

**COMMITTEE ON PROBATION EDUCATION
NOVEMBER 25, 2008 MEETING MINUTES**

Present	Absent	Staff
Tim Hardy, Chair	Chuck Moter	Marie Holck
Todd Zweig, Vice Chair	Hon. John N. Nelson	Chad Kewish
Margie Brakefield	Robyn Austin	Sixto Valdivia
Rene Baca		Krista Chapman
Scott Mabery		Kensley Gonzales
Hon. Stephen McCarville		Chad Campbell
Diane McGinnis		Cathy Lowe
Kate Weiby		Barbara Ortolano
Lee Grant Phillips, II		
Tivo Romero		
Kathy Waters		
Rob Lubitz		

I. Welcome

Tim Hardy called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m. Each member introduced themselves, including three members who joined the meeting via conference call. Ellen Kirschbaum joined the meeting as a guest speaker.

II. Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Diane McGinnis and seconded by Tivo Romero to approve the minutes from the August 19, 2008 and the September 30, 2008 meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Strategic Planning: Information provided by Cathy Lowe

Cathy explained that the planning process had somewhat shifted from “Strategic Planning” to “Fast Track Planning” due to the current budget situation and circumstances surrounding frozen staff positions. The planning process at this point is focused more on

the short term, 2009-2010, rather than the long term. She then reviewed what was discussed at the last meeting.

What Works?

- Probation Officer Academy
- Adult and Juvenile Services working together more and more
- DT and FT
- FSD (because of mobility)
- IPS
- Detention Academies

What Needs to Be Added?

- Mid level training for supervisors
- More online training and satellite broadcasts available
- Explore national programs for training
- Employee focused management training (all levels)
- Executive level training with a global emphasis
- Training for court staff at county level (customer service and specific job duties)

Diane McGinnis and Kathy Waters each added additional information and explanations on why certain programs would be more useful than others and to whom the information would be directed. Cathy said that executive level training is what the AOC is currently working on with the National Center. The AOC, in a seven state sponsorship, is working with the National Center to develop four courses a year (for a total of 12 courses) which the AOC will ultimately own. Cathy then addressed the topic of customer service and asked how it could be seen more as hard skills training rather than soft skills training.

Diane explained that customer service is communications based and is very important in conflict management and deflection. Cathy agreed, then asked the group to identify the goals that COPE would recommend to COJET for 2009-2010. She asked for three or four ideas along with the methods the committee would use to accomplish those goals. Kathy asked if there were any training ideas that were universal so the committee could train as many judicial staff as possible. She said training on more of a universal level, such as some form of communications training, would allow more court staff access to the training since it would be applicable to so many. Judge McCarville suggested that the training be offered during the annual judicial staff conference, since most counties keep only a skeleton staff that week anyway. There would not be a disruption in service at a later date when staff had to leave again for training. Diane suggested disseminating training information online to make it more widely available to prospective participants. so class information would be more widely available. Tim Hardy believed that better coordinated distance learning opportunities would be beneficial to the entire state. He feels sometimes that opportunities are lost because of travel issues or because class information is not easily accessible. He even suggested, when the technology becomes available, having some COPE meetings via web camera instead of always in person.

Cathy then refocused the meeting on the specific goals. She reminded members that Detention training had not yet been discussed and asked if members thought it should be addressed. Diane agreed, but said it is sometimes difficult to conduct training because of officers' varying schedules. Tim shared a training opportunity that his department created simply by exploring innovative and alternative methods of training. Yuma County Juvenile Probation sent selected probation officers to Detention Officer Training

so that they could familiarize themselves with detention duties, practices, and ideas. He stressed that if counties “think outside the box” there are training opportunities available for little to no cost.

Cathy then asked the committee if they would rather define methods of accomplishing the goals today, or wait until a later date when more information concerning resources and budgets would be available. The committee agreed that it would be best to wait and use the time to think of additional ways in which the committee could reach its decided goals. The goals were:

- Communication Skills (internal and external)
- Coordinating Training (include distance learning)
- Identify & utilize existing training
- Project Management Training
- Additional Detention Training

IV. Faculty and Instructor Qualification Policy: Information provided by Barbara Ortolano

Barbara began by explaining some changes she would like to propose to the current Instructor Qualification Policy. The first proposed amendment would be to section 4, item B5 which would state that prior to application, the officer must be current in CPR and First Aid, and submit those materials with the application. The second proposed amendment would be to section 5-A on page four and would mandate that officers submit copies of CPR and First Aid cards with their applications. Barbara added that the only other acceptable proof instead of a card is either a class roster with the person’s name on it or verifying with the instructor that the person took the class. The third proposed

amendment would be to section 7, item C, which would require instructors to submit quarterly reports to the Education Safety specialist each quarter.

Barbara told the committee members that the Instructor policy has a revocation process, but not a suspension process. A suspension process is necessary so that if an officer's CPR or First Aid certification expires, or they have not taught within the past six months, the AOC could suspend them instead of revoking instructor status. Tim called attention to page 4, section 5, letters B, C, and D, which was an additional area of proposed change concerning who initially receives the instructor application. Barbara explained that the proposed change will simply reflect what is already being done procedurally.

Rob questioned why a "suspended" instructor would only be reinstated after teaching a class. He believed that being taught by a "suspended" instructor would invalidate the training that participants received. Barbara responded that the "suspended" instructor would actually be teaching under the direction of a lead instructor so there was no cause for alarm. Diane questioned whether the rule requiring instructors to teach every six months needed to be changed because current hiring trends have been reduced due to budget cuts. Barbara strongly felt that any lapse greater than six months would be detrimental to the Officer Safety program and to the instructor's teaching abilities. Cathy asked if it was realistic to expect that all instructors teach every six months. Marie and Barbara both agreed that it was reasonable and not difficult to find an instructional opportunity. Marie said the overall compliance rate was superb and that instructors are normally in compliance. Rob and Diane both agreed that the term "suspension" may sound harsh and a good alternative term could be "lapse in credentials." Diane also

recommended that the word “assisting” replace “teaching” in the policy area regarding suspended instructors teaching a class in order to be reinstated.

Todd Zweig asked about the revocation process regarding disciplinary action under section 5, number 4. He asked if a chief or director was required to notify the AOC if an instructor had received disciplinary action from his or her department. Marie explained that it was at the chief or director’s discretion whether or not to contact the AOC regarding disciplinary action.

Barbara asked the committee how they wanted the policy to read concerning suspensions. Diane cautioned that since instructors were technically volunteers, a certain amount of courtesy was needed. The committee discussed different ways of wording the policy. Diane recommended adding “or verification or certification” to page four in the policy after it says “Copies of current First Aid and CPR cards.” Tim asked for the policy revisions to be made, then the committee would review the revised policy and vote at the next meeting.

V. Handle with Care/ Detention Defensive Tactics: Information provided by Tim Hardy and Ellen Kirschbaum

Tim explained that he and Marie had been discussing “Handle with Care” for a few months. Handle with Care is a course that is designed to educate detention officers on ways to safely deal with juveniles if a confrontation escalates physically. He feels the committee needs to be aware of this program because it can increase the versatility of probation officers. If a probation officer is used in a Detention setting, due to staff shortage for example, the officer will be familiar with practices modeling Handle with

Care. Ellen explained that the program, founded in 1984, is now nationally recognized and it is federally recognized as an approved vendor. The main issue is that the program is very costly to JJSD and, due to impending budget cuts, may not be able to fund the training any longer. Ellen wondered if counties would be able to pay for the training should that circumstance occur. Another concern she expressed was whether Probation and Detention could be on the same page while training since they do have such different approaches. She suggested that the AOC and counties, in a combined effort, begin developing a single curriculum so they are no longer dependent upon an outside vendor. This would allow more control to make changes to the curriculum as well as how often and when trainings are offered. She and Tim proposed that COPE explore and develop its own curriculum that is consistent with Probation and Detention, with the focus on communication. Scott stated that he didn't see a need for consistency between Detention and Probation because they each use such different tactics at different times. He did, however, agree that Probation Officers should be trained on the basics of Handle with Care if they are going to be working in a detention setting, such as the circumstance that Tim explained earlier in the meeting. Marie stated that the current certification is valid through October 2009, so if the committee was interested in pursuing the idea, the new curriculum would have to be in place by that time. Todd asked if there were any drawbacks to bringing the training in house. Ellen responded that there weren't many drawbacks, if any, when one figures the cost, control of the training and scheduling, and control over the curriculum. Marie reminded the committee that the Handle with Care curriculum is copyrighted, so research would be needed to develop a new curriculum that is tailored specifically to AOC and Arizona Counties. Tim suggested that this idea be

passed to the Detention subcommittee for approval. Marie agreed and asked that the Officer Safety Specialists, Barbara Ortolano and Kevin Jeffries, attend the meeting as well. The committee agreed to pursue the idea contingent upon the recommendations from the Detention subcommittee.

VI. Prison Rape Elimination Act Curriculum (PREA): Information provided by Chad Kewish and Krista Chapman

Chad began by explaining that the Detention Subcommittee is exploring the option of adding the PREA lesson plan, or an abridged version, to the Detention Academy. He then asked Krista to discuss the approval of the lesson plan by the Curriculum subcommittee. Krista briefed the committee by stating the Curriculum subcommittee met on November 6 to review and approve the PREA lesson plan. All members were able to review it prior to the meeting, along with the manual section and PowerPoint presentation so they could gain the best perspective on all the materials. The lesson plan was approved with minor changes, one of which was to add a pre and post test to gauge learning, and is ready for COPE approval. Diane added that the curriculum did not need to be changed, but reminded the committee that in a juvenile setting, a professional boundary break extends not only to the youth, but to the youths' parents, counselor, or any other person coming in contact with that youth. Diane moved to adopt the Prison Rape Elimination Act lesson plan; Judge McCarville seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Curriculum Subcommittee Report: Information provided by Todd Zweig

Todd stated that the subcommittee had not met since January 2007. The PREA curriculum was approved at the November 6 meeting. The subcommittee is currently in need of three members and asked that any interested parties send applications to either Marie or Tim. Currently, there is not another meeting scheduled, however, both Todd and Krista foresee the subcommittee being busy due to new curriculum being generated and old curriculum being updated. Diane McGinnis asked for a current list of members which Krista read.

VIII. Detention Subcommittee Report: Information provided by Chad Kewish

Chad reported that the subcommittee had not met since the last COPE meeting, but they are scheduled to meet next week. Four new members have been added:

Joelene Hefner- Yuma County

Fernando Matiella- Santa Cruz County

Elaine Grissom- Mohave County

Julie Ramirez- Coconino County

The subcommittee is currently looking at revisions of the Behavior Management curriculum. They have been working on, and are now wrapping up strategic planning, which they can finish completely upon receipt of the results from the Detention Standards Task Force.

IX. Trainer Excellence Awards: Information provided by Sixto Valdivia

Sixto began by explaining that for the past two years, the committee has looked for ways to make the Trainer Excellence nomination process more unbiased and fair. He

explained the current Trainer Excellence process, then presented his new proposal to the committee. He prepared a revised, more in depth form which asked better, more unbiased questions. He also created another form which he proposed be sent to a predetermined set of three committee members. The additional form included a scoring matrix and allows the reviewers to score as fairly as possible. Tim was very appreciative to Sixto for his efforts and agreed that this was the fairest way to make choices for the trainer excellence awards. Diane made a motion to adopt the proposed screening process as the first level of screening and the top three candidates from this process be moved forward to COPE for final selection; Margie Brakefield seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

X. Officer Safety Report: Information provided by Barbara Ortolano

- Barbara reviewed for the committee some of the projects she has been working on in the past year since taking over the Officer Safety position. These projects range from visiting every county in the state to determine officer safety needs, to updating officer files, to revising the firearms manual and PowerPoints. She explained that she is also working on updating the handcuffing portion of the DT manual because she determined from her county visits that the current technique is either not being used or is being modified by individual officers.
- Defensive Tactics- Three academies were since the last COPE meeting, 38 participants attended, and all passed both the practical and written exam portions. There is currently a special DT class being held for seven Maricopa Juvenile Officers who, due to budget cuts, are being moved from the office setting to the field setting after a number of years.

- Firearms Training- The last train the trainer was held the last week of September. Since the last COPE meeting, four academies have been held with 56 officers attending. One officer failed the written portion, but passed the retest. Two officers failed the practical exam (one on day shooting, one on night shooting), but both will be remediated and allowed to retest. The next academy is scheduled for the first week of December in Pima County.

XI. Certification Update: Information provided by Krista Chapman

The last academy was October 20-31st; 46 participants attended. Because room was available, two tribal court officers and two municipal officers attended. Of the four, two did not pass the exam, but were offered the chance to come back and take it again. Of the remaining 42, four failed and have been assigned a staff trainer for tutoring. Krista was very pleased with the class demeanor and noted that there were many brand new officers in the class. Kathy Waters added that she was very appreciative when members of her staff were allowed to attend the academy because it is so instrumental in teaching them about the Arizona Probation system.

XII. Detention Academy Update: Information provided by Chad Kewish

Chad asked if any committee members would object to combining the Detention Academy report with the Detention subcommittee report for future COPE meetings because they do go hand in hand. The next Detention Academy begins next week in Phoenix and 16 officers are scheduled to attend.

After the last Detention Academy, the subcommittee realized that most participants were from outside the region and very few officers attended from within the region. The

Detention subcommittee wanted to send a survey to all departments to gain input on a few key items such as the effectiveness of the academy, what trainings each department is setting up in house, and any difficulties in the registration process. The subcommittee wanted to first gain approval from COPE before sending out the survey. The COPE members agreed that the survey was a good idea and encouraged the subcommittee to proceed.

XIII. Testing Time Limits: Information provided by Marie Holck

Marie quickly reviewed the reasons why testing time limits are being proposed. Marie spoke with the testing consultant prior to the meeting and he agreed that the test should not take six hours. If students were using that amount of time, their decision making skills may be weak and in turn, could present a liability for their department. His recommendation was to take the average amount of time used by most students and add one hour. Using this formula, the recommended time limit was four hours. Marie said that the time limit would not apply to officers with learning disabilities or testing issues. Todd Zweig asked how many officers normally take longer than four hours. Marie responded that the average is three officers. Kathy Waters made a motion to limit the testing time to four hours, based on the testing consultant's recommendation. Margie seconded the motion. Judge McCarville added that the wording should be changed to "the committee has the discretion to set testing time limits" so that it is not so specific and could be applied to all tests administered under COPE. The motion passed unanimously with Judge McCarville's amendment.

XIV. FSD Update: Information provided by Sixto Valdivia

The last FSD was August 20-22nd in Yavapai County and had 24 participants. Sixto was very pleased with the class and impressed with their work ethic and presentations. The next FSD will be held in Yuma County December 9-11th and will have 17 participants. Due to the Certification cancellation, another FSD is scheduled for January 27-29, 2009 in Phoenix.

XV. New Business: Information provided by Marie Holck

Marie thanked Tim Hardy for his service to the COPE committee for the past 10 years. Tim will be leaving the committee at the end of his term to chair the COP committee. In turn, Tim thanked Marie for her service to the committee since she will be retiring in January.

XVI. Call to the Public: Tim Hardy

None

XVII. Adjourn: Tim Hardy

The meeting adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kensley Gonzales