accommodate the training needs. J. Portman asked if contributions could be requested/provided by the counties (County Judges). The Board also had a concern that the efforts made by the agencies, and CTC, were such to sustain the enterprise and if the Academy was sustainable. The Board agreed that a better product is worth the effort and worth paying for.

The Board tasked the Director to analyze, using the analysis attached, to determine the cost savings to CTC (benefit of having agency instructors committed to teach in lieu of a cadre of instructors paid by CTC) and to transmit minutes of the meeting to each member so suggestions could be formulated to construct communications to CTC and other agencies using the Academy.

### III – Old Business:

#### III – A Minimum Reading Comprehension Exam (RCX)

At the last Board meeting the single issue discussed involved the possibility of using the RCX (with a set minimum grade level reading exam) as one of the minimum entry requirements. The Director had been tasked with determining if there was sufficient supporting data to ask the CTC Board of Trustees to establish the RCX with a 10<sup>th</sup> grade reading level as a minimum entry standard.

The Director related that each cadet (hired, sponsored, or attending without affiliation/association with an agency) is required to take the RCX. If the cadet scores less than a 10<sup>th</sup> grade level, the Director counsels with the prospective cadet about the difficulty they may encounter in the course due to the fact that the material required to be taught (including the law) is 12 to 14 year level. Since the RCX was implemented, those who have enrolled, despite their low reading scores, have had mixed results. Some cadets with high reading skills have failed at a greater rate than those with reading scores between 9 and 10.

The Director attributed that to dedication, effort, and study habits of the individual cadet and the inordinate random difficulty of the computer generated licensing exam.

The Director advised the Board that such a minimum enrollment standard may cause a problem with some agencies that do not use a written exam as a qualifier for employment. If such an agency wants to send a current employee (hired to attend or on the payroll in another capacity), the Academy would have to tell the agency that they could not send the cadet until the reading score was at or above the minimum level.

The Director advised the Board that each annual self-assessment, each biannual site visit/evaluation and periodic surveys conducted by TCLEOSE asks whether the Academy uses a RCX, what grade level is used and if the exam and the level established is a prerequisite for enrollment.

The question to the Board was whether they would task the Director to propose the RCX (at a 10<sup>th</sup> grade level or to wait until the data supports such or until TCLEOSE mandates that minimum standard for enrollment.

The motion was made and seconded to wait; the vote recorded was 4 to wait and 1 opposed. The opposing member (D. Whitis) argued during discussion that that minimum requirement would improve the professionalism of the Academy and would be useful in selecting prospective cadets. The Director advised that if an agency wished to use the RCX in their selection/approval process they could pre-test the candidate.

V. The meeting was then adjourned at 11:00AM