

BETST MINUTES

January 31, 2024



**Board of Emergency Telecommunications
Standards & Training
Canton, MS**

Call to Order, Roll Call, Establish Quorum:

Chairman Stan Alford called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

The Director called the roll, and a quorum was present to hold the meeting. The Director introduced and welcomed Director Tony Carleton of MLEOTA as the new Board representative from MLEOTA. He announced that Catherine Bell was present today from the AG's office to serve as the Board Counsel. Alexis Morris of the AG's office will be the new Board Counsel, but was unable to attend today's meeting.

Members Present:

Mr. Stan Alford, MEMS

Mr. Robert G. Bailey, MS Chapter of NENA

Director Tony Carleton, MLEOTA

Mrs. Sheri Hokamp, MS Chapter of APCO

Chief Will Jones, Mississippi Police Chief's Association

Sheriff Mike Lee, Mississippi Sheriff's Association

Sheriff Charlie Sims, MS Law Enforcement Officers Association

Chief Terry Tucker, Mississippi Fire Chief's Association

Hon. Catherine Bell, Board Counsel

Members Not Present:

Mr. Marvin Ratliff, Claiborne Co. (Nuclear Facility)

Mr. Steven Jones, MS Department of Health, EMS Division

Vacant – Fire Academy

Vacant – MJIC

Guests:

Jeny Price – Horn Lake P.D.

Treva Rogers – Grenada Co.

Alta Richardson – Madison P.D.

Director Paul Harkins, Lee Co. 911

Tanya Mayo, Lee Co. 911

Rick Seavey, Instructor

Angie Walker, Simpson Co. 911

Jackie Matthews, Clarke Co. 911

Alyssa Taylor, Gulfport PD

Louis Congleton, Gulfport PD

Tiffany Power, Gulfport PD

The Board Counsel requested that the Chair entertain a motion to approve today’s agenda. The Chair entertained a motion and Mr. Bailey made a motion to approve the agenda, Sheriff Lee seconded the motion, and it was approved without opposition.

Standards and Training Staff:

Mr. Robert D. Davis, Program Specialist Supervisor

Ms. Lydia Edwards, Program Specialist III

Mrs. Marie Fivecoat, Program Specialist III

Mrs. Jennie Sturgis, Program Specialist III

Presentation and Approval of September 1, 2023, Minutes:

The minutes for the September 1, 2023, meeting were emailed to all members. The minutes were reviewed. The Chair entertained a motion. Mr. Alford made a motion to approve the

minutes and a second was received from Mr. Bailey. The minutes were approved without opposition.

OLD BUSINESS:

Presentation for Final Approval of New Course – Leadership Training-Emergency Communications Center, 16 hours, 2 credits: Alta Richardson/Jeny Price-Lydia Edwards-

Ms. Edwards attended the pilot class and presented her findings to the Board. She recommended the class for approval. Director Carleton made a motion to approve, with a second from Mr. Bailey. The course was approved without opposition.

Presentation for Final Approval of New Course – Hazmat Incidents, 8 hours, 1 credit: Alta Richardson/Jeny Price-Marie Fivecoat-

Mrs. Fivecoat attended the pilot class and presented her findings to the Board. She recommended the class for approval with the understanding that the course be taught at fire departments or the fire training academy. Mr. Bailey made a motion to approve, with a second from Chief Tucker. The course was approved without opposition.

Presentation for Final Approval of New Course – Suicide, 16 hours, 2 credits: Alta Richardson/Jeny Price-Jennie Sturgis-

Ms. Sturgis attended the pilot class and presented her findings to the Board. She recommended the class for approval. Sheriff Sims made a motion to approve, with a second from Mr. Alford. The course was approved without opposition.

Presentation for Final Approval of New Course – Never Secure and Always Ready, 8 hours, 1 credit: Jeny Price-Marie Fivecoat-

Mrs. Fivecoat attended the pilot class and presented her findings to the Board. She recommended the class for approval. Mrs. Hokamp made a motion to approve, with a second from Chief Tucker. The course was approved without opposition.

Review Course Tuition:

The Board reviews training costs on a yearly basis. Many instructors have requested that tuition be increased due to the high cost of travel.

After a review of the current rates and a discussion of training costs, Director Carleton made a motion to increase the 8-hour elective tuition by \$20.00 to \$25.00 per day and the 40-hour basic tuition to \$425.00. Mr. Bailey seconded the motion. During discussion, Mrs. Hokamp

stated that she didn't think this was enough of an increase. She made a motion to amend this motion in order to raise the tuition to \$175.00 for an 8-hour course, \$350.00 for a 16-hour course, and \$495.00 for a 40-hour basic course. Chief Jones seconded the motion, and the motion was adopted without opposition.

Any increase in tuition will need to be presented to the DPS Budget Office for approval before any increases can go into place.

Director Paul Harkins reported to the Board that IAED rates have increased, and he would request that the Board reimburse the new rates charged to the agencies that use IAED. Mrs. Hokamp stated that APCO rates were also increasing. A discussion was held concerning in-state tuition and cost as it compares to national vendor tuition and costs. Mr. Alford made a motion to reconsider the previous motion, Director Carleton seconded the motion, it passed without opposition. Discussion continued concerning this issue. It was determined that the rising cost of training was something that had to be addressed. Mr. Alford made a motion to increase the in-state tuition to \$175.00 for an 8-hour course, \$350.00 for a 16-hour course, and \$495.00 for a 40-hour basic course, and to reimburse agencies using the national vendor's courses for the amount charged by the vendors, if vendor rates continue to increase the staff must notify the Board. Mrs. Hokamp seconded the motion, and it passed without opposition. A list of costs will be gathered by the staff and the staff will seek approval from the DPS budget staff. Rate changes will not go into effect until approval by DPS budget and the Board.

NEW BUSINESS:

Presentation by Richard Seavey Sr.:

Instructor Seavey told the Board that the BETST calendar is very important to instructors and agencies. He stated that the course advertisements must be posted in a timely manner. He requested that course postings should be added to the calendar at least 3 months prior to the start of the course. He said that agencies need time to get approval to send students to the classes. Other instructors stated that the courses did need to be posted on the calendar quicker in order for agencies to have time to get the travel to classes approved.

The Director stated that many instructors don't send in their course requests 3 months in advance of the start date, but the staff will strive to place courses on the calendar as soon as they possibly can. The staff will also send the instructor confirmation of the receipt of the course request as proof that the course is approved.

Election of Officers:

Mr. Terry Wages was the vice-chairman. He is now retired. Mr. Alford is ending his first term as chairman. The chairman and vice-chairman are eligible to serve two consecutive terms.

The Chair asked for nominations for chairman. Chief Terry Tucker nominated Mr. Alford for a second term. There were no other nominations. Mrs. Hokamp made a motion to close nominations and elect Mr. Alford as Chairman. Mr. Bailey seconded the motion, the motion passed without opposition. Mr. Alford was elected Chairman.

The Chair asked for nominations for vice-chairman. Director Carleton nominated Sheriff Charlie Sims. There were no other nominations. Mrs. Hokamp made a motion to close nominations and elect Sheriff Sims as Vice- Chairman. Chief Jones seconded the motion, the motion passed without opposition. Sheriff Sims was elected Vice-Chairman.

Director's Report

The Director reported the death of board member, Ken Gunter. Mr. Gunter represented MJIC. He will be missed.

Chief Tucker announced that although he retired as a full-time fire chief, he has been requested to stay on the Board and represent the Fire Chief's Association.

Schedule of Next Meeting Date, Time, and Location:

The next meeting will be announced once scheduled.

Adjournment:

The Chair entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Alford made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Hokamp. There was no opposition. The meeting was adjourned at 11:08 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Director, Office of Standards and Training