

Open Session Minutes

IOWA LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY COUNCIL MEETING

September 4, 2025 9:00am

ILEA Building, Room 201

7105 NW 70th Avenue

4640 Burma Road

Johnston, IA 50131

A meeting of the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy Council was held as a hybrid of in-person and online attendance.

Members Present: Ricardo Martinez II, Academy Council Chair
Diane Venenga, Vice Chair and Chief, North Liberty Police Department
Nathan Fulk, Colonel, Iowa State Patrol
Vicky Long Hill, Citizen of Iowa
Melissa Henderson, Officer, Cedar Rapids Police Department
Dave McDaniel, Sheriff, Hardin County Sheriff's Office
Daniel Jansen, Captain, West Des Moines Police Department
Sadie Weekley, Lieutenant, Marshalltown Police Department
Aaron McClelland, Captain, Waterloo Police Department
Kevin Schneider, Sheriff, Polk County Sheriff's Office
Jana Abens, Citizen of Iowa

Members Absent: Elizabeth Quinn, Sergeant, Story County Sheriff's Office
Ryan Ridout, DOT Director, Bureau of Investigation and Identity Protection
Eric Gjerde, Representative
Charles McClintock, Senator
Judd Lawler, Representative
Izaah Knox, Senator

Legal Counsel Present: Erin Hardisty, Assistant Iowa Attorney General

Staff Present: Brady Carney, Director, ILEA
Kristi Traynor, Legal Counsel, ILEA
Donna Hallstrom, ILEA
Jennifer Rico, ILEA
Nicole Stevens, ILEA

Guests Present: Logan Studer Joey Speers Arrick Clausen Tony Trejo Geoff Groen

Guests Online: Matt Owens Tim Nielsen A. Hyatt Joe Raaymakers Bill Freeland
Zachary Engstrom

Ric Martinez called the meeting to order. Ric Martinez began with the welcome and introductions of the Academy Council, ILEA staff and guests.

Ric Martinez determined there was a quorum.

Ric Martinez stated the proceedings are being recorded and reminded Council members that they are to abstain from participating in and/or voting on any action items involving a potential conflict of interest.

The first item (#1) on the agenda was the potential conflicts of interest on the Open Session agenda.

Diane Venenga advised that she would recuse herself from Action Item# 7.

The second item (#2) on the agenda was public comment. There was none.

The third item (#3) on the agenda was the Petition for Waiver for Iowa Administrative Code Rule 501-4.2(1)(a) for Logan Studer.

Logan Studer was certified as a law enforcement officer on 11/16/23. He wishes to serve as a firearms and rifle instructor prior to reaching 3 years of experience as a certified officer. Buena Vista has one other firearms and rifle instructor on staff. Studer does not identify any specific training or expertise relevant to firearms. Logan Studer states there would not be a hardship for him if the waiver was denied, but it would assist the agency if it was granted. Council members stated that it would be a good idea for Logan to be a safety officer and assist his Sergeant in that capacity until he has reached his 3-years of certification experience. Council also advised that there would not be a relief for his agency due to the fact that Logan would have to be mentored by his Sergeant until he reached his 3-years so both instructors would have to be present for all training/qualifications.

Ric Martinez entertained a motion. Dan Jansen made a motion to deny the Petition for Waiver for Iowa Administrative Code Rule 501-4.2(1)(a) for Logan Studer. Nathan Fulk seconded the motion. An individual voice vote was taken. Aaron McClelland-Aye; Dave McDaniel-Aye; Nathan Fulk-Aye; Ric Martinez-Aye; Melissa Henderson-Aye; Dan Jansen-Aye; Diane Venenga-Aye; Kevin Schneider-Aye; Vicky Long-Hill-Recuse; Sadie Weekley-Aye; Jana Abens-Aye. 10-Aye; 1-Recuse (Long-Hill), motion carried. Waiver was denied.

The fourth item (#4) on the agenda was the Petition for Waiver for Iowa Administrative Code Rule 501-4.2(1)(a) for Arrick Clausen.

Arrick Clausen was certified as a law enforcement officer on 4/21/23. He wishes to serve as a firearms instructor prior to reaching 3 years of experience as a certified officer. Denison has a part-time officer who is a firearms instructor for their office. Clausen states he has committed much of his career to improving firearms proficiency, tactics and safety. He would like the opportunity to share that knowledge with others and believes that could prevent harm, save lives & strengthen his department. He has been a certified Reserve since 2020. The Fall 2025 Firearms/Rifle Instructor Course is already full and if granted, Clausen would have to attend the Spring 2026 Firearms/Rifle Instructor Course. Council and Clausen discussed approving the waiver so he can register and attend the Spring 2026 course before

that course fills up. Clausen would not be able to “bump” any certified officer that has three or more years certified.

Ric Martinez entertained a motion. Dan Jansen made a motion to approve the Petition for Waiver for Iowa Administrative Code Rule 501-4.2(1)(a) for Arrick Clausen and allow him to attend the Spring 2026 Firearms/Rifle Instructor Course and he would not be allowed to bump any other officers that meet the 3-year requirement. Jana Abens seconded the motion. A group voice vote was taken. All Aye, 11-0, motion carried. Waiver was approved.

The fifth item (#5) on the agenda was the Petition for Waiver for Iowa Administrative Code Rule 501-2.1(5) and 501-10.1(5) for Geoff Groen.

Geoff Groen requested to go into Closed Session to discuss his case.

Ric Martinez entertained a motion. Aaron McClelland made a motion that the Council move into Closed Session for the purpose of discussing records that are required or authorized by state law to be kept confidential and to evaluate the professional competency of the individual’s appointment and prevent needless and irreparable injury to his or her reputation as he requested a Closed Session pursuant to Iowa Code section 21.5(1)(a)(i). Sadie Weekley seconded the motion. An individual voice vote was taken. Aaron McClelland-Aye; Dave McDaniel-Aye; Nathan Fulk-Aye; Ric Martinez-Aye; Melissa Henderson-Aye; Dan Jansen-Aye; Diane Venenga-Aye; Kevin Schneider-Aye; Vicky Long-Hill-Aye; Sadie Weekley-Aye; Jana Abens-Aye. All Aye; 11-0, motion carried.

Council went into Closed Session at 9:48am.

Council resumed Open Session at 10:18am.

Ric Martinez entertained a motion. Aaron McClelland made a motion that the Council deny the Petition for Waiver for Iowa Administrative Code Rule 501-2.1(5) and 501-10.1(5) for Geoff Groen. Nathan Fulk seconded the motion. A group voice vote was taken. All Aye, 11-0, motion carried. Waiver was denied.

The sixth item (#6) on the agenda was the Petition for Waiver for Iowa Administrative Code Rule 501-10.1(5) for Tim Nielsen.

Nielsen was charged with Theft 3rd in 1997. He pled guilty to Theft 5th, and paid a fine. Nielsen had work done on his car, but the price for the work was higher than originally quoted. He wrote a check and the repair shop agreed to hold the check for a week until Nielsen was paid again. The car broke down the following day and there was a dispute over the work and the bill. The shop presented the check for payment early and there were insufficient funds to cover the check. Nielsen requested that the record of his conviction be expunged in 2025. Since the incident, Nielsen worked for the City of Clinton. Nielsen does not appear to have further involvement with law enforcement other than traffic violations. The hardship for Nielsen is that he would not be able to give back to his community by serving as a reserve officer.

Ric Martinez entertained a motion. Sadie Weekley made a motion to approve the Petition for Waiver for Iowa Administrative Code Rule 501-10.1(5) for Tim Nielsen. Melissa Henderson seconded the motion. A group voice vote was taken. All Aye, 11-0, motion carried. Waiver was approved.

The seventh item on the agenda was the Petition for Waiver for Iowa Administrative Code Rule 501-10.1(5) for Keegan Witbeck.

Witbeck was cited with OWI in 2022. He pled guilty to an amended charge of reckless driving (he refused PBT, datamaster, blood, & urine testing), with credit for time served. Witbeck was convicted of Attempted Burglary and Criminal Mischief 3rd in 2014 when he was 19. He entered his ex-girlfriend's garage, damaged a parked car, and threw a hammer through a window of her residence. He received a deferred judgment, 2 year's probation, paid fines and restitution. Iowa Courts Online also shows a temporary 236 order was issued against Witbeck in August 2013, but was cancelled before hearing in September 2013. Witbeck does not appear to have been involved with law enforcement since the 2022 OWI incident, other than traffic citations. He is involved in coaching youth wrestling and trains in Jiu Jitsu and MMA according to his letters of support. Chief Houser, DNR Officer Brent Kopple, Officer Yassin, Chris Janis, Mike Berrebi, Matt Leighton, Andrew Bestor, Daniel Ortiz wrote letters in support of the waiver. Council approved his LEO petition for waiver back in August 2025 but the LEO position was filled and now the agency wants to start him as a Reserve until another LEO spot becomes available.

Ric Martinez entertained a motion. Sadie Weekley made a motion that the Council approve the Petition for Waiver for Iowa Administrative Code Rule 501-10.1(5) for Keegan Witbeck. Dave McDaniel seconded the motion. A group voice vote was taken. 10-Aye; 1-Recuse (Venenga), motion carried. Waiver was approved.

Council took a break at 10:28am.
Council resumed Open Session at 10:40am.

The eighth item (#8) on the agenda was the approval of the Open Session Council Minutes from:
July 3, 2025
July 16, 2025

Ric Martinez entertained a motion. Sadie Weekley made a motion to approve the Open Session minutes from July 3, 2025 and July 16, 2025. Kevin Schneider seconded the motion. A group voice vote was taken. All Aye, 11-0, motion carried.

The ninth item (#9) on the agenda was the approval of the Consent Agenda as presented.

Ric Martinez entertained a motion. Melissa Henderson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Dan Jansen seconded the motion. A group voice vote was taken. All Aye, 11-0, motion carried.

The tenth item (#10) on the agenda was the discussion about the Screening Committee. Ric Martinez asked if any members had any questions regarding the Screening Committee's authority. Members advised that they understood the Screening Committee's authority and did not have any questions.

The eleventh item (#11) on the agenda was ILEA Reports.

Director Carney advised that there are 76 recruits in the ILEA Basic Academy currently. The recruits are in day three of week one. The Rife Instructor Course is coming up and ILEA will be having a back to

back Firearms/Rifle Instructor course in the near future. The qualification courses have been updated and the feedback has been very positive. Legislative session is coming up and IGOV moved up the budget request cycle and ILEA will be submitting those no later than September 15, 2025 for July 1, 2027.

The twelfth item (#12) on the agenda was to move into Closed Session.

Ric Martinez entertained a motion. Diane Venenga made a motion that the Council go into closed session for the purpose of discussing closed session minutes, whether to initiate licensee disciplinary investigations or proceedings, to discuss the decisions to be rendered in a contested case conducted according to the provisions of chapter 17A, pursuant to Iowa Code sections 21.5(1)(a), (d), and (f). Dan Jansen seconded the motion. An individual voice vote was taken. Dave McDaniel-Aye; Ric Martinez-Aye; Melissa Henderson-Aye; Dan Jansen-Aye; Jana Abens-Aye; Vicky Long-Hill-Aye; Aaron McClelland-Aye; Diane Venenga-Aye; Nathan Fulk-Aye; Sadie Weekley-Aye; Kevin Schneider-Aye. All Aye; 11-0, motion carried.

Council went into Closed Session at 10:52am.
Council resumed Open Session at 1:05pm.

The thirteenth item (#13) on the agenda was to vote on items discussed in the Closed Session.

Approval of the Closed Session Council Minutes from July 16, 2025

Ric entertained a motion. Sadie Weekley made a motion to approve the July 16, 2025 Closed Session Council minutes. Melissa Henderson seconded the motion. A group voice vote was taken. All Aye; 11-0, motion carried.

Voluntary Surrender Files

24-017: Ric entertained a motion. Melissa Henderson made a motion that the Council accept the waiver of hearing and voluntary surrender in case number 24-017 and issue an order permanently revoking the certification with no possibility of reinstatement. Nathan Fulk seconded the motion. A group voice vote was taken. All Aye; 11-0, motion carried.

24-049/25ILEA0010: Ric entertained a motion. Aaron McClelland made a motion that if neither party requests a review, the Council initiate review of the proposed decision in Case No. 24-049/25ILEA0010, to examine findings of facts, complete definitions within codes related to counts I, II, III and IV. Dan Jansen seconded the motion. A group voice vote was taken. All Aye; 11-0, motion carried. (it should be noted that AAG Hardisty recused herself from this discussion)

Investigative Files

24-057: Ric Martinez entertained a motion. Nathan Fulk made a motion that the Council administratively close case number 24-057. Dan Jansen seconded the motion. A group voice vote was taken. All Aye; 11-0, motion carried.

25-011: Ric Martinez entertained a motion. Dan Jansen made a motion that the Council administratively close case number 25-011. Melissa Henderson seconded the motion. A group voice vote was taken. 10-Aye; 1-Recuse (Venenga), motion carried.

25-016: Ric Martinez entertained a motion. Aaron McClelland made a motion that the Council administratively close case number 25-016. Sadie Weekley seconded the motion. A group voice vote was taken. All Aye; 11-0, motion carried.

25-019: Ric Martinez entertained a motion. Dan Jansen made a motion that the Council find probable cause of a violation of 501 IAC rule 6.2(1)(f), (2)(b), (2)(c), and (2)(e)(4) and order the Academy to proceed with the case. Dave McDaniel seconded the motion. A group voice vote was taken, 10-Aye; 1-Recuse (Venenga), motion carried.

25-020: Ric Martinez entertained a motion. Melissa Henderson made a motion that the Council find probable cause of a violation of 501 IAC rules 6.2(2)(b), (2)(c), (2)(e)(3), and (2)(e)(4) and order the Academy to proceed with the case. Sadie Weekley seconded the motion. A group voice vote was taken. All Aye; 11-0, motion carried.

25-023: Ric Martinez entertained a motion. Nathan Fulk made a motion that Council find that the evidence gathered in the investigation does not substantiate a violation of 501 Iowa Administrative Code chapter 6, and that the Council therefore lacks probable cause to proceed with this matter. Aaron McClelland seconded the motion. A group voice vote was taken. All Aye; 11-0, motion carried.

25-024: Ric Martinez entertained a motion. Aaron McClelland made a motion that the Council administratively close this case. Sadie Weekley seconded the motion. A group voice vote was taken. 9-Aye; 2-Recuse (Henderson/Venenga), motion carried.

25-026: Ric Martinez entertained a motion. Jana Abens made a motion that the Council find probable cause of a violation of 501 IAC rules 6.2(1)(f); 6.2(2)(b), (2)(c), and (2)(e)(4) and order the Academy to proceed with the case. Dan Jansen seconded the motion. A group voice vote was taken, 10-Aye; 1-Recuse (Weekley), motion carried.

25-029: Ric Martinez entertained a motion. Dan Jansen made a motion that the Council find probable cause of a violation of 501 IAC rules 6.2(1)(f); 6.2(2)(b), (2)(c), and (2)(e)(4) and order the Academy to proceed with the case. Melissa Henderson seconded the motion. A group voice vote was taken. All Aye; 11-0, motion carried.

25-031: Ric Martinez entertained a motion. Sadie Weekley made a motion that the Council find probable cause of a violation of 501 IAC rule 6.2(2)(e)(4) and order the Academy to proceed with the case. Dave McDaniel seconded the motion. A group voice vote was taken. 10-Aye; 1-Recuse (Venenga), motion carried.

25-034: Ric Martinez entertained a motion. Melissa Henderson made a motion that the Council find that, although the documents gathered in the course of the investigation may constitute a technical violation of the administrative rules; the evidence before the Council indicates that the alleged violation was not serious enough to warrant a hearing by the Council. The Council will not pursue formal disciplinary action in this matter. Jana Abens seconded the motion. A group voice vote was taken. All Aye; 11-0, motion carried.

25-038: Ric Martinez entertained a motion. Sadie Weekley made a motion that the Council find probable cause of a violation of 501 IAC rules 6.2(1)(f); 6.2(2)(b), (2)(e)(3), and (2)(e)(4) and order the Academy to proceed with the case. Melissa Henderson seconded the motion. A group voice vote was taken. 10-Aye; 1-Recuse (McClelland), motion carried.

The fourteenth item (#14) on the agenda was future agenda items. There were none.

The fifteenth item (#15) on the agenda was the future meetings:

- a. Screening Committee Meeting - September 16th (Deadline September 12th)
- b. October 2, 2025 at 9:00am (Deadline September 25th)
- c. October 16, 2025 (Rules Committee Meeting)

The sixteenth item (#16) on the agenda was to give notice of:

Public Hearing: September 24, 2025 at 9:00am on HF 901 Reciprocity Rules

The seventeenth item (#17) on the agenda was to adjourn the meeting.

Ric Martinez entertained a motion. Dan Jansen made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:15pm. Jana Abens seconded the motion. A group voice vote was taken. All Aye; 11-0, motion carried.



Ricardo Martinez II, Chair
Iowa Law Enforcement Academy Council



Date