

Applicant Review Committee

Meeting Minutes

June 24, 2026

The Applicant Review Committee of the Board on Public Safety Standards and Training held a regular meeting on June 24, 2026, at the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training located at 4190 Aumsville Hwy SE, Salem, Oregon. Director Marie Atwood called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

Committee Members:

Josh Aldrich, Oregon Sheriff's Jail Command Council, Corrections Policy Committee – (Teams)
Mark Boren, Public Member, Corrections Policy Committee – (Teams)
Kevin Dresser, Non-Management Law Enforcement, Police Policy Committee – (Teams)
Ronda Griffin, APCO-NENA, Telecommunications Policy Committee – (Teams)
Rob Wood, Public Member, Police Policy Committee – (Teams)

Committee Members Absent:

Mike Fletcher, Chair, APCO-NENA, Telecommunications Policy Committee

Guests:

Medford Police Department – (Teams)
Austin Casarez-Thompson – (Teams)

DPSST Staff:

Marie Atwood, Professional Standards Division Director
Jennifer Howald, Administrative Rules Coordinator
Melissa Lang-Bacho, Professional Standards Compliance Coordinator
Cindy Park, Professional Standards Compliance Coordinator
Juan Lopez-Hernandez, Executive Support Specialist



1. Introductions

- *Introductions of members, guests and staff.*

2. Approve February 25, 2026 Meeting Minutes

- *A consensus was reached to approve the February 25, 2026, meeting minutes.*

3. *Austin Casarez-Thompson, DPSST No. 67532; Application Review: Police

Presented by Victor Sanchez, Professional Standards Compliance Coordinator

Reason for Discretionary Review

The DPSST received an Application for Training (F5) and a Criminal History Reporting Form (F28) for Austin Casarez-Thompson, in which he disclosed a criminal disposition that occurred prior to his employment as a public safety professional.

On March 15, 2020, Casarez-Thompson was arrested in Phoenix, Arizona, and charged with DUI with a BAC of .08 or More and Extreme DUI – BAC .15 to .20, both misdemeanors. On

September 29, 2020, he pled guilty to DUI with a BAC of .08 or More in Maricopa County Justice Court. The Extreme DUI charge was dismissed as part of a plea agreement. He was sentenced to ten days in jail and three years of probation, which was terminated early on August 2, 2022.

Austin Casarez-Thompson provided verbal mitigation for committee consideration.

<i>Applicant Review Committee Discussion/Consensus/Vote</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>Vote</i>	<i>Outcome</i>
A consensus was reached to adopt the record.			
The Applicant Review Committee found the following moral fitness violations and factors: <i>Moral Fitness Violations:</i> • Dishonesty: The committee did not identify elements of dishonesty. • Gross Misconduct: Casarez-Thompson violated the Board's pre-employment moral fitness standard for Gross Misconduct when he chose to drive a motor vehicle on a public roadway while under the influence of alcohol. His actions placed himself, others, and property at risk of harm. <i>Aggravating Factors:</i> • Casarez-Thompson was arrested and convicted of DUI. • Casarez-Thompson was fired by his agency after the DUI incident. <i>Mitigating Factors:</i> • Casarez-Thompson was hired by an agency in Arizona and served well there without any evidence of leaving this employer under any derogatory circumstances. • Casarez-Thompson has a letter of support from his training sergeant. • Casarez-Thompson is present before the Committee today and provided verbal mitigation. • Casarez-Thompson pled guilty to the charge without contesting it six years ago. • Casarez-Thompson shows remorse for his actions and appears sincere. • Casarez-Thompson is a lateral hire and the employing agency in Arizona onboarded him despite his background. • Casarez-Thompson is accompanied today by leadership staff at Medford Police Department.			
A consensus was reached to confirm the identified aggravating and mitigating factors.			
Rob Wood moved that the committee affirm the moral fitness violations, as presented.	Mark Boren	5 ayes; 0 nays	Motion Passed Unanimously

Ronda Griffin moved, after considering the identified violations of the Board's pre-employment moral fitness standards and weighing the aggravating and mitigating circumstances unique to this case, that no action should be taken against Casarez-Thompson's application for training and subsequent certification.	Rob Wood	5 ayes; 0 nays	Motion Passed Unanimously
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4. Inquiry Closure – Information Only

Presented by Victor Sanchez, Professional Standards Compliance Coordinator

The DPSST presented the list of applicants for public safety training/certification who had engaged in pre-employment criminal conduct that was determined to not require committee review. This information was presented as information only and required no action by the committee.

5. Next Applicant Review Committee Meeting: July 22, 2026, at 11:00 a.m.

Administrative Notes:

These minutes reflect the order of the discussion/voting items as they appear on the official meeting agenda. The actual order in which they were discussed may vary.

All documents reviewed and discussed in this meeting are subject to Oregon Public Records Law (ORS 192.410 to ORS 192.505). These documents can be requested by contacting DPSST at dpsst.records@dpsst.oregon.gov.