

PEACE OFFICER MERIT COMMISSION SALT LAKE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, June 11, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT: David Salazar, Chair
Martha Stonebrook – Vice Chair
Chris Bertram – Member

David Salazar called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM. at the Salt Lake County Government Center, Room S3-810. This meeting was also available via-WebEx.

Commissioner Salazar- We have one item on the agenda today, to approve the 2025 Public Safety exam plan.

Carita Lucey- Exam plan public meeting was sent out office wide, along with the exam plan. This test is solely for the Public Safety Bureau in the sergeant rank. Advisory board is Chief Kari Huth, Lt. Mark Haws, Sgt Craig Tischner, Sgt. Cameron Cook. Policies are noted and have been in place for many years, they govern the promotional testing, can access via- link provided. Minimum qualifications are candidates must have merit status, must have completed probationary period, must not have more than three or more does not meet expectations ratings during the two preceding rating periods. Service time will be counted to the first day of examination, which is July 16th at the written policy test. Must have 5 years' service time in their current category. 5 years in a public safety deputy position, will allow 2 years outside service time to qualify for testing. In addition, must have 1 year of education from a qualified regional education, can substitute with service, 6 years as a deputy they could qualify. Competencies are communication skills, problem solving/decision making, coaching/motivation, interpersonal skills, integrity,

Commissioner Salazar- there is a typo in the word integrity

Carita Lucey- we will get that corrected. There are three phases of this test, first is the written 100 question policy test based off Sheriff's Office policy manual, law enforcement operations manual and Utah state statutes. Relevant state statutes will be provided to the candidates to prepare for the test once the exam plan is approved. Refers to advisory board for clarifications.

Craig Tischner- in years past specifically notes with which state statutes that were included in the test. How would the commission want to see that or have the verbiage written in that or just Utah state statute? They can guess from whatever thousands of

statutes out there, or years past common practice has been to identify which statutes to study.

Commissioner Salazar- So you asking us about whether or not you should specify the statutes or just leave it open?

Carita Lucey- in years past we have specified those statutes, seeing the chief nod. I think our recommendation is to specify that chief do you want to.

Chief Kari Huth- I agree with that, there are thousands of statutes, and we have narrowed that down in the past.

Commissioner Bertram- as Sgt. Tischner points out you have a whole book to read versus a list. We've got a short timeline to know these within the next month.

Chief Kari Huth- There are only maybe 15 there if I remember properly. May not even been quite that many. So, we will specify which areas and sections of codes we want them to look at.

Commissioner Bertram- Policy and procedure and the operations manual, is that something they have access too? Would that be the whole thing?

Carita Lucey- those are available online now and are under constant revision. We will try to hold off on any updates on the Sheriff's Office Policy manual or law enforcement manual. If there is something that absolutely needs to go out, we will specify that it doesn't apply to the exam. So only what is online right now. Statutes will be sent out once we have the approved exam plan.

Applicants must score 70% on the written policy test to move onto the next phase. Seniority points are added into that score. The purposes of passing phase one and the policy test seniority points will be included. Phase 2 will be an oral interview and consist of behavioral and situational questions, this will evaluate the candidate's essential knowledge, skills and abilities as outlined in the competencies above. Administrative situational scenario is designed to determine the applicant's ability to lead, multitask, problem solve and handle stress under pressure as a sergeant in the Sheriff's Office. Instructions will be given at that time of the phase.

Evaluation board- Lt. Ryan Scothern with PSB, Sgt. Kiel Knueston PSB, Sgt Nick Adams PSB and Sgt. Troy Siebert with LEB.

Testing will open June 23rd and close on July 3rd. Written policy test will be July 16th at 1800 hours applicants will be given details on where testing will take place. Oral interview and administrative situation scenario will be July 28th-31st. Please check emails during the process as we are required to make changes based upon the number of applicants. Scoring weights: Policy test=20%, Oral interview= 35% administrative

situational scenario= 40% and Seniority= 5% for a total of 100%. Candidates must have an overall score of 70% to be placed on the register. Will turn it back to the board.

Commissioner Salazar- not a whole lot of changes based on the past.

Commissioner Bertram- I didn't see that it stated you must have 70% to be placed.

Carita Lucey- yes, it is there

Commissioner Bertram- Oh you are right, I missed it, it is right there at the top. How many candidates do you anticipate having applied for this approximately? I only say that 70% get past the written test versus just applying that at the end. If for some reason that was going to cut down the pool of people at the cut off at the written test where you would have a lower number move forward into the other testing where we may be again not forced to within the next 2 years exhaust the list because we cut people off at the initial written test. Is there going to be a good candidate pool?

Carita Lucey- I am going to refer to Sgt Russell or maybe Chief Huth and Sgt. Tischner

Craig Tischner- based on the seniority list and years of service, it is a rough estimate around 15- 18 that could take the test.

Commissioner Bertram-Will take the test?

Craig Tischner- I want to say 25ish. Historically we have only promoted 5 at a time twice in the last 10 years if I remember correctly.

Commissioner Salazar- That is just a rough estimate of what we anticipate on how many are going to test, maybe more than 50% for sure.

Commissioner Bertram- the only concern that I have is that if you anticipate anecdotally 10 promotions, you have 15, that's probably going to be one of the more difficult parts of the test for students. And, and I mean, obviously it's good to have that cut off. If 10-15 pass the test you will still be within a good candidate pool. Just looking at if there was a low number turn out 15 is a good number with 5-10 getting promoted.

Craig Tishchner- That's anticipating if everyone I would assume is going to test.

Carita Lucey- With the Law Enforcement Bureau who has a smaller pool, that has been brought up to me today. With this advisory board they wanted it to stay this way. We are looking at that with smaller pools of candidates.

Commissioner Bertram- If you get 15 proposed candidates and you think you'd have 15 openings in two years you may want to not cut out those candidates. You may lose some of the 15 because of the written test, whereas you keep them in and they may still

shine in those other positions and get above 70% to make the list. Your call, but 15 is a good number.

I did notice that Troy Siebert is within the office and not outside the office. Typically you use someone outside of the entire organization.

Carita Lucey- That is accurate, as you know we have incorporated UPD and previously he was with UPD. Not a long history with the Sheriff's Office or familiar with a lot of Public Safety candidates. We felt good about using him. There is nothing in merit commission policy that requires us to have an outside evaluator.

Commissioner Bertram- Only thought that he is still part of the office and just that culturally. We've done it outside by practice.

Commissioner Stonebrook- I have a question based on the challenge that we had respecting the last test and timing. I am not seeing where either the oral interview or the administrative situational scenario indicates how much time they will be given for each of those. If you are creating a scenario that you want to do however, you're showing off and you don't know the amount of time to before you get there that it's they could over prepare.

Carita Lucey- Historically that is given with the instructions and the amount of time and the scenario when they arrive for that phase of the testing. So, there would be no way to prepare for that. But when they are there, they are made aware of the time. I am not sure about this one, sometimes there is preparation so they can look at the timing that way. It may just be that they are given the information and need to respond based on that and are told when their time is up.

Commissioner Stonebrook- So they don't bring a power point or anything like that?

Carita Lucey- No, not for the Sergeants exam. You are thinking of the Lieutenant and Captain's Exam which we do let them know that is 30 minutes or 60 minutes and a PowerPoint presentation and give some details in the exam plan. That is more of a strategic level and we're not having them do a PowerPoint presentation.

Commissioner Stonebrook- Okay well that is fine, you know if you plan for an hour and a half and you're given 30 minutes when you walk in is crazy. That does answer my question. I didn't know the difference.

Carita Lucey- A member of the Advisory Board Sgt. Tischner has some input.

Craig Tishner- As far as the timing goes, let's just call out the elephant in the room. That is one of my grievances. I want to make a recommendation as far as timing, as soon as the final exam plan comes out so that part is in there or is it just okay to leave it out. It would be important if they knew the timing. During the Lieutenants testing process also an e-mail, a clarification email that went out that did specify the timing. It

would be an hour, 30 minutes for this or 30 minutes for this, that was during the process. So, to avoid during the process of clarification I think we need to actually get the clarification out now, which we don't have appropriate answers to that now. I don't know if the Chief would agree but when we finalize the final exam plan and include the state statutes maybe we can include that portion as well? I don't know if that would be acceptable or not, but I do think that would be fair.

Carita Lucey- I have no problem with that, I am just thinking that if they don't know the scenario, which we wouldn't be providing right. Because we wouldn't get people responding off the cuff and directly would that benefit them differently than the exam you are talking about where a presentation type of thing? I don't mind adding the time, just wondering if there is a benefit if they don't know the scenario.

Craig Tishcner- If that question comes up, is that going to be answered as a clarification question?

Carita Lucey- No, so we have always wanted to avoid that. Again for the administrative situation scenarios they are always given the time when they come in and take the exam. We have never provided the information prior. That was only the higher level and the leadership presentation where there were questions. So, for the sake of this test, we will not be providing that information.

Commissioner Salazar- That practice has been consistent with the way it has been in the past exactly for this group.

Carita Lucey- For this group what information they get in the exam plan is the information sent out to them, statutes what information that they're provided during the testing. No additional clarification will be provided.

Commissioner Salazar- Did that answer your question.

Commissioner Stonebrook- It did, and I didn't mean to bring up something that was so extraneous. I just didn't want it to be an issue if it didn't have to be.

Commissioner Salazar- I think we have addressed the questions from the Commission, and we will open it up to public comment. Will open it up for anyone online or in person. Please state your name for the record. Please feel free to speak in support or concerns with the exam plan, we want to hear it all.

Sheriff Rivera- I just wanted to say I am in support of this plan and excited to go through this process and hopefully we will get to promote someone. I appreciate all the work that has gone into this plan.

Chief Kari Huth- I am in support of this plan; I have done a lot of work on it myself. I just wanted to make one clarifying comment to Commissioner Bertram. We probably won't have an opportunity in the next 2 years just looking at where we're at. I think we

have ever been promoted by our initial promotion process from Public Safety Bureau when we first made that career jump. Since then, it has only been o1 or 2. So with the 15 that we are looking at I think it is good.

Commissioner Bertram- Thank you for that and the clarification I appreciate that.

Chief Kari Huth- I want to thank Carita and her team it has been a great experience.

Criag Tischner- Would like to make a recommendation to the Merit Commission, when the dust settles, I think it would be a good thing for the Merit Commission to go through a mock test as well. If they ever want to go through the manual here and you see what you're providing but going through it will help you understand a lot of the technicalities that could come from it. I would like to extend that offer out there if it's okay with admin and HR and the Commission. I think it would be great if you went through the motions of taking the test.

Commissioner Salazar- You mean you want us to study all this stuff?

Commissioner Bertram- That written test would embarrass me.

Craig Tischner- Maybe go through the motions and you'll see the full testing process. I'd like to make that recommendation if that is okay.

Commissioner Salazar- I don't think anyone need be afraid that we're going to come and take awa your job and score well.

Chief Kari Huth- I think Commissioner Bertram has probably taken 3 of them.

Commissioner Bertram- I have taken 3 of them and the written scares me and the scenario.

Carita Lucey- And you're glad not to be doing it again right?

Commissioner Bertram- to reword standard advice for a retried cop, not my problem.

Carita Lucey- If we have any questions online if you could unmute yourself and make your comment.

Chief Shanda Gonzalez- Just wanted to make a comment that I support the test and appreciate all your hard work that has gone into this test today.

Taunica Crump- I just wanted to say this test looks pretty much exactly like it was last time. I think last year or two years ago we had the PowerPoint involved in that one but this looks streamlined and good to me.

Scott Laughlin- In the chat Newell Mann said that on the last exam they did give the time for the oral board and scenario. I reviewed that and they gave them the time for the oral board and not the scenario. Just wanted to let everybody know that and that it was not going to be provided for this test.

Commissioner Bertram- Just to clarify what you're saying is they said for instance, it would be 30 minutes of an oral board.

Scott Laughlin- Yes, so on the oral board it said you'd be given 15 minutes to answer the questions for the oral board on the last exam plan. But it did not give any time for the scenario.

Commissioner Bertram- Did it indicate how many questions would be asked in the 15 minutes? I know in the past and going back here, somethings they would say that the oral board is going to be 30 minutes. They didn't tell them how many questions, but gave them a baseline. If you decided as a board that we're going to have 30 minutes and then 50 minutes to score you may want to clarify that but you don't have too.

Scott Laughlin- I need to find the page.

Carita Lucey- That is what I was thinking, just because we did it last time doesn't mean we have to do it this time that is the advisory board, a lot of times we do want to make changes and do things a little bit differently. If that was done differently that is great but I think how the advisory board has it set up this way is how this exam has been designed. I would recommend that we go with that.

Scott Laughlin- I did find it, just to clarify on other exam plans we've made it does not say the time but for the purpose of the last Public Safety Sergeant's exam, they had a presentation with it and it said presentation/oral interview using the competencies provided, the candidate will have up to 15 minutes to present to the evaluation board in any format that they choose. It sounds like it was a dual purpose and the time frame given was for a presentation, not the questions.

Carita Lucey- which would make sense because there'd be the preparation for that. Thank you for the clarification.

Commissioner Salazar- I think there was a question online.

Amber Arnold- I believe that was Newell Mann, and that is the question that they were responding to.

Carita Lucey- Are there any other questions online that you can see Scott?

Scott Laughlin- No it appears that the only question was from Newell Mann and that has been addressed.

Commissioner Stonebrook- I just want to clarify that I wasn't suggesting that you list time frames unless it was something for instance like the ones that do have the presentation in a format should be whatever times. That's all I was asking just as a little place, so we wouldn't have any issues if in fact it would have been something, but it was an expectation. Thank you for that.

Commissioner Salazar- Any other questions or clarification with regard to either those spaces of the exam or any other parts of the exam overall? I think we can go ahead and close the public comment and bring that back to the commission unless there is any follow up questions from the commissioners, I think we can entertain a motion.

Commissioner Stonebrook- I would move that we approve the 2025 Public Safety Sergeant Exam Plan.

Commissioner Bertram- I will second that.

Commissioner Salazar- It's been first and seconded to approve the plan as it has been presented today, all in favor say aye.

Commissioner Bertram- Aye

Commissioner Stonebrook- Aye

Commissioner Salazar- alright Sheriff's you have an approved plan. We are always happy to help and appreciate the help from Carita and the advisory board and others involved in putting these plans together. I think a lot of what we do from one plan to the next remains the same, I think everything is always well thought out and questioned doesn't mean that's what you can automatically do again. We do appreciate the time and effort that goes into planning, that makes our jobs a lot easier.

Carita Lucey- We appreciate your time Commissioners; we appreciate your time and support and guidance that goes into this.

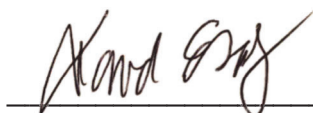
Commissioner Salazar- I will make a motion to adjourn. All in favor say aye.

Commissioner Stonebrook- Aye

Commissioner Bertram- Aye

Commissioner Salazar- This meeting is adjourned.

Reviewed and Approved by



David Salazar, Chair
Salt Lake County
Peace Officer Merit Commission

DATE: 8/11/2025