



Criminal Justice Services Board (CJSB) Executive Committee

January 19, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

*The meeting took place at DCJS, 1100 Bank Street, Richmond, Virginia
in the 12th floor Conference Room*

Members Present

Chief Craig Branch, Chair
Sheriff C. O. Balderson
Ms. Maria Jankowski
Mr. Jagdish Katyal, Jr.
Chief Jeffrey Katz
LTC Kirk Marlowe, Proxy for COL Gary Settle

Members Absent

Chief Maggie DeBoard
The Hon. Bryan Porter, Vice-Chair

I. Call to Order

Chairman Craig Branch called the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Criminal Justice Services Board (CJSB) to order at 10:00 a.m. A quorum was present.

II. Old Business

Circuit Court Follow-Up: Mr. Omar Higazi

Chairman Branch called on Mr. Erik Smith from the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) to give a summary of Mr. Omar Higazi's case.

Mr. Smith reminded the Executive Committee that Mr. Higazi was formerly with the Chesapeake Police Department and was decertified pursuant to clause (B)(vi) of § 15.2-1707 of the *Code of Virginia*. After multiple continuances, the Executive Committee heard his appeal hearing and voted to sustain his decertification which Mr. Higazi then appealed to the Virginia Beach Circuit Court. The Circuit Court then remanded the matter back to the Board to make specific findings regarding their decision.

The Executive Committee also heard from Mr. Higazi's counsel.

Ms. Maria Jankowski made a motion, seconded by Sheriff C. O. Balderson, that the Executive Committee meet in closed session for the purpose of discussing the decertification of Mr. Higazi with legal counsel. The motion passed unanimously.

Once the Executive Committee had concluded its closed session, Ms. Jankowski made a motion, seconded by Sheriff Balderson, that the Executive Committee re-open the meeting to the public. The motion passed unanimously. All members of the Executive Committee certified that only matters involving legal advice from counsel were discussed during the closed session.

Ms. Jankowski made the motion, seconded by Chief Jeffrey Katz, that the Executive Committee uphold the original decision, uphold the decertification and issue written findings of fact within thirty days to be supplied to counsel in compliance with the judge's order. The motion passed unanimously.

III. New Business

Decertification – Mr. Dennis Reynolds, formerly with the Augusta County Sheriff's Office

Chairman Branch called on Mr. Smith (OAG) to give a summary of Mr. Dennis Reynolds' certification status and to present the facts resulting in his decertification as a law enforcement officer from the Augusta County Sheriff's Office. Mr. Reynolds was decertified pursuant to clause (B)(vi) of § 15.2-1707 of the *Code of Virginia*.

The Executive Committee also heard from Mr. Reynolds' counsel as well as representatives from the Augusta County Sheriff's Office.

Sheriff Balderson made a motion, seconded by Chief Katz, that the Executive Committee meet in closed session for the purpose of discussing the decertification of Mr. Reynolds with legal counsel. The motion passed unanimously.

Once the Executive Committee had concluded its closed session, Sheriff Balderson made a motion, seconded by Chief Katz, that the Executive Committee re-open the meeting to the public. The motion passed unanimously. All members of the Executive Committee certified that only matters involving legal advice from counsel were discussed during the closed session.

Mr. Jagdish Katyal made the motion, seconded by Chief Katz that the Executive Committee reinstate the certification of Mr. Reynolds as a law enforcement officer. The motion passed unanimously.

Decertification – Mr. Victor Perry, formerly with the Prince William County Police Department

Chairman Branch called on Mr. Smith (OAG) to give a summary of Mr. Victor Perry's certification status and to present the facts resulting in his decertification as a law enforcement officer from the Prince William County Police Department. Mr. Perry was decertified pursuant to clause (B)(vi) of § 15.2-1707 of the *Code of Virginia*.

Sheriff Balderson made a motion, seconded by Chief Katz that the Executive Committee meet in closed session for the purpose of discussing the decertification of Mr. Perry with legal counsel. The motion passed unanimously.

Once the Executive Committee had concluded its closed session, Sheriff Balderson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Katyal, that the Executive Committee re-open the meeting to the public. The motion passed unanimously. All members of the Executive Committee certified that only matters involving legal advice from counsel were discussed during the closed session.

Sheriff Balderson made the motion, seconded by Mr. Katyal that the Executive Committee uphold the decertification of Mr. Perry based on evidence provided in falsifying a criminal complaint under oath. Good cause was not provided to be reinstated. The motion passed unanimously.

Decertification – Mr. Troy Hinchey, formerly with the Washington County Sheriff’s Office

Chairman Branch called on Mr. Smith (OAG) to give a summary of Mr. Troy Hinchey’s certification status and to present the facts resulting in his decertification as a law enforcement officer from the Washington County Sheriff’s office. Mr. Hinchey was decertified pursuant to clause (B)(vi) of § 15.2-1707 of the *Code of Virginia*.

The Executive Committee also heard from Mr. Hinchey’s counsel as well as representatives from the Washington County Sheriff’s Office.

Sheriff Balderson made a motion, seconded by Chief Katz, that the Executive Committee meet in closed session for the purpose of discussing the decertification of Mr. Hinchey with legal counsel. The motion passed unanimously.

Once the Executive Committee had concluded its closed session, Sheriff Balderson made a motion, seconded by Chief Katz, that the Executive Committee re-open the meeting to the public. The motion passed unanimously. All members of the Executive Committee certified that only matters involving legal advice from counsel were discussed during the closed session.

Mr. Katyal made the motion, seconded by LTC Kirk Marlowe, that the Executive Committee reinstate the certification of Mr. Hinchey as a law enforcement officer for providing good cause to overrule the decertification. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Public Comment

Ms. Mary Ottinot spoke to the Executive Committee. She currently serves on the Virginia Behavioral Health Advisory Council. She indicated she was a victim of Human Trafficking by police officers in Virginia three years ago and it still hasn’t been investigated. She asked who it should be reported to when law enforcement covers up crimes and she recommended that the Executive Committee establish policies for these situations.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m. The next meetings will take place on March 28-29, 2024.