



South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy

SOUTH CAROLINA LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, October 22, 2025
1:00 p.m.

A meeting of the South Carolina Law Enforcement Training Council (LETC) was held at the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy on Wednesday, October 22, 2025. This meeting was advertised in accordance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

CALL TO ORDER

Agenda Item 1

Chief Mark Keel, Chair of the Law Enforcement Training Council, called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. Chief Keel called for a roll call of the Council members. The roll was called by Opel Bunn.

Members present for this meeting in-person were Chief Mark Keel, (Chairman), State Law Enforcement Division (SLED); Sheriff Lee Foster (Co-Chair), Newberry County Sheriff's Office; Interim Director Joel Anderson, S.C. Department of Corrections; Director Jake Gadsden, S.C. Department of Probation, Parole, and Pardon Services; Director Robert Woods, S.C. Department of Public Safety; Sheriff Barry Faile, Lancaster County Sheriff's Office; Chief Kevin Cornett, Isle of Palms Police Department; Major Nick Gallam, Aiken County Detention Center; and Chief William Holbrook, Columbia Police Department.

Member present for this meeting via video/conference call was Director Tom Mullikin, S.C. Department of Natural Resources.

Attorney General Alan Wilson, S.C. Attorney General's Office was absent from this meeting, but was represented by proxy, Deputy Attorney General Jeff Young.

Guest attendees present in-person or via video/conference call were JJ Jones, S.C. Law Enforcement Officers Association/S.C. Police Chiefs Association; Sally Foster, S.C. Sheriffs Association; Chief of Staff Mike Oliver, S.C. Department of Public Safety; Mark Gosnell, S.C. Troopers Association; Colonel Chisolm Frampton, S.C. Department of Natural Resources; Chief Kenneth D. Phelps, S.C. Department of Public Safety; Joanna McDuffie, Esquire, Richland County Sheriff's Department; Sergeant Amanda Alexander, Laurens County Sheriff's Office; Marcus Gore, Esquire, S.C. Department of Public Safety; Fred Williams, Esquire, Darlington County Communications Center; Chief William Petty, Chester Police Department; Sheriff Anthony Russell, Hampton County Sheriff's Office; Christopher Cushman, Hampton County Sheriff's Office; Grant McElveen; Chief Patrick Miles, Lake City Police Department; Lieutenant Andrew LeGette, Lake City Police Department; Captain Dion Artis, Fairfield County Detention



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Center; Director Harriet Squirewell, Fairfield County Detention Center; Chief David Lane, Dillon Police Department; and Chief James Parker, Great Falls Police Department.

SC Criminal Justice Academy attendees were Director Jackie Swindler; Opel Bunn, Executive Assistant; James Fennell, General Counsel; Major Lauren Fennell, Accreditation and Standards Manager; Madison Reynolds, Legal Unit; Justin Miller, IT Manager; Jared Lee, IT; Julian Scott, IT; Scott Deckard, Investigator; Lieutenant Mikie Pylilo, Public Information Officer; Major John Yarborough, Facilities Operations Manager; Mike O'Connell, Evaluator; Bob Bianco, Evaluator; and Missy Collins, Certification Manager.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Agenda Item 2

A motion to adopt the agenda was made by Sheriff Faile. Director Woods seconded the motion. Council voted unanimously to adopt the agenda as presented.

APPROVAL FOR MEETING MINUTES

Agenda Item 3

A motion to approve the minutes of the September 10, 2025, meeting was made by Director Woods and seconded by Sheriff Foster. Council voted unanimously to accept the meeting minutes as recorded.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Agenda Item 4

A. Financial Updates

Director Swindler

Fines and fees revenues have increased 5% over the same time last year.

Expenditures are up 6% over first quarter of fiscal year 2025. This is mostly due to the statewide pay increase and step plan increases. Increases in contractual services and supplies and materials were balanced by a drop in fixed charges due to the completion of the camera system project in the prior fiscal year.



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B. Capital Project Update

John Yarborough

North dorm restrooms: Proposed bid opening changed to January 20, 2026. Commencement of construction February 10, 2026. Proposed completion October 18, 2026. All dates are subject to change.

Director Swindler reminded the Council that the Academy will be down about 100 beds during those months with limited availability for advanced classes staying at the Academy. He stated that the Academy will still have plenty of room for all basic classes.

C. General Counsel Report

- Misconduct Cases

Brandon Knotts (2025-CJA-05-07) (Darlington County Communications Center) (Prosecutorial Discretion)

Summary: Allegation of the misrepresentation of employment related information.

On September 4, 2025, the Darlington County Communications Center (Department) provided a notice to the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy stating the Department wished to exercise prosecutorial discretion pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 23-23-150 (B) (2) and declining to prosecute the misconduct allegation **Request for Final Agency Decision.**

The Hearing Officer Recommended that Council:

- A. Order that the contested case file in this matter be closed; and
- B. Order, pursuant to the requirements of S.C. Code Ann. § 23-23-150 (M), that the “Personnel Change in Status Report: Notification of Separation Due to Misconduct” filed by the Darlington County Communications Center in this matter be expunged, and that the certification file of Brandon Knotts be updated in the records of the Criminal Justice Academy to reflect no outstanding allegations of misconduct based on the allegations reported by the Darlington County Communications Center in this matter.

Brandon Knotts was not present at this meeting.

Fred Williams, Esquire was present and spoke on behalf of the Darlington County Communications Center and to answer questions from the Council if applicable.



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After hearing statements from Mr. Williams, Chief Holbrook made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Hearing Officer due to the Darlington County Communications Center's decision to exercise prosecutorial discretion and expunge the records within thirty (30) days. Director Gadsden seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously to expunge the records within thirty (30) days.

Messiah Miles (2024-CJA-12-08) (Chester Police Department)

Summary: Allegation of the dangerous or unsafe practices involving firearms, weapons, or vehicles which indicate either a wilful or wanton disregard for the safety of persons or property.

Allegation of wilfully making false, misleading, incomplete, deceitful, or incorrect statements to a law enforcement officer, a law enforcement agency, or a representative of the agency, except when required by departmental policy or by the laws of this State. **Request for Final Agency Decision.**

The Hearing Officer Recommended that Council:

- A. Issue its final agency decision, pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 37-107 D. finding that the allegation of misconduct filed against Messiah Miles by the Chester Police Department has been proven by the preponderance of evidence; and
- B. Impose a sanction as the Law Enforcement Training Council, in its discretion, deems appropriate pursuant to its authority set forth at S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 37-108 A(1-5)

Messiah Miles was not present at this meeting.

Chief William Petty was present and spoke on behalf of the Chester Police Department and to answer questions from the Council if applicable.

After hearing statements from Chief Petty, Sheriff Faile made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Hearing Officer and to permanently deny Messiah Miles's eligibility for law enforcement certification. Director Anderson seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously to permanently deny Messiah Miles's eligibility for law enforcement certification.



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Mikala Lofton (2024-CJA-08-11) (Hampton County Sheriff's Office)

Summary: Allegation of the misrepresentation of employment related information.

Allegation of wilfully providing false, misleading, incomplete, deceitful, or incorrect information on a document, record, report, or form, except when required by departmental policy or by the laws of this State. **Request for Final Agency Decision.**

The Hearing Officer Recommended that Council:

- A. Issue its final agency decision, pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 37-107 D. finding that the allegation of misconduct filed against Mikala Lofton by the Hampton County Sheriff's Office has been proven by the preponderance of evidence; and
- B. Impose a sanction as the Law Enforcement Training Council, in its discretion, deems appropriate pursuant to its authority set forth at S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 37-108 A(1-5)

Mikala Lofton was not present at this meeting.

Sheriff Anthony Russell was present and spoke on behalf of the Hampton County Sheriff's Office and to answer questions from the Council if applicable.

After hearing statements from Sheriff Russell, Chief Cornett made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Hearing Officer and to permanently deny Mikala Lofton's eligibility for law enforcement certification. Director Woods seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously to permanently deny Mikala Lofton's eligibility for law enforcement certification.

Grant McElveen (2024-CJA-12-05) (Sumter County Sheriff's Office)

Summary: Allegation of wilfully making false, misleading, incomplete, deceitful, or incorrect statements to a law enforcement officer, a law enforcement agency, or a representative of the agency, except when required by departmental policy or by the laws of this State. **Request for Final Agency Decision.**

The Hearing Officer Recommended that Council:

- A. Issue its final agency decision, pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 37-107 D., finding that the allegation of misconduct reported against Grant McElveen by the Sumter County Sheriff's Office has not been proven by preponderance of the evidence; and



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- B. Approve, pursuant to the authority of the Law Enforcement Training Council set for at S.C. Code Ann. § 23-23-150 (G) (1), Grant McElveen's eligibility for certification as a law enforcement officer in the State of South Carolina; and
- C. Expunge within thirty (30) days of the final agency decision in this matter, pursuant to the requirements of S.C. Code Ann. § 23-23-150 (M), all evidence related to the allegations of misconduct filed against Grant McElveen by the Sumter County Sheriff's Office.

Grant McElveen was present at this meeting and spoke on his behalf and to answer questions from the Council if applicable.

There was no representation for the Sumter County Sheriff's Office present at this meeting.

After hearing statements from Mr. McElveen, Director Woods made the motion to accept the recommendation of the Hearing Officer and to expunge the records within thirty (30) days. Sheriff Faile seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously to expunge the records within thirty (30) days.

Brianna Williams (2025-CJA-09-04) (South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice Detention)

Summary: South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice Detention submitted an allegation of misconduct on September 10, 2025, with a separation date of May 21, 2025. The agency indicated that "the delay in submission is due to the Department of Juvenile Justice's policy that makes termination effective retroactively from the date of suspension". **Acceptance Request.**

Jawan Dezhazier (2025-CJA-09-05) (South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice Detention)

Summary: South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice Detention submitted an allegation of misconduct on September 10, 2025, with a separation date of May 27, 2025. The agency indicated that "the delay in submission is due to the Department of Juvenile Justice's policy that makes termination effective retroactively from the date of suspension". **Acceptance Request.**

James Fennell, Esquire spoke on behalf of the S.C. Criminal Justice Academy and to answer questions from Council if applicable.

James Fennell, Esquire addressed the Council and asked to combine and accept both South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) cases: Brianna Williams and Jawan Dezhazier.



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He stated that DJJ backdate all of their dates of separation for the date of suspension while they were doing their investigation and as a result every single one falls outside the 30 days. He asked the Council to accept both cases as extenuating circumstance.

Major Gallam made a motion to accept the late allegations of misconduct submitted by the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice. Director Gadsden seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously to accept the late allegations of misconduct submitted by the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice. ***Please note that one vote was recorded for both cases.***

Stephanie Lawson (2025-CJA-09-26) (Inman Police Department)

Summary: Inman Police Department submitted an allegation of misconduct on September 30, 2025, with a separation date of June 23, 2025. The agency indicated that they had issues with their IT system and did not see that the previous submission was unable to be processed. Upon notice from the Academy, the separation was resubmitted. **Acceptance Request.**

James Fennell, Esquire spoke on behalf of the S.C. Criminal Justice Academy and to answer questions from Council if applicable.

After hearing statements from Mr. Fennell, Sheriff Faile made a motion to accept the late allegation of misconduct submitted by the Inman Police Department. Sheriff Foster seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously to accept the late allegation of misconduct submitted by the Inman Police Department.

Non-Compliance Issues

Lake City Police Department

Lake City Police Department was notified of their non-compliance with the minimum standards under SC Code Ann. §23-23-150(B)(2), SC Code Reg. 37-103, and LETC Order 2020-LETC-005 on August 27, 2025. The agency failed to prosecute allegations of misconduct reported to the Academy by failing to appear at the Contested Case Hearing for Marshanda Gregory (2024-CJA-10-08) scheduled for May 14, 2025.

SCCJA is seeking civil penalties for the agency's non-compliance with SC Code Ann. §23-23-150(B)(2), SC Code Reg. 37-103, and LETC Order 2020-LETC-005.

James Fennell, Esquire spoke on behalf of the S.C. Criminal Justice Academy and to answer questions from Council if applicable.



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Chief Patrick Miles was present and spoke on behalf of the Lake City Police Department and to answer questions from Council if applicable.

After hearing statements from both parties, Chief Cornett made a motion to impose a civil penalty in the amount of \$1,000.00 for non-compliance on the Lake City Police Department. Director Woods seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously to impose a civil penalty in the amount of \$1,000.00 for non-compliance on the on the Lake City Police Department.

Fairfield County Detention Center

Fairfield County Detention Center was notified of their non-compliance with the minimum standards under SC Code Ann. §23-23-60(C)(3), SC Code Ann. §23-23-40, and SC Code Reg. 37-022(A) on August 15, 2025.

The agency was noncompliant with SC Code Ann. §23-23-60(C)(3) as they allowed 6 officers' certification to expire before recertification was requested. In addition, two officers' certifications were set to expire within 45 days, and a Mandatory Retraining Notification was not received.

In addition, the agency was non-compliant with SC Code Ann. §23-23-40, and SC Code Reg. 37-022(A) in the certification requirements and late submission of a separation. The agency did not certify an individual within one year of employment and after multiple email notifications, the agency submitted a separation in August of 2025 indicating a separation date of September 1, 2024.

Finally, the agency failed to submit their roster to CJA upon request. A second request was sent to the agency and the roster was received. Upon review of their roster, there were nine discrepancies. Eight officers were shown in Acadis records but were not located on the agency roster. One individual listed on the agency roster had no documentation of being employed by the agency. After a request for clarification, the agency failed to provide a response.

SCCJA is seeking civil penalties for the agency's non-compliance with §23-23-60(C)(3), SC Code Ann. §23-23-40, and SC Code Reg. 37-022(A).

James Fennell, Esquire spoke on behalf of the S.C. Criminal Justice Academy and to answer questions from Council if applicable.

Captain Dion Artis and Director Harriet Squirewell were present and spoke on behalf of the Fairfield County Detention Center and to answer questions from Council if applicable.



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Scott Deckard, Investigator spoke on behalf of the S.C. Criminal Justice Academy and to answer questions from Council if applicable.

After hearing statements from all parties, Director Woods made a motion to impose a civil penalty in the amount of \$55,000.00 for non-compliance, suspend the remaining \$1,016,770.00 fine based on the Fairfield County Detention Center successful completion of two (2) years of probation. He further stated that if they maintain compliance then the fine would be suspended, if not then the full fine in the amount of \$1,016,770.00 would be imposed.

After the motion was made, Major Gallam added quarterly audit review from the Academy.

Director Woods amended his motion to impose a civil penalty in the amount of \$55,000.00 in lieu of the \$1,071,770.00 for non-compliance and that the Fairfield County Detention Center be placed on probation for two (2) years, to include adding quarterly audit review from the Academy and required Captain Dion Artis to attend and successfully complete the Training Manager Development Class. If Fairfield County Detention Center is found to be in compliance during the probationary period with no violations of non-compliance, then the remaining civil penalty in the amount of \$1,016,770.00 will be suspended. If Fairfield County Detention Center is found to be in non-compliance during the probationary period, then the remaining civil penalty in the amount of \$1,016,770.00 will be imposed. Major Gallam seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously to impose a civil penalty in the amount of \$55,000.00 and that the Fairfield County Detention Center be placed on probation for two (2) years, quarterly audit review from the Academy and required Captain Dion Artis to attend and complete the Training Manager Development Class. If Fairfield County Detention Center is found to be in compliance during the probationary period with no violations of non-compliance, then the remaining civil penalty in the amount of \$1,016,770.00 will be suspended. If Fairfield County Detention Center is found to be in non-compliance during the probationary period, then the remaining civil penalty in the amount of \$1,016,770.00 will be imposed. ***Please note that Director Mullikin left the meeting and did not vote in this case.***

Dillon Police Department

Dillon Police Department was notified of their non-compliance with the minimum standards under SC Code Ann. §23-23-85 on September 15, 2025. The agency was non-compliant with their Early Warning System policy and required proofs for 6 areas (Hiring/Termination, Early Warning System, Vehicle Pursuits, Duty to Intervene, Post-Academy Training, and IA/Citizen Complaints). The agency submitted their Early Warning System policy amendments and were given applied discretion in 3 areas, following satisfactorily improvements, within the given timeframe. The agency remained non-compliant in 3 areas.



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SCCJA is seeking civil penalties for the agency's non-compliance with SC Code Ann. §23-23-85.

James Fennell, Esquire spoke on behalf of the S.C. Criminal Justice Academy and to answer questions from Council if applicable.

Chief David Lane was present and spoke on behalf of the Dillon Police Department and to answer questions from Council if applicable.

Mike O'Connell, Evaluator spoke on behalf of the S.C. Criminal Justice Academy and to answer questions from Council if applicable.

After hearing statements from all parties, Sheriff Foster made a motion to impose a civil penalty in the amount of \$11,285.00 for non-compliance and that the Dillon Police Department be placed on probation for two (2) years and quarterly audit review from the Academy. The remaining civil penalty in the amount of \$22,570.00 will be suspended, if Dillon Police Department is found to be in compliance during the probationary period with no violations of non-compliance. If Dillon Police Department is found to be in non-compliance during the probationary period, then the remaining civil penalty in the amount of \$22,570.00 will be imposed. Director Anderson seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously that the Dillon Police Department be placed on probation for two (2) years and quarterly audit review from the Academy. The remaining civil penalty in the amount of \$22,570.00 will be suspended, if Dillon Police Department is found to be in compliance during the probationary period with no violations of non-compliance. If Dillon Police Department is found to be in non-compliance during the probationary period, then the remaining civil penalty in the amount of \$22,570.00 will be imposed.

Great Falls Police Department

Great Falls Police Department was notified of their non-compliance with the minimum standards under SC Code Ann. §23-23-85 on August 15, 2025. The agency was unable to provide proofs for their Body Worn Camera policy for the years 2023 and 2024.

SCCJA is seeking civil penalties for the agency's non-compliance with SC Code Ann. §23-23-85.

James Fennell, Esquire spoke on behalf of the S.C. Criminal Justice Academy and to answer questions from Council if applicable.



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Chief James Parker was present and spoke on behalf of the Great Falls Police Department and to answer questions from Council if applicable.

Mike O'Connell, Evaluator spoke on behalf of the S.C. Criminal Justice Academy and to answer questions from Council if applicable.

After hearing statements from all parties, Sheriff Foster made a motion to impose a civil penalty in the amount of \$9,455.00 for non-compliance and that the Great Falls Police Department be placed on probation for two (2) years and quarterly audit review from the Academy. The remaining civil penalty in the amount of \$52,545.00 will be suspended, if Great Falls Police Department is found to be in compliance during the probationary period with no violations of non-compliance. If Great Falls Police Department is found to be in non-compliance during the probationary period, then the civil penalty in the amount of \$52,545.00 will be imposed. Chief Holbrook seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously to impose a civil penalty in the amount of \$9,455.00 for non-compliance and that the Great Falls Police Department be placed on probation for two (2) years and quarterly audit review from the Academy. The remaining civil penalty in the amount of \$52,545.00 will be suspended, if Great Falls Police Department is found to be in compliance during the probationary period with no violations of non-compliance. If Great Falls Police Department is found to be in non-compliance during the probationary period, then the remaining civil penalty in the amount of \$52,545.00 will be imposed.

D. Director's Comments

Director Swindler

Director Swindler gave updates regarding vacant and filled Academy positions since the last quarter.

Director Swindler asked the Council to please review the proposed dates for 2026 LETC meetings and let the Academy know if there were any schedule conflicts.

Lastly, Director Swindler asked the Council to review the K9 Committee's recommendations and complete the survey and make any suggestions by Friday, November 14, 2025. He asked the Council if they could put on the agenda for the November meeting to make a final decision as to the recommendation.

Chief Keel added that the Council can have a good discussion and if there are any issues, they could talk more about the proposed recommendations at another meeting, but wanted everyone to have an opportunity to speak out before a decision is made.



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OLD BUSINESS

Agenda Item 5

There was no unfinished business to discuss.

NEW BUSINESS

Agenda Item 6

There was no new business to discuss.

CLOSING REMARKS/AJOURNMENT

Agenda Item 7

Chief Keel inquired whether there were any more questions or comments from Council. When there were no more remarks or comments, Sheriff Foster made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Major Gallam seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Opel C. Bunn

Opel C. Bunn