THE NORTH CAROLINA SHERIFFS' EDUCATION AND TRAINING STANDARDS COMMISSION FINAL AGENCY DECISION MINUTES

DATE: December 4, 2025

TIME: 1:00 P.M.

LOCATION: DoubleTree by Hilton Raleigh Crabtree Valley
4100 Glenwood Avenue Road, Raleigh, North Carolina, 27612

SUBMITTED BY: Willliam Mitchell, Director

I. CALL TO ORDER — Sheriff Alan Norman

The North Carolina Sheriffs' Education and Training Standards Commission's Final Agency Decision meeting was called to order by Sheriff Alan Norman on Thursday, December 4, 2025. Chair Norman welcomed everyone to Wake County. Chair Norman requested a roll call of Commission members. Alex Radford recorded the following:

MEMBERS PRESENT		MEMBERS ABSENT
Sheriff Jack Smith	Sheriff Ed McMahon (Probable Cause)	Sheriff Lowell Griffin
Sheriff Chip Hughes	Sheriff Mike Roberson (Probable Cause)	Sheriff Shelton White
Sheriff Banks Hinceman	Sheriff Don Brown (Probable Cause)	Sheriff Jeff Crisco
Sheriff Van Shaw	Sheriff Alan Norman	Sheriff Lowell Griffin
Sheriff Terry Johnson	Sheriff James McVicker	Mr. Jamie Markham
Mr. Wayne Branch	Retired Sheriff BJ Barnes Jr.	
Ms. Jennifer Fisher		

STAFF

Joy Strickland	North Carolina Department of Justice
Steven Wilson	North Carolina Department of Justice
Ian Courts	North Carolina Department of Justice
Steve Draper	North Carolina Department of Justice

William Mitchell	North Carolina Sheriffs' Standards Division
Alex Radford	North Carolina Sheriffs' Standards Division

Alex Radford announced that a quorum was present.

Chair Norman noted that Mr. Steven Wilson, Assistant Attorney General, would serve as the Commission Legal Counsel. Mr. Wilson read the ethics statement to the Commission members and reminded everyone that both the Petitioner and the Respondent would be limited to 30 minutes of oral argument.

Chair Norman welcomed everyone to the North Carolina Sheriffs' Training and Standards Commission meeting and asked the visitors to stand and introduce themselves**.**

VISITORS

Michila Cupp	Iredell County Emergency Communications
Starlene Wolfe	Iredell County Emergency Communications
Barry K. Henline	Law Offices of Barry K Henline, PLLC
Hart Miles	Cheshire Parker Schneider & Abrams, PLLC
Aaron Ravilious	Hoke County Sheriff's Office
Kevin Smith	North Carolina Sheriffs' Standards Division
Byron Tucker	Alamance County Sheriff's Office
Eddie Caldwell	North Carolina Sheriff's Association
Lauren Earnhart	North Carolina Sheriff's Association
Alan C. Jones	North Carolina Sheriffs' Standards Division

II. OATHS — Sheriff Alan Norman

Chair Norman asked Alex Radford to administer oaths for re-appointed member Sheriff Terry Johnson and new appointment Commissioner Wayne Branch.

III. APPROVAL OF JUNE FAD MINUTES

Chair Norman requested a motion to approve minutes for the September 11, 2025, Final Agency Decisions.

A **MOTION** was made by Retired Sheriff BJ Barnes Jr. to approve the minutes from the September 11, 2025, Final Agency

Decision meeting; seconded by Sheriff Terry Johnson. **MOTION CARRIED**

Joy Strickland stated to the Commission that Earnest Brown's cases had been postponed.

IV. FINAL AGENCY DECISION — Joy Strickland / Ian Courts / Steve Draper

***David William Pate**

Mr. Pate was not present for the proceedings. Attorney Barry K. Henline was representation for Mr. Pate. Ms. Joy Strickland presented oral arguments regarding the case against David William Pate.

The Petitioner, David William Pate applied for detention officer certification with the Brunswick County Sheriff's Office in May 2022, prompting an investigation into multiple past criminal convictions and admitted offenses disclosed on his application, many of which were tied to long-standing substance abuse issues and later expunged, including misdemeanor larceny, solicitation to obtain property by false pretenses, shoplifting, assault on a female, driving while impaired, and possession of drug paraphernalia. Although Pate cooperated fully, presented evidence of substance abuse treatment, favorable work evaluations, and testimony regarding sobriety and personal reform, the Probable Cause Committee found that he had committed a combination of four or more Class A and B misdemeanors, warranting denial of certification under North Carolina Administrative Code. Following a contested case hearing, the Administrative Law Judge concluded that, despite mitigating evidence and professional support, Pate's history of substance-related offenses and a recent alcohol-related arrest undermined claims of extenuating circumstances. As a result, the Commission determined that denial of certification for an indefinite period was appropriate and upheld the denial of Pate's application.

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, it is hereby ordered that petitioner's Justice Officer Certification is denied indefinitely.

Attorney Barry K. Henline presented his arguments to the commission and stated that Mr. Pate was not present today due to an injury. Mr. Henline did not challenge the findings and would accept the actions of the Commission.

Chair Norman asked the Commission if there were any questions.

A **MOTION** was made by Sheriff Van Shaw to enter closed session; seconded by Sheriff Chip Hughes. **MOTION CARRIED**
A **MOTION** was made by Sheriff James McVicker to enter open session; seconded by Sheriff Jack Smith. **MOTION CARRIED**

A **MOTION** was made by Sheriff Terry Johnson in the matter of David William Pate; Adopt the proposed final agency decision by Counsel to **DENY CERTIFICATION INDEFINITELY**; seconded by Sheriff Jack Smith. **MOTION CARRIED**

***Michila Lee Cupp**

Ms. Cupp was present for the proceedings. Mr. Ian Courts presented oral arguments regarding the case against Ms. Cupp.

The Administrative Law Judge found that jurisdiction, venue, and notice were proper and that the North Carolina Sheriffs' Training and Standards Commission had authority to certify justice officers.

The petitioner, Michila Lee Cupp, is an applicant for telecommunicator certification with the Iredell County Emergency Communications. She disclosed prior Florida convictions arising from a 2005 incident in which she improperly obtained $70 in gift cards while working at JCPenney, conduct initially charged as felony scheme to defraud but later reduced to misdemeanor petit theft, with one count dismissed and the other resolved through probation and restitution. Although the Commission's Probable Cause Committee determined there was probable cause to deny certification based on felony commission, the Administrative Law Judge concluded, after a full evidentiary hearing, that the petitioner's actions did not constitute a felony "scheme to defraud" under Florida law because they were not part of a systematic or ongoing course of conduct. Finding by a preponderance of the evidence that the petitioner did not commit a felony and noting the reduction of charges by prosecutors, the Administrative Law Judge ordered that the petitioner's justice officer certification be granted.

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, it is hereby ordered that petitioner's Justice Officer Certification should be granted.

Ms. Cupp addressed the Commission and appreciated the opportunity for them to hear her case.

Ms. Wolfe expressed her appreciation for Ms. Cupp and stated she was a valued member to their department.

Chair Norman asked the Commission if there were any questions.

A **MOTION** was made by Sheriff James McVicker to enter closed session; seconded by Sheriff Terry Johnson. **MOTION CARRIED**

A **MOTION** was made by Sheriff James McVicker to enter open session; seconded by Retired Sheriff BJ Barnes Jr. **MOTION CARRIED**

A **MOTION** was made by Sheriff Van Shaw in the matter of Michila Lee Cupp; Adopt the proposed final agency decision by Counsel to **GRANT CERTIFICATION**; seconded by Commissioner Wayne Branch. **MOTION CARRIED**

***Aaron Christopher Ravilious**

Mr. Ravilious was present for the proceedings. Attorney Hart Miles was representing Mr. Ravilious for the hearing. Mr. Steve Draper presented oral arguments regarding the case against Mr. Harvan.

In this contested case regarding Aaron Christopher Ravilious, the Administrative Law Judge found that although the alleged victim, Alisha Pitt, is hearing-impaired and qualifies as an individual with a disability under North Carolina law, there was insufficient credible evidence to conclude that Petitioner Aaron Ravilious committed either assault on a person with a disability or second-degree forcible rape. The Tribunal determined that Pitt's testimony was only partially credible, that the parties' accounts of their sexual encounter sharply conflicted, and that there was no corroborating medical evidence, eyewitness testimony, or reliable supporting evidence; criminal charges had also been dismissed for lack of evidence. Text messages showed sexually explicit communication before and after the encounter, and the sheriff's investigation revealed inconsistent statements by Pitt and relevant post-incident conduct bearing on credibility. Applying applicable statutes, administrative rules, and prior Commission decisions, the Tribunal concluded that Respondent failed to prove that Petitioner "committed" the alleged offenses or lacked good moral character, emphasizing that lawful private sexual conduct alone does not justify revocation absent proof of criminal behavior. Accordingly, the Tribunal ordered that no action be taken against Petitioner's justice officer certification.

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, it is hereby ordered that no action be taken against petitioners Justice officer Certification.

Chair Norman asked the Commission if there were any questions.

A **MOTION** was made by Sheriff Chip Hughes to enter closed session; seconded by Sheriff James McVicker. **MOTION CARRIED**

A **MOTION** was made by Sheriff James McVicker to enter open session; seconded by Commissioner Wayne Branch. **MOTION CARRIED**

A **MOTION** was made by Sheriff Van Shaw in the matter of Aaron Christopher Ravilious; Adopt the proposed final agency decision by Counsel that **NO ACTION BE TAKEN AGAINST CERTIFICATION**; seconded by Sheriff James McVicker. **MOTION CARRIED**

V. LEGAL COUNSEL'S REPORT — Ian Courts

Mr. Ian Courts summarized the Legal Counsel's Report, and reviewed the various stages of litigation for the administrative cases as follows:

- 55 active cases.
- 6 cases closed since the September 11, 2025, meeting.
- 6 cases pending judicial review
- 16 new cases opened since the last meeting

VI. RECESS

A **MOTION** by Sheriff James McVicker to recess the December 2025 Sheriff's Final Agency Decision meeting: Seconded by Sheriff Van Shaw. **MOTION CARRIED**