

MINUTES OF ARKANSAS STATE POLICE COMMISSION MEETING

November 14, 2024

The Arkansas State Police Commission met on Thursday, November 14, 2024, at the Arkansas State Police Headquarters, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Commission Chairman Teague called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Commissioner Jeffery Teague, Chairman  
Commissioner Jim Hinkle, Secretary  
Commissioner Ken Reeves  
Commissioner Neff Basore  
Commissioner Mike Akin  
Commissioner Steve Edwards

MEMBER ABSENT:

Commissioner John Allison, Vice-Chairman

STATE POLICE PERSONNEL PRESENT:

Colonel Mike Hagar	Lt. Colonel Mike Kennedy
Lt. Colonel Jason Aaron	Major Stacie Rhoads
Major Jeff Drew	Major Roby Rhoads
Major Mike Moyer	Major Ron Casey
Captain Randall Murphy	Sergeant Jason Martin
Captain Scott Joe	Sherry Woods
Captain Larry Joe Carter	Sergeant Greg Dycus
Jenna Castleberry	Susan Tedford
Dan Mack	Kalika Rogers
Shelly Cantrell	Bridget White
Caitlin Teague	Captain Brad Lann
Donna Cox	Captain Jeff Plouch
Sergeant Matt Foster	Captain Dustin Morgan
Lieutenant Jay McAllister	Buster Lackey
Corporal Chris Garner	Captain Jeff Sheeler
Captain Chris Goodman	Jonathan Nettles
Nick Genty	Cindy Murphy
Donna Humphries	Philip Warriner

OTHERS PRESENT:

Hugh Finkelstein, DPS	Emily Hamilton, ASPF
Sarah DeBusk-Griffith, AG's Office	Elizabeth Anderson, ASPF
Ford Overton, ASPF	Alex Flemister, ASPF

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Commission Chairman Teague led the pledge of allegiance.

NOTIFICATION OF MEDIA:

The media was notified of this meeting on November 4, 2024.

MINUTES:

Commission Chairman Teague stated Commissioners you have before you the minutes of October 10 monthly meeting, what is your pleasure? Commissioner Reeves stated I make a motion to approve the minutes of the regular monthly commission meeting. Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. Commission Chairman Teague stated we have a motion and a second, all in favor, I, any opposed and the motion passed.

Commission Chairman Teague stated that brings us to our division reports and first is our Fiscal Report.

Fiscal Section – Jenna Castleberry

Jenna Castleberry stated good morning, Colonel, Mr. Chair, Commissioners, we are a 1/3 of the way through the year and everything looks good on revenue and expenditures. We had our budget hearing for Fiscal Years 26 and 27, that was on the 12<sup>th</sup>, everything went well there, and we received executive recommendation.

Commission Chairman Teague stated next is Administrative Services, Major Roby Rhoads.

Administrative Services – Major Roby Rhoads

Major Roby Rhoads stated Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, and Colonel Hagar good morning, the Administrative Services report for last month includes the following transactions. For the uniformed noncommissioned we had four new hires, four promotions, one retirement, one voluntary resignation, and one transfer. The commissioned transactions included 47 new hires, we hired 53 recruits, but only 47 were new to the system, five promotions, one retirement, ten voluntary resignations, and three transfers. We currently have six military deployments.

Major Roby Rhoads stated we still have 39 recruits remaining in Troop School and they are at the range this week, so it is their first fun stuff that they get to do.

Major Roby Rhoads stated the Wellness Unit last month saw 75 individuals and did six follow-up visits. Dr. Lackey processed seven Act 537 patients, and the nurse practitioner saw 72 patients.

Major Roby Rhoads stated for the ASP Health Plan, the October claims were \$1,866,515.00, that is higher than last month but some of that was a carryover from last month because of some billing issues with Blue Cross and Delta Dental. Our ending fund balance was \$13,756,497.00.

Commission Chairman Teague asked when will the current Troop School end? Major Roby Rhoads stated March, I don't remember the date.

Commission Chairman Teague stated Crimes Against Children, Major Drew.

Major Jeff Drew stated good morning, Colonel, Chair, and Commissioners, the CACD Hotline received 6,736 calls in October, with 2,955 of those being accepted for investigation. Major Drew stated there were 14 child deaths reported with four investigated, nine assessed, and one documented. Major Drew stated our investigations accepted 616 cases and 567 cases were closed, with 165 with a true finding giving us a substantiation rate of 29%.

Commission Chairman Teague stated Highway Patrol, Major Casey.

Major Ron Casey stated good morning, Colonel, Chairman, Commissioners on the Highway Patrol Division report for the month of October, troopers arrested 1,874 persons with 2,851 criminal arrests, 290 DWI and six DUI arrests. They wrote a total of 9,125 citations for hazardous arrests, physically arrested 616 people and wrote 20,565 citations. I never have included this in the report, but I think it is good thing to start including that troopers have 3,147 assist to motorists, which shows that we do more than just write speeding tickets and work crashes. Pursuits were up to 69, way above what we had last month. We investigated 1,591 crashes, 31 of those being fatalities, which on this report, is the only reduction that we had from last month. Eighteen stolen vehicles recovered at an estimated value of \$318,000.00. We had 16 aircraft missions, and 10 training flights, our Cessna is back in service, so they did a lot of training flights in the Cessna. Troopers drove a total of 965,701 miles. We had 31,272 calls for service into our dispatch centers. We had 18,910 DL/CDL tests given. Everything is up quite a bit from last month other than fatality crash investigations. Troopers confiscated 774 pounds of marijuana, 1.07 pounds of methamphetamine, 13 pounds of cocaine, 961 pills that were confiscated, ½ pound of other drugs and troopers confiscated \$17,736.00 in drug seizure money.

Commissioner Hinkle stated I really enjoy seeing the stuff that Cindy is sending us now, especially on assists to motorists, complimentary things. I know you are probably on the same page here or more so maybe than I, but I wish we had a better way of informing the public on some of the outstanding things that our troopers are able to do in assisting people out there, but I don't have the answer. I wish you people would start thinking about how we could better get that information out to the general public, it is a great service, and I sincerely thank your people, Major, for what they are doing.

Colonel Hagar stated the Communications Team came up with the idea that along with our "Your Arkansas State Police Campaign", they are going to open a link there to where people can log on and there are a couple of different names that are being thrown out there but

basically, they can give a testimony to what the state police has done for them and to try to do a better job to make that known to the public. We can capture those testimonies of people calling in, whether it be just a motorist assist, solving an unsolved, or a cold case, anything like that so we look for that link to be available very soon if it is not now, it will be very soon.

Commission Chairman Teague stated next is Criminal Investigations, Major Stacie Rhoads.

Major Stacie Rhoads stated good morning, everyone, so for the month of October, we initiated 140 criminal cases, one officer involved shooting, 14 of those were death investigations that included two homicides. We also initiated one case involving criminal misconduct by a police officer. One of the things that I want to highlight is you have all heard me talking about our human trafficking council and the work that we are doing. Well over the past year, we have learned that a lot of these trafficking victims start in foster care. Foster care kids and runaways are three times more likely to become victims of human trafficking. So, we started taking a look at the missing kids that were across the state and what can we do to help find some of these missing kids. So as of today, we have 97 missing kids across the state, 12 of which are foster kids. Back over the summer we started coming up with some ideas of like how can we help with this, where can our impact be on that, so we recently advertised a position for a missing child liaison to be put in our human trafficking. All they are going to do is try to help find these missing kids. Just an example, last week we rescued a thirteen-year-old girl who has been missing from Hot Springs since April. We recovered her from a house with a trafficker who we also arrested last week. I don't even want to consider how much exploitation that she has had since April being out here, thirteen years old! I can tell you this story, we recovered a fourteen-year-old female, we have actually recovered her twice, but this last time she provided during her interview, two other kids that were being exploited in Iowa and we coordinated with Iowa officials, and they were able to locate and recover the two victims up in Iowa. So, you know I read a quote one time that you make an impact don't worry about your income. I know these guys that are in our human trafficking aren't going to get wealthy off doing this, but I think the work they are doing is going to make some huge dividends in the long run. I am really proud of the work that we are doing in that.

I also want to take the opportunity to, yesterday, I sat in a different capacity, I am actually a commissioner on the Commission for Law Enforcement Standards and Training. Yesterday was a really unfortunate time for the state police because we had to sit while one of our former troopers was up for decertification. I want to just really brag on the work of our Office of Professional Standards, I know that is not something you all generally hear anything about, but the work that they do in having to investigate not only their colleague but sometimes their friends can be very, very difficult work. The testimony given here yesterday from the investigator who handled that case, Christiana McKibben, was really, really outstanding and I wanted you all to know just how fantastic a job she did on that.

Commissioner Hinkle stated Stacie, I noticed in today's paper that you recused yourself from that vote, is that basically because it was a former employee or had you had the misfortune of investigating part of that yourself. Major Stacie Rhoads stated no, it is just kind of a common courtesy, I didn't want no conflict of interest.

Commissioner Reeves stated you know Commissioner Hinkle talked about what a shame it is that the public doesn't know all of the nice things our troopers do for people. We see them thanks to Cindy's clips. Fixing flats for older people, if I had a flat on my pickup, I would probably need help, I am not even sure where the jack is, but what you are talking about here on saving these kids, gosh, I wish the public knew what an impact we have on the crimes against children and the trafficking. I don't know how we get the word out there, but it is a shame that everyone doesn't realize. It warms my heart when you tell us as you do so often about saving some little girl from being abused over and over and over again and nobody to care about her. Major Stacie Rhoads stated we don't get in this work because we think we are going to get pats on the back,atta boys, or get championed in the public. We do this because it is a duty and a lot of our agents work in obscurity and most of the time, they are fine with that. But I want to make sure, you know, I am not being a good leader if I am not celebrating the good work and the places that we hope to go in the future with finding these kids.

Commissioner Akin stated this girl that was thirteen years old that had been missing since April, her parents are nowhere. Major Stacie Rhoads stated she was in foster care. I will tell you all another story, foster kids you know, a lot of times when you have runaways that have both parents, both parents get concerned and they are constantly walking step by step with

the local agency to find their kids. Foster kids don't have those people at home that really care where they are at. We recently, it has probably been 2 years ago, a fourteen-year-old autistic boy who frankly no one wanted, his parents had disowned him. He was in the foster system, he would run away from foster homes, because his foster people didn't want him, and they were taking him to the facility from Conway to West Memphis. The DHS worker stopped to go to the bathroom, well and he ran away. Fourteen-year-old autistic kid, it is 10:00 p.m. on a Friday night, the DHS worker waited around there for about 45 minutes. The sheriff's department came out and they looked for him just for a short time and then they left. This was around Brinkley, Palestine area with lots of fields during the summer with lots of snakes, fourteen years old nobody was looking for him. Colleen Nick called me at 4:00 a.m. in the morning and said Stacie we have got nobody looking for this kid. That is when I got the idea, I don't want there to be kids out there subject to this kind of stuff and nobody looking for them. That is the hole that we are going to try to fill with this position.

Commissioner Akin states so this thirteen-year-old goes back into the foster program and you look for new foster parents. Major Stacie Rhoads stated so we have found her another placement in a home that is strictly for victims of exploitation. Commissioner Akin stated I appreciate your compassion about this, it is a big deal.

Commissioner Hinkle stated Colonel, when someone was to call in to a general number here and say I am so and so with the rotary club or lions club, or a legit organization, and I am looking for somebody to come present a program or speak to us. What approach do we take on that and who do we look to, to go to the public to tell them about these crimes against children or assisting older motorists and so on, you obviously don't have time to do it. I am sure Stacie doesn't have time to do it, do we have a designate who is trained in all of the various things. Commissioner Reeves stated Stacie does have time to do it, she is coming to Harrison to the rotary club, I asked her too. Colonel Hagar stated, and I have spoken at a few the past month or so, I have spoken in Mountain Home and Stuttgart. Colonel Hagar stated typically those request will come in on a Troop or Company level and depending on what their area of interest is, they will assign someone from that area to go and speak to them. When we get the request in our office, we reach out to the field or if it is specific for me, so it just kind of depends. Commissioner Hinkle stated I was just curious if we had an individual who is trained in all of the aspects who was a good public speaker, and you don't really have that situation.

Commission Chairman Teague stated that brings us to Regulatory and Building Operations Division, Major Mike Moyer.

Major Mike Moyer stated good morning, Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, Colonel Hagar during the month of October, the Identification Bureau processed 25,292 civil background checks and 9,343 criminal fingerprint submissions. The Used Motor Vehicle Dealer Section processed 348 dealer applications. The PI Security Section processed 533 applications. The Fire Investigators conducted ten origin and cause investigations and out of those ten origin and cause investigations, there were four of those that four individuals died in the fires. Major Moyer stated the bomb squad handled four explosive calls this past month.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

Commission Chairman Teague stated we have on our agenda today, Ms. Emily Hamilton with the Arkansas State Police Foundation (ASPF) here to give us an update as to the goings on of the foundation.

Ms. Emily Hamilton stated Colonel Hagar, Chairman, and Commissioners, I stand here today to give a different report than what we have just heard. I stand here today filled with gratitude, pride, and admiration for the work that we have accomplished with ASPF in 2024. This year has been one of growth, collaboration and tremendous impact. In January, we began with record breaking sales of holiday ornaments, thanks to the tireless efforts of our auxiliary. This achievement laid the foundation for what would be an extraordinary year of giving back and community building. We are on track for yet another year of record-breaking sales with our ornaments for the holiday season. We also welcomed a new leader to our foundation, Elizabeth Anderson, her leadership has been pivotal in driving us forward. Also, our newly elected officers, Ford Overton, Alex Flemister, and Patti Cannon who stepped into their roles with vision and purpose.

Throughout the year we saw our scholarship program grow in ways that were nothing short of remarkable. In the Spring, we awarded 20 scholarships, and, in the Fall, 29 scholarships were awarded. These scholarships provided \$200,000.00 in support, to support the dreams of Arkansas State Police (ASP) Troopers dependents. This was not only a financial commitment but also an investment into the future of our community and our young people who will achieve great things. February took us on the road as we kicked off our “Around the State in Thirty Days” tour. We visited all 12 troops engaging with ASP in sharing the vital work of our foundation. It was a humbling experience to see firsthand the impact of our efforts and how much the ASP community values the support we provide. As the year progressed, we continued to break new ground, in April we saw tremendous success of our dueling piano fundraiser hosted by Troop G’s Spouses Auxiliary in Texarkana which raised \$50,000.00 for scholarships. Events like this remind us, when we come together our potential is limitless. This year also marked the creation of our exclusive track day experience which has been an exciting addition to our fundraisers and has brought much enthusiasm and competition out in our donors during our auction. These select few experiences have raised \$40,000.00 for the foundation thus far. In May, we paused to honor our fallen heroes and in doing so were reminded of the deep bond that unite us as a community. ASPF Spouses Auxiliary support of National Police Week highlighted the strength and resilience of our law enforcement community. Our fundraising efforts reached new heights this year from our Farmer’s Bank Golf Tournament in El Dorado which raised \$115,000.00 for our scholarship fund. The Centennial Conway Golf Tournament in June which netted \$75,000.00 for our scholarship fund. The Houseworth’s Hearts for Heroes Gala in Blytheville which also added \$85,000.00 to our Heart for Heroes Fund. This year has shown us what we can achieve when we pull together for a cause we believe in. In addition to our financial successes, we made strides in bringing people together, the ASP Retirees Association April Meeting at Camp Robinson, ASP Family Days around the state and the ASP Awards Luncheon. All of these events provided opportunities for us to connect, celebrate, and strengthen the ties that make our foundation so special. Looking back, we see not just a year of numbers and events but a year of heart, of dedication, and of impact. From the blood drives to the retiree meetings, to troopers and their families that benefitted from our Hearts for Heroes, to graduating scholarship recipients, we have made a difference in the lives of so many. As we prepare for 2025, we carry forward the spirit of collaboration, generosity, and service that defined us this year. Together we will continue to grow, to support, and to honor the men and women of the ASP Family.

We have compiled a busy schedule for 2025, it is included in your meeting packet for your review. We would love to have you join us at all of our events. We also took a page out of ASP’s playbook to bring the message of the foundation to all Arkansans. We collaborated with the Cranford Ad Agency, and we have created a lot of impactful videos. I brought our ASPF overview video for you to view today. I can take questions after the video.

Commission Chairman Teague stated very good video, well done I think, thank you. You did a great job Emily, we appreciate the update, and you guys are doing a great job. Also, thank you for the update on the scheduled events for next year.

Commission Chairman Teague asked do we have any new business? Colonel Hagar stated yes sir, I would ask that we go into executive session to discuss personnel matters.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Commissioner Reeves stated I move that we retire into Executive Session to consider personnel matters. Commissioner Basore seconded, and the motion passed. Commission Chairman Teague stated we have a motion and a second, all in favor, any opposed and the motion passed. The Commission went into Executive Session at 10:32 a.m.

Commission Chairman Teague called the meeting back to order at 11:27 a.m. and stated Colonel Hagar you have has some recommendations to make.

Colonel Hagar stated yes sir, for the position of Sergeant in Regulatory, PI/Security, my recommendation is Corporal Andrew Lay. Commissioner Hinkle made a motion that Corporal Andrew Lay be promoted to Sergeant in the Regulatory Division, PI/Security. Commissioner Basore seconded the motion. Commission Chairman Teague stated we have a motion to approve and a second, all in favor, I, and the motion passed.

Colonel Hagar stated for position of Sergeant Troop A Highway Patrol, my recommendation is Corporal Christopher Garner. Commissioner Akin made a motion that Corporal Christopher Garner be promoted to Sergeant in the Highway Patrol Division, Troop A. Commissioner Reeves seconded the motion. Commission Chairman Teague stated we have a motion to approve, and a second, all in favor, I, and the motion passed.

Colonel Hagar stated that's all I have Mr. Chairman.

NEXT MEETING:

Commission Chairman Teague stated the next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on Thursday, December 12, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Commission Chairman Teague stated if there is nothing else, we stand adjourned. With no further business, Commission Chairman Teague adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

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Commission Chairman

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Commission Secretary