

Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police
MICHIGAN LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCREDITATION PROGRAM



Onsite Final Report

Romulus Police Department

July 29, 2024

Team Leader: Patrick A. Beeman

Team Member: Louis Keele

A. Agency name, CEO and AM:

1. Agency: **Romulus Police Department**
11165 Olive
Romulus, MI 48174

(734) 955-8820
2. CEO: **Robert Pfannes**
Chief of Police
3. AM: **Captain Nicole Harris**
Accreditation Manager

B. Dates of the On-Site Assessment:

Monday, July 29, 2024

C. Assessment Team:

1. Team Leader: **Patrick A. Beeman, Deputy Chief**
Coldwater Police Department
57 Division Street
Coldwater, MI 49036

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2. Team Member: **Sergeant Louis Keele**
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D. Community and Agency Profile:

1. Community Profile

Romulus was settled in 1826 by a French-Canadian named Samuel Polyne, and became a township in 1835. Romulus remained a township until 1970 when it incorporated as a city.

The city has a strong mayor form of government and since 2021 has operated under the guidance of Mayor Robert McCraight. The City Council serves as its elected body and consists of a Mayor Pro-tem and five at-large council members.





The City of Romulus is located in southeastern Michigan just 20 miles west of the City of Detroit and at the convergence of two major interstates, I-94 and I-275. It is situated halfway between Detroit and Ann Arbor.

Romulus is a major automotive, transportation and shipping hub that is home to both the General Motors Powertrain plant and an Amazon regional distribution center. It has thirty-six (36) hotels within its borders, which is second in rooms only to the City of Detroit.

Nearly all the hotels are concentrated on the north side of Metro Airport along the Merriman and Middlebelt road corridors. The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) estimates that 26 million people cross through its borders every year.

The city itself is, and has always been, a diverse, close-knit community. As of 2022, there were 25,108 residents in the city with 9,275 households and a racial makeup that is divided nearly evenly between African-American and white residents. It has one public high school that many residents attended together. Romulus has four neighborhood parks that include basketball courts, baseball diamonds and a dog park. The city also has an indoor community athletic center with pools, courts, a large fitness area and banquet facilities.

Romulus is a growing community that houses an international airport, multiple Fortune 500 companies, and is rife with development opportunities. The City of Romulus prides itself in being, "the city with small town appeal and big city style."

2. Agency Profile

The Wayne County Sheriff's Department provided police coverage for Romulus until 1981, when the Romulus Police Department was formed. Mayor William Oakley appointed Donald Flood as the city's first Chief of Police. Twelve officers were hired to join Chief Flood as the Romulus Police Department took shape. By the end of 1982, the department had increased its size to 35 sworn officers, five dispatchers and two support / administrative staff members.

The Romulus Police Department is housed in the old Romulus Elementary School, located at 11165 Olive Street. During the early operations of the department, numerous rooms within the building still had elementary school chalkboards on the walls. In 1998, under the direction of Chief Charles Kirby, the police building was completely renovated to accommodate the increased needs of the department, which had climbed to a staff of 74 sworn officers. These modifications included report writing rooms, a secured front lobby, a dedicated booking and prisoner intake area and interview rooms.

Currently, the Romulus Police Department consists of 47 sworn officers with 9 civilian dispatchers. In addition to patrol they have a school resource officer, a special service officer, a task force officer and three detectives. The leadership team includes Chief

Pfannes, two captains, three lieutenants and five sergeants.

The Romulus Police Department provides police services to approximately 25,000 residents, 700 businesses and has a daytime population that more than doubles due to Detroit Metropolitan Airport. The City of Romulus has seen exciting economic growth over the last several years including the opening of Michigan's first Sheetz location, which is a 24-hour convenience store that was founded in 1952 and has more than 660 locations across six different states.

Over the years, the Romulus Police Department has strived to be community oriented. The department hosts and participates in numerous community events during the year including our annual bike ride, shop with a cop, thanksgiving dinner give away as well as many events such as cops & clippers, trunk or treats and the first responder's basketball tour.



The Romulus Police Department strives be a professional, proactive and service oriented law enforcement agency. Our focus is on problem-oriented and community-oriented policing which is embodied in our mission statement, “to protect the lives and property of the community we serve, to reduce the occurrences and fear of crime, and to enhance the safety of the public while partnering with our community. Our mandate is to do so with integrity, honor, respect, and compassion; while always conducting ourselves with the highest ethical standards to forever maintain our community's trust and confidence.”

3. CEO Biography

Chief Robert Pfannes has 37 years in policing and joined the Romulus Police Department in March of 2020, after retiring as the Chief of Police at the Ann Arbor Police Department.

The son of a Detroit Police Officer, Chief Pfannes started with the Detroit Police Department in 1987. Facing layoffs, he moved on to the Garden City Police Department before eventually landing at the Ann Arbor Police Department where he found a home for 22 years.

Over his career, Chief Pfannes has worked uniform patrol, plain clothes major crimes, undercover narcotics, low-income housing and a downtown business district beat. He has been a road patrol Sergeant, Detective Sergeant, SWAT team leader, P.S.A.P. Supervisor and Professional Standards Section Commander. While a Detective Lieutenant, he served as the department's Public Information Officer and Detective Section Commander



before his promotion to Deputy Chief where he oversaw Patrol Operations and Support Services. As Chief, he oversaw AAPD's accreditation.

Chief Pfannes has taught at the Wayne County Regional Police Academy at Schoolcraft College for the past 31 years; presented at the University of Michigan Ross School of Public Policy; teaches at the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police – New Police Executive School and Shield Leadership Training among others. He has served on numerous boards and committees, including the Washtenaw Police Academy Advisory Board, (RISS) Regional Information Sharing Systems board, and the Washtenaw County Prosecutor's Domestic Violence Advisory Committee among others. Chief Pfannes has a bachelor's degree from Madonna University and is a graduate of Eastern Michigan University's School of Staff and Command.

4. Accreditation Manager Biography



Captain Nicole Harris has 19 years in policing and joined the Romulus Police Department in September of 2005 after graduating from Wayne County Regional police academy.

Captain Harris was the first law enforcement officer in her family and graduated from Romulus High School in 2001. She has given back to her community by coaching high school softball and helping to organize numerous community events over the years. Captain Harris is a graduate of Madonna University where she obtained her bachelor's degree in public administration.

Over her career, Captain Harris has worked in uniformed patrol including being a field training officer and evidence technician. As a sergeant, she oversaw road patrol before transferring to the administrative sergeant position which oversaw the field training program, evidence technician program and in-house training program. Once promoted to lieutenant, she remained in the administrative position and attended Eastern Michigan University School of Police Staff and Command. Once promoted to Captain, she became the accreditation manager and assembled a team to ensure the department achieved re-accreditation. In addition to accreditation, Captain Harris oversees the patrol operations division as well as the PSAP center.

5. Future Issues

The agency cited three issues or challenges facing the department now and in the near future: Retention, Building Renovation, Sustaining Success. These three challenges are discussed below.

Robert Pfannes – Chief of Police

Robert Pfannes has been the Chief of the Romulus Police Department for the past 4 years. We began our conversation discussing some of the challenges Pfannes encountered when he took over which will lead into the challenges the department faces going forward.

Pfannes was retired from the Ann Arbor Police Department for 7 months when he was contacted in March of 2020 about the Chief's position in Romulus. Among the issues he faced upon his arrival was a revenue generating model of policing based on traffic enforcement (about \$1.6 - 2 million per year city budget expectation), a violent crime problem, a highly unacceptable response time, and only 38 officers (down from 60). Much of the violent crime was committed by and against non-residents attracted to the hotel district and a handful of other hotspots.

Pfannes observed that there was a great deal of support from the public for the police department when he arrived. He found the city administration to be supportive in the abstract, but highly unaware of the police department's urgent needs and challenges. Pfannes said the city administration seemed surprised initially, but ended up being very receptive when the facts were presented. Since then, collaborative efforts have developed and the city has demonstrated their commitment to provide needed improvements to the police department and prioritize its needs as city goals.

Pfannes described the community as historically, racially diverse, with a nearly 50/50 racial split, and mostly middle to lower income residents. Many of the older residents went to school together and nearly all city events have diverse participation. The city could be described as "old fashioned" by some as it celebrates its veterans, Flag Day and many other patriotic events that have fallen by the wayside in other cities. Defying the national narrative on police relations, the city's Public Safety Millage proposal passed in a landslide with 75% in support.

The chief recounted a story when he was brand new and stopped at a small, local Baptist church for a fish fry. He said he likes fish and chips, heard about the fundraiser and stopped by for lunch. He was unknown to the congregants and was eyed very suspiciously when he walked in wearing a suit and holding a prep radio. While he waited for his lunch, one of the women volunteers warily asked him how he heard about the fish fry. He told them he saw it on the city's website and introduced himself as their new police chief. He said she grabbed his arm excitedly and called out that the police chief was there. All the volunteers rushed out of the kitchen to meet him. They told him that they were honored that he would come to their benefit. He said he was surprised (and a little bit embarrassed by their reaction) but that it told him a lot about the type of community he would be serving.

Pfannes said as part of assessing the department, he met with each officer individually and found that they had a lot of good people working there. He stressed that he did not discover just having good officers, but good people working as police officers. As far as

the police department was concerned, Pfannes said that despite having good people, they were a rudderless ship. The previous chief had been off work on an emergency medical leave for over a year and the city hadn't appointed an interim or acting chief. They had excellent people in the second tier of the management team who had been holding the department together through sheer dedication and no defined authority.

And then there was the 100-year-old school building the police department is housed in; industrial trash cans lining the walls and buckets collecting water from the leaks in the roof. The carpet appeared to have plant life growing in places.

To address some of the pressing issues the department faced, Pfannes began to work with the Mayor to increase his awareness of the police department's challenges. He disbanded the traffic unit during COVID returning those officers to patrol. Increases in sworn and dispatcher staffing were approved. They went after the violent crime problem by identifying the hot spots and then using policing initiatives as well as an all-city department approach, which brought attention from the building department, ordinance enforcement and rental inspections to bear on hot spots. And they began recruiting and hiring more officers. According to Chief Pfannes, they are now authorized for 50 officers and are currently at 47. They began working with state and federal leaders to tour the facilities at RPD in order to get some grant support for funding a new or renovated police department. Pfannes said he pushed towards MLEAC accreditation as it was a great way to assess and put his stamp on the organization.

Chief Pfannes indicated staffing was a challenge going forward, which is not unique to Romulus. In addition to recruiting, he is concerned about retention and not burning out his people. The building was another challenge. He said that the officers had been promised a new building for 30 years, but nothing ever improved. They used grant money for a \$100,000-dollar roof repair, new carpet, and interior paint. There are no more buckets collecting water or huge trash containers lining the hall. Among the options they considered for facilities included building a new station, renovating another local building, or reconstructing their existing building.

Chief Pfannes said that due to cost and because he and the city wanted to maintain their downtown presence, the reconstruction option is the most viable. He likes their current location and pointed out that the police department anchors two lower income, but low crime neighborhoods. Pulling out would be devastating to them, leaving a large, blighted property that would be destabilizing. The project is moving and architects have been hired.

Finally, Chief Pfannes pointed out their third challenge was to maintain their movement forward. He said turning a department around was easier in some respects than a new chief coming into a successful department and making changes. He points out that his employees wanted change. However, he said he has gotten a lot of buy-in from the employees, the city, and the community and is optimistic for the future of the Romulus Police Department.

On a side note, the assessors noticed a large white board in the Chief's office, filled with columns of information including department goals, opportunities, and leadership philosophy regarding professionalism, accountability and staffing support. When asked, the Chief explained that he put that up when he took over to help him plan the way forward. He said many of the items on the list have been accomplished. The board serves as a visual reminder to the Chief and the staff of where they are heading.

E. Public Information Activities:

Public notice and input are cornerstones of democracy and MLEAC accreditation. This section reports on the community's opportunity to comment on their law enforcement agency and to bring matters to the attention of the commission that otherwise may be overlooked.

1. Telephone Contacts

The public telephone line was active on Monday from 1 – 3 p.m. The telephone line was tested and found to be functional. Three calls were received.

Sean Mullins said he was a lifelong resident and business owner for the past 40-years. He said he has had nothing but positive contacts with the Romulus Police Department, both personally and professionally. He said they exemplify courtesy and professionalism. Mullins said that he operates restaurants and works night shifts where he has seen people on substances, emergency medical calls, etc. and RPD are often the first responders on scene. He said he has had employees robbed, and RPD officers took care of their safety and emotional needs. Mullins said that he fully supports Romulus Police Department's accreditation efforts. He said that accreditation helps dispel a lot of issues people have with law enforcement because it is a third-party review.

Kathy Green advised she is a long-term resident of Romulus and called in to express her opinion of the department. She went on to state that they are very professional and treat the citizens of the city very well. They are extremely involved in the community engagement initiatives such as shop with a hero, turkey give-away at Thanksgiving, and other city sponsored events and activities. She feels the officers are committed to the city and its residents. Green also gave a special note of gratitude to Captain Harris advising, "she's the best."

Gary Harris said he has worked and lived in Romulus for 46-years. He said he wanted to put in a good word for RPD because they are good people. According to Harris, RPD has made some good strides in the past few years under Chief Pfannes and noted they are doing some good things. RPD has a good presence in the community, and he has heard from others who have had to call RPD for help that they are prompt and take care of business. Harris said he supports RPD's accreditation.

2. Correspondence

The assessors received no copies of correspondence regarding the reaccreditation process.

3. Media Interest

There were no inquiries from the media to assessors regarding the on-site.

4. Community Outreach Contacts

Robert McCraight – Mayor of Romulus

McCraight has been the Mayor of Romulus for the past three years and prior to that spent 25-years working for the city. He said he thinks the PD is doing an incredible job compared to where they started. McCraight said he and Chief Pfannes have a clear and open relationship which includes weekly meetings. According to McCraight, Pfannes doesn't pull any punches, he gives it to him straight and backs it up with data. The Mayor said the department is doing a good job recruiting, and though they are currently understaffed, they have approval for four new positions. McCraight said the department enjoys the support of the community, which never bought into the defund police movement, and recently passed a public safety millage with 75% approval. McCraight explained that Romulus is a hard-working, blue collar town, and they want to invest in public safety.

Among the challenges facing the department, McCraight pointed out the recent murder of a police officer in neighboring Melvindale and said not many people want to be a police officer right now. Next, he spoke about growth. He said Romulus is growing with economic development, but that growth will be constrained without a safe community. He said Detroit Metro Airport is the largest economic engine in their community, so they play to their strengths: planes, trains and automobiles. He said they have two large tracts of land available for jobs and industry.

McCraight said that Chief Pfannes brought him data showing that crime had spiked in the hotel district during Covid. He said people weren't travelling and the hotels had filled up with transients. Romulus implemented a whole-of-city approach to the problem. The police would go out and address the immediate issue, then other city departments would go out the next day to include the building department, ordinance enforcement, etc. This approach showed the officers that the whole city would address the problem to back up the police department.

Mayor McCraight said the police department needs a new building. They are currently housed in an old school building that was supposed to be temporary. He said they were trying to get ARPA funds, but their proposal did not work out. Now they are looking at renovating their current building, gutting it and rebuilding in what will be a \$10 million project. He said they have already secured a \$1 million grant from the state to get things started.

The Mayor said he thinks accreditation is a great thing, combining best practices with outside review. He said he is proud of the work done by the Romulus Police Department.

Tina Talley, Romulus City Councilwoman

Tina Talley has served on the City Council for the past 7 years. She said she may be biased, but said she cannot say enough good things about the police department. She is impressed with the way they handle things, doing a professional job even while they are shorthanded. She said she would compare the Romulus Police Department against anybody.

Talley pointed to the hotel district as a hot spot. She said the police department makes sure they have the district covered, but also maintains a presence in the rest of the city. She said the department does a good job of balancing the needs of the community.

Talley described Romulus as a small, close-knit community where everyone knows everyone else. She said having RPD officers engaged in the community goes a long way to foster that environment. Talley gave a few examples of officer engagement with the community such as a bike ride for kids, Trunk or Treats at Halloween, they stop and play basketball with the kids. She said the department is building relationships with the community.

Talley addressed some challenges facing the department, to include getting the staffing levels back up. She acknowledged that this is a problem that is not unique to Romulus as every department is facing issues with recruiting and retention. Talley said that she is not sure what to do about recruiting and retention, but she has spoken to Chief Pfannes and believes he is a smart guy. She said she prays about this issue. Councilwoman Talley said they have a great city, and they are working to make it better.

Kevin Losen, Human Resources Director

Kevin Losen has been the Human Resources Director for the City of Romulus for the past 8-years. Prior to that he served with the Wayne County Sheriff's Office for 28-years. Losen said he gets to take credit for bringing Chief Pfannes to Romulus as he called him about the Chief position at RPD.

According to Losen, the recruiting environment at Romulus PD is much improved. He pointed to their last contract with Police Officer's Association of Michigan, a 5-year deal that will see officer wages increased 28% over the course of the contract. Losen said they checked comparable cities and RPD was in the middle. With the new contract RPD is near the top, which has helped a lot with recruiting and retention.

Losen said Chief Pfannes has been working on a new cadet program in which the department will hire people interested in policing in a part-time capacity. If the

department likes what they see in the cadet, they will sponsor them through the academy and add them to their patrol officer staff upon graduation. Losen said the department is currently authorized 50 officers. They were down 10, mostly through attrition / retirements at the beginning of the year, but their numbers are rebounding. The work environment at RPD has been vastly improved.

Losen said RPD has a very solid chief, which has brought stability to the department that hasn't been there for the past 20-25 years. He said that when he was patrolling with WCSO, RPD did not have a good reputation. He also referenced the fact that some police leadership were sent to prison about 15-years ago, and that is a situation that is very difficult to overcome. However, Losen said they have brought in quality people and their leadership has turned things around. He said the people who work at RPD and lived through it have noticed the difference of working under a chief with integrity. He said the city has been addressing retention in the last two contracts. They are also working on a new facility to make it a better place to work.

Losen said that from his perspective as the HR director, the city has a good working relationship with the unions. He said very few grievances get to his desk, meaning that if a situation arises it is generally worked out at the department level. Losen said that they have not had a police arbitration case in the 8-years he has been the HR Director.

Jerry Golden, Senior Dispatcher

Jerry Golden has worked for RPD for 21-years, all in dispatch, and sits on the POAM board. Golden said that POAM has a good relationship with department management. He said their last contract was settled about a year ago, it was a good deal, and he hasn't heard anyone complaining about it.

Golden said there was a lot of back and forth during contract talks, with between 15 and 20 meetings during the process. He said he never felt disrespected during the process. He said it was just a matter of working things out, and a couple of sticking points took longer to work out than others. Golden said they had one grievance a couple of years ago, but he did not remember what the issue was. According to Golden, Chief Pfannes and shift command are very willing to sit down and talk about issues, Chief Pfannes hears them, and they work together as a team.

Golden said he has 4-more years until retirement. He summed things up by saying RPD is a good place to work, most people like it there and it seems like they are going in the right direction.

Marc Cook, Police Officer

Cook is a rookie police officer currently undergoing the FTO process, which he said is going well. Cook said he liked how everything in the FTO program was structured, and he is getting a lot of training with RPD instead of being thrown to the wolves. Cook said RPD uses PowerFTO to manage the FTO process which helps keep everything on

track. He reports that everyone has been very helpful and they treat each other like family.

Cook said the challenges he is facing as a new employee include finding a good work-life balance. He said he has two young girls at home, and he is working 8-hour shifts as opposed to the 12-hour shifts other agencies use. He said he is looking to go to the midnight shift after FTO so he can have more time for his family.

Cook said he was attracted to RPD because he has family in the downriver area and a brother in law works in a neighboring community. He said Chief Pfannes seems like a down to earth person who knows what he is doing, and other people from his police academy work at RPD as well.

5. Agency Ride-along

Assessor Keele conducted a ride along with Officer Mark Salazar from approximately 1030 a.m. until 12 p.m. Officer Salazar was assigned to the north end of the city during this shift. He patrolled and conducted “property checks” at a number of local manufactured home communities. Salazar advised that he retired after 22 years as a police officer in the city of Detroit and came to Romulus to work for the past 4 years. He spoke of the differences between the departments and the type of work conducted. He stated that he enjoys working in Romulus due to the fact that there is extreme diversity within the community. Due to the airport and hotels within the city, Salazar advised that he has contact with people from all walks of life, economic status and cultures which provides for a unique policing experience.

Salazar said the hotel district brings challenges to the department by way of drugs. Some of the hotels utilize low rates and fail to maintain the properties in an effort to salvage some income and compete. We toured the “hotel district” and witnessed some of the conditions first hand. Some of the hotels are being renovated. One of the more challenging properties has recently been sold to a competitor and is in the process of being torn down, with plans to replace it with a larger more reputable hotel. This is due in part to the efforts of the city and the Mayor who recognized the problems and took an overall approach to combat the issue.

According to Salazar, when police are called to these properties and observe deficiencies in the buildings and management, ordinance and building officials are dispatched to follow up and enforce code violations. This has helped encourage the business owners to take a more vested interest in the properties and their maintenance. The businesses are also more selective on what activities they allow that may be a cause for police attention, keeping some of the undesirable activities out of the city.

Salazar advised they work 8-hour shifts (days, afternoons, midnights) and are staffed with 4 patrol officers and 2 supervisors. The workload varies from day to day, some are extremely busy and other days not so bad. One of the aspects he likes about the department is the fact that officers are more “well rounded” because they handle the calls from start to finish. When in Detroit, Salazar said patrol conducted very little follow

up, and many units exist to handle specific tasks. An example of that would be an OWI arrest; in Detroit that would be turned over to a traffic unit and patrol would return to taking calls for service.

In Romulus the initiating officer handles the incident through sobriety tasks, PBT, arrest, and chemical test. With that Romulus PD does a very good job of training officers in areas other than just firearms and defensive tactics.

During the ride along only one call for service was dispatched, a citizen assist for a disabled vehicle causing a traffic obstruction. Officer Salazar approached the driver and spoke in a very professional manner and came to a solution to assist. He was able to push the vehicle into a nearby parking lot to await the arrival of a tow truck. He did so in a safe manner and utilized his overhead lights and traffic vest for visibility. It was apparent that the citizen was very appreciative of the efforts and the positive contact with police.

In regards to the relationship between the police department and elected officials, Salazar spoke very highly of the partnership that exists. He advised that the council and Mayor are very supportive of the department. He believes they are truly committed to the progress of the city and the well-being of the officers.

Officer Salazar was an outstanding representative of the Romulus Police Department.

F. Essential Services:

Chapter 1 – The Administrative Function:

Direction of Personnel

The chief of police has the authority to issue, modify, repeal, amend, revise, and approve agency policies and procedures, general orders, and special orders. The agency policies were clear and understandable. The policies were constructed in a logical manner with employee duties and responsibilities clearly defined. The system is managed by Power DMS.

The agency's mission statement: "It is the mission of the Romulus Police Department to protect the lives and property of the community we serve, to reduce the occurrences and fear of crime, and to enhance the safety of the public while partnering with our community. Our mandate is to do so with integrity, honor, respect, and compassion; while at all times conducting ourselves with the highest ethical standards to forever maintain our community's trust and confidence."

Fiscal Control

The only cash account that is maintained within the police department is a petty cash fund for minor purchases not to exceed \$25. All receipts and logs are maintained by the

Administrative Assistant and quarterly reviews are conducted by police command.

All other transactions are handled through the Treasurer's Office at City Hall including payments for copies of reports, FOIA's and other related records.

Internal Affairs

The agency accepts and investigates all complaints, including anonymous complaints. All internal investigation files are properly secured with limited access. All complaints filed have a final disposition made by the chief of police, and the complainant is notified of the outcome.

During the assessment period the agency received the following complaints:

Y1 – 10 Total Complaints

(4 internal employee investigations and 6 external citizen complaints)

Unfounded: 6

Founded: 0

Founded in part: 2

One internal complaint still pending at time of report

Y2 – 14 Total Complaints

(9 internal employee investigations and 5 external citizen complaints)

Unfounded: 4

Founded: 10

Founded in part: 0

Y3 – 11 Total Complaints

(7 internal employee investigations and 4 external citizen complaints)

Unfounded: 6

Founded: 5

Founded in part: 0

All founded complaints were addressed through training and discipline up to and including termination when warranted.

Romulus PD staff prepares a comprehensive annual report regarding internal investigations to identify any trends, training or equipment issues.

Disciplinary Procedures

The agency has well-established policies and procedures that detail the rules, regulations and expectations for employee conduct. The agency is well disciplined and has procedures to apply training and counseling in lieu of punitive employee discipline. Disciplinary action can include oral reprimand, written reprimand, suspension without pay, demotion, or discharge. The agency has a grievance procedure that is established by the collective bargaining agreement.

Organization

All sworn personnel take, sign, and subsequently abide by an oath of office to enforce the law and uphold the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Michigan. All agency personnel acknowledge a code of ethics. Bias-influenced policing is strictly prohibited by the agency. There is a definition for bias-influenced policing, including prejudicial decisions affecting individuals in classes protected by federal and state law.

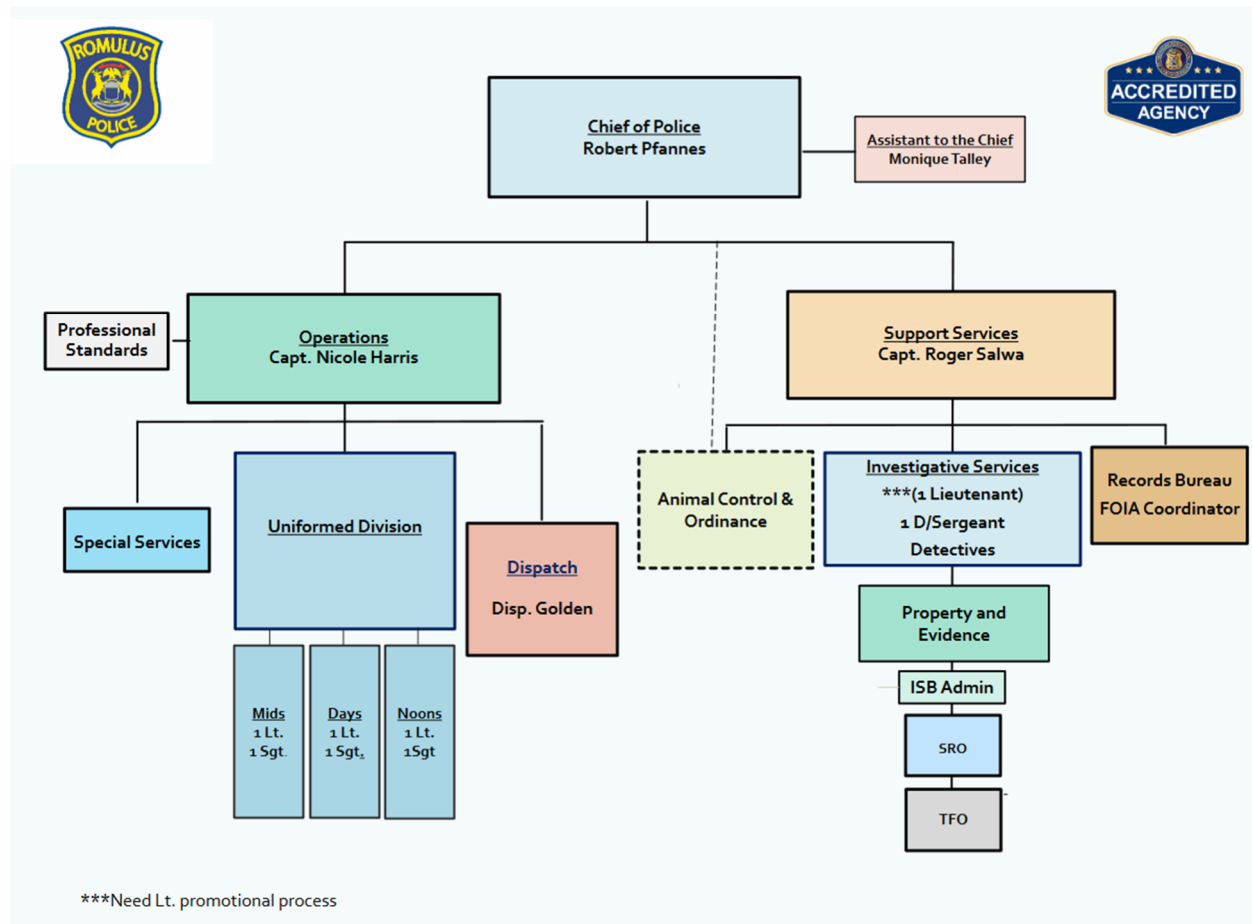
The agency also prohibits unlawful workplace discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment. The written directive outlines a proper reporting mechanism in the chain of command, including an alternate reporting process for any conflict of interest. The directive requires employees to report any type of harassment and requires investigations to be conducted in accordance with state law. There were no reported incidents of harassment during the assessment period.

Police personnel have a structured unity of command. In the Romulus Police Department, the chief of police is supported by two Captains and four Lieutenants. One Captain oversees the Support Services and the other oversees Operations. There is currently a vacancy for a Lieutenant assigned to Investigative Services.

The department currently consists of 47 sworn personnel. Sworn Personnel consists of the Chief of Police, two Captains, three Lieutenants, five Sergeants and 39 Police Officers, 4 of which are assigned to investigations. RPD does have one Officer assigned out to a special investigative unit, and currently have 4 sponsored recruits attending the Wayne County Regional Police Academy, scheduled to graduate in November 2024.

The police department is a full-service, 24-hour operation. Patrol services work eight-hour shifts and are broken up into platoons. Each shift is manned with 4 patrol Officers and 2 command officers. Dispatch is also a 24-hour operation with 2 dispatchers assigned to each 8-hour shift.

The agency's organizational chart is reproduced below.



Agency Equipment and Property

Agency personnel are responsible for the proper care of department property and any equipment that is assigned to them and to report any malfunctions, damage, or loss of equipment immediately to a supervisor. The wearing of body armor is mandatory for all sworn personnel, with additional requirements to wear body armor while engaged in pre-planned and high-risk operations.

Public Information

The Operations Captain serves as the PIO for immediate issues affecting the public such as road closures, severe traffic accidents, weather events, or incidents primarily handled by units under their command.

The Support Services Captain serves as the PIO for incidents that are, or will be ongoing criminal investigations, or for issues primarily handled by the units under their command.

No press release, or official statement representing Romulus Police may be initiated by a member of the department without prior notification and approval from the Chief or his

designee.

Agency Records and Computers

The agency has a detailed policy describing field reporting, follow-up investigations, and the approval of reports by supervisors. The department controls access to agency records electronically with records management passwords. The agency uses Oakland County's Courts and Law Enforcement Management Information System (CLEMIS) for records management. There are extra security measures for non-public records. Records personnel handle all Freedom of Information requests (FOIA), and the agency abides by the state retention and disposal requirements in accordance with Michigan Statute and Records Management.

The agency has procedures to protect its central records. The data is stored and backed up electronically and is password-protected. There were no breaches in security during the assessment period.

All paper copies are maintained by records personnel and secured in locked areas.

Agency Training

The agency's training records are current and are being maintained in accordance with applicable retention schedules. Training course content is outlined, and lesson plans are utilized. In-house instructors are properly trained and experienced. New sworn personnel are required to complete an extensive training program. Officers in field training rotate shifts. Field training officers are selected and trained through a documented process. Annual training includes firearms, legal update, non-deadly force decision making, Taser proficiency, Haz-mat, and use of force.

Authorization and Use of Agency Weapons and Ammunition

The Chief of Police (CEO) is the authorizing authority for weapons and ammunition requirements, including specialized weapons. The agency uses certified/qualified staff for armorer inspections, repairs, and replacement. Records of weapons are properly maintained with written guidelines for storage and maintenance.

The facility contains a secured armory where weapons and ammunition are stored. It is adequately stocked with ammunition and back-up firearms. An armorer's bench and tools are present to facilitate the maintenance of duty weapons. Out of service weapons are clearly indicated.

CHAPTER 2 – The Personnel Function:

Personnel Benefits and Responsibilities

The agency has an established policy outlining an employee assistance program (EAP), line-of-duty injury and death policy, and an employee collision and review process. The

agency uses a third-party provider for the Employee Assistance Program which is well advertised and accessible to the employees. The agency also has a comprehensive exposure control and reporting policy.

Performance Evaluations

The agency policy and procedure require all agency personnel to receive documented monthly face to face coaching and feedback sessions. The system includes directions to raters regarding evaluation responsibilities and procedures on how to use the required forms. The evaluation system has a clear appeal process. The agency has an established early warning system.

Promotion of Sworn Personnel

The promotional process is conducted in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement between the Police Officer's Association of Michigan (POAM) and the Chief when promotional needs are established.

The process consists of written evaluations, oral boards and additional factors such as seniority and education. A score is then derived from the above assessments and candidates are ranked in order of scores and the Chief can choose from the two top qualifying candidates. A probationary period of 12 months is established for newly promoted personnel.

Recruitment of Sworn Personnel

The Romulus Police Department actively participates in the recruitment of sworn personnel. The agency is taking steps to attract qualified applicants. The recruitment plan contains a clear statement that the agency is committed to equal opportunity. The stated goals and objectives for recruitment are clear and understandable.

The agency actively recruits new personnel through promoting activities that will increase the pool of applications such as attending job fairs, school programs, and public employment programs. The agency attends local police academies and other community events in an effort to continually seek out qualified applicants. The recruitment plan is scheduled to be reviewed annually.

Selection of Personnel

The agency has a complete written process for the selection of new full-time personnel, which includes a thorough background investigation, as well as a medical and psychological exam. The Office of the Chief of Police is directly involved in the interview and hiring process of new applicants.

Romulus is currently sponsoring 4 recruits at the Wayne County Regional Police Academy (Schoolcraft College), after a selection process of candidates.

Reserve Officers and Civilian Volunteers

Romulus does not utilize any Reserve Police Officers, Civilian Volunteers or Cadets as part of their staffing model.

CHAPTER 3 – The Operations Function:

Arrest, Search and Seizure

The Romulus Police Department is a full-service agency with arrest powers. The agency and its policies follow the U.S. Constitution in relation to arrest, search and seizure. The agency recognizes the foundation set forth in the Fourth Amendment.

Agency policies outline warrantless search exceptions to the search warrant rule as well as the process for obtaining and serving court authorized search warrants. Agency policies cover the arrest of persons with and without warrants, as well as alternatives to custodial arrests. Policies also exist for special circumstances such as the arrest of foreign nationals or people of limited capacity. Arrestees are fingerprinted and photographed as part of the booking process.

In the event that an arrestee has to care for dependents, officers ensure the dependents are in a safe environment prior to leaving the scene. If the dependents are minors, officers facilitate placement with an adult care taker.

Agency directives contain criteria for strip and body cavity searches, which can only be conducted with supervisory approval. All such searches shall be done in private and by a member of the same sex as the person being searched. No body cavity search, except the mouth, is permitted without a court authorized search warrant, and must be documented according to Michigan statutes.

Interview and Interrogation

The Romulus Police Department has established procedures for compliance with contemporary criminal procedural requirements related to interviews, investigative detention interviews, and interrogations. Juvenile suspects are afforded the same rights as adults with regards to interviews and interrogations with the additional requirement of parental notification when possible. The agency records all suspect interviews or interrogations. RPD maintains two interview rooms with recording equipment for custodial interviews, as well as third room for conducting interviews of people who are not in custody. Officers may summon assistance by requesting it from a second officer detailed to monitor the interview, or by use of the officer's two-way radio or emergency button in the booking area adjacent to the custodial interview rooms.

Use of Force

The Romulus Police Department limits officer's use of force to that which is objectively

reasonable to overcome resistance. Their policies define key terms and outline criteria for escalation and de-escalation of the use of force. Chokeholds are prohibited. The agency places restrictions on the use of deadly force, and identifies criteria for use of less lethal and weaponless controls. The agency requires medical aid when a person complains of injury after a use of force incident, appears to be in distress, or is rendered unconscious. Among the responsibilities of a supervisor are to review the incident and forward a report to the Professional Standards Sergeant for a meaningful review of the use of force. The agency completes an annual documented summary and written analysis of all use of force incidents. RPD defines a use of force incident as any use of force above compliant handcuffing for reporting and review purposes.

RPD reported 32 use of force incidents in 2021, 42 in 2022, and 53 in 2023. It should be noted that the number of calls handled by the agency increased each year of the assessment period and employee staffing levels increased each year as well. In 2023, RPD experienced a 200% increase in use of force related to assault runs, and 400% increase in runs involving an armed suspect.

No officer used lethal force or discharged a firearm during the assessment period. The agency tracks use of force incidents with a tracking form, which is also facilitates the meaningful review of each incident. In year two an employee was placed on administrative leave while under investigation for a potential excessive force incident. The agency complies with the National Use Of Force Data Collection requirements. The Duty To Intervene standard took effect during year three of the assessment period, with the agency reporting a Non-Occurrence.

Communications

The Romulus Police Department maintains a two-way radio system for communicating with personnel in the field. RPD has an in-house PSAP for police / fire / medical calls within Romulus. The agency uses CLEMIS for CAD and records management functions, which generates all required fields for each call for service such as a unique incident number, date, time, location, etc. RPD has access to primary and secondary channels for internal communications, as well as a Statewide Region 2 channel for inter-agency communications. Agency policies dictate when a dispatcher shall assign backup units and when supervisory notification is required, and the proper handling of misdirected or abandoned 9-1-1 calls.

The agency's PSAP has the ability to immediately replay all 9-1-1 calls and radio traffic. The recordings are maintained in excess of 31 days, and procedures exist to safeguard recordings for evidence or other requests for copies.

The agency was found to be out of compliance with standard 3.4.5 Medical Calls because they lost their ability to handle Emergency Medical Dispatch with certified staff in year two of the assessment period. This issue will be discussed in detail below in the section discussing non-compliance issues. EMD requirements were returned to compliance in year three of the assessment period.

The agency is equipped with a backup generator to provide electricity to their entire department in the event of a power outage. The generator is maintained in accordance with manufacturer's instructions, to include an annual load test.

Field Activities

The Romulus Police Department was involved in 25 police pursuits in 2021, with 18 and 19 in subsequent years. The agency's policy authorizes pursuits for traffic violations through felony offenses with specified restrictions. Supervisory approval is required to participate in an inter-agency pursuit. Agency policies stipulate that all personnel involved in a pursuit must file a written report, and each pursuit has a meaningful review. The agency completes an annual documented summary and analysis of all pursuits in the aggregate. The agency prohibits the use of roadblocks or intentional collisions to end pursuits.

The agency's policies and training provide guidance for officers when interacting with people who are emotionally impaired, suffering from mental disturbance or emotional crisis.

The agency utilizes video recording equipment to include in car and body worn cameras. Officers are required to record all citizen contacts in the performance of their duty. Retention of this data occurs in accordance with policy to assist with criminal and departmental investigations.

The agency maintains mobile data computers within their patrol vehicles in compliance with CJIS standards.

The Romulus Police Department has a comprehensive policy covering foot pursuits that prohibits destructive criticism and authorizes an officer to terminate the pursuit when the risks outweigh the need to apprehend the suspect. A meaningful review is conducted on each pursuit, as well as an annual documented summary and analysis of foot pursuits in the aggregate.

Employees of RPD are required to wear safety belts in accordance with Michigan law while operating department vehicles. Further, passengers in the vehicles are also required to wear safety belts. The department requires officers to use child safety seats when necessary, and makes child seats available to staff for this purpose.

The Romulus Police Department does not field a canine team.

Traffic Safety and Enforcement

The Romulus Police Department has applicable policies in place regarding traffic violation enforcement, enforcement options, offenders, and traffic direction and control.

The directive establishes procedures to conduct motor vehicle stops, including high-risk stops. The enforcement options include verbal warnings, citations, and arrest when appropriate.

Homeland Security/Critical Incidents

The agency has a critical incident system in place, which includes command, operations, planning, logistics and administration. The agency did not respond to any critical incidents where ICS protocols applied during the assessed period. The special events standard was added in year three of the assessment period, and the agency has a policy in place that covers vehicle and pedestrian traffic into and out of the area, traffic control, emergency vehicle access, etc. This protocol was used for the NFL Draft, in which RPD conducted a continuous, visible and proactive police presence in the Hotel District in order to ensure safety and deter crime.

CHAPTER 4 – The Investigative Function:

Criminal Investigation

The Romulus Police Department case management system starts with a case review by the on-duty supervisor, who ensures all reports and required forms are complete and forwards cases to the appropriate bureau for follow-up as needed. Criminal complaints in which prosecution will be sought are reviewed by a detective, and criminal complaints involving juveniles are reviewed by the juvenile officer. All part 1 crimes, home invasions and larcenies involving the theft of over \$1,000 are assigned to a detective.

Agency policies outline procedures for eyewitness identifications to include show-ups, photographic line-ups, and in-person line-ups. Witnesses are interviewed after the line-up procedure to assess witness confidence and every eyewitness identification is documented.

Crime Scene Processing

The agency has trained evidence technicians that are available 24 hours a day for crime scene processing. Written directives are in place to ensure the proper identification, preservation and collection of evidentiary items by officers, as well as transmission to a crime lab for further analysis.

Storage of Evidence and Property

Agency policies require that all property received or confiscated shall be entered into the records management system and securely submitted to the property function by the end of the officer's tour of duty. A written report is required to describe the property and how it came into the custody of the department. Agency policies specify extra security measures for exceptional, valuable or sensitive property items. The agency documents the chain of custody for property items from the time they receive the property through its release.

The agency has a designated Property / Evidence Custodian, who runs the property room. They also have an Alternative Property Custodian. The property room is locked, and inside the property room is an area with enhanced security that is secured by a secondary lock. The property room is monitored by video surveillance. The only people with keys and authorized access to the property room are the Property Custodian and Alternate Property Custodian.

The agency provides temporary submission lockers for officers to securely submit property to the property room.

The Romulus Police Department conducts required inspections, inventories, and audits in compliance with the standard. A full inventory was conducted in Year three of the assessment period when the Property Custodian retired and was replaced. During the tour of the facility during the on-site, the property room was found to be clean, secure and well organized.

Juvenile Matters

The Romulus Police Department has policies in place with regards to juvenile delinquency. The department works to release juvenile status offenders into the care of their parents or guardians as soon as possible. Status offenders, misdemeanants and victims of abuse or neglect are not placed in secured confinement. The department restricts placement into a juvenile facility for only those cases involving felony charges, or where the juvenile is a threat to the safety of themselves or others. The agency's directives ensure the protection of the juvenile's Constitutional rights.

Special Investigations and Operations

The agency has policies in place which dictate procedures for special investigations and operations. The agency did not conduct any surveillance, decoy, raid or undercover operations during the assessment period, nor did they use any confidential informants.

The agency has established policies regarding missing persons (juvenile and adult), including runaway cases, unidentified persons, and the safe delivery of newborns. There were no incidents where the agency needed to use Amber Alerts or the Law Enforcement Information Network (LEIN).

CHAPTER 5 – The Arrestee/Detainee/Prisoner Handling Function:

Transporting of Arrestees/Detainees/Prisoners

The Romulus Police Department has established policies and procedures to include searching vehicles and subjects prior to transport. Subjects are secured in caged vehicles and seat belts are utilized in compliance with State law.

The agency has a system to allow the rear seat belt to be fastened to a receptacle on the cage, rather than having the officer reach across the arrestee. Patrol vehicles are searched prior to and after an arrestee is transported.

Processing of Arrestees/Detainees/Prisoners

The department maintains a processing area. Appropriate weapon control policies and procedures are in place.

This area is monitored by closed circuit cameras and has an open mic in case of emergency which is monitored by dispatchers and supervisors. Policy and signage are in place regarding electronic equipment prohibited during breathalyzer tests which has been relocated to a separate semi enclosed room for accuracy due to interference when processing an intoxicated person close to the instrument.

An appropriate escape policy is in place and the processing area is secured by a locked door.

There is a secure sally port where lock boxes for weapons are installed and available for securing weapons before entering the processing room.

Holding of Arrestees/Detainees/Prisoners

The PD maintains a secure holding facility that houses prisoners on a short-term basis. Three holding cells are available to allow for the separation of males and females.

30-minute face-to-face checks are required. Video surveillance is used in between the face-to-face checks. In the event of a suicidal arrestee the face to face is shortened to 15 minutes and the utilization of blankets and mats are limited.

Appropriate training and evacuation policies and procedures are in place. The written directive requires personnel to be initially trained in the supervision and care of detainees with refresher training every three years. Under current policy only shift supervisors monitor the arrestees being housed at Romulus PD. Training of those supervisors occurs when the employee is promoted. A lot of discussion was conducted between the team and assessors regarding this policy and a review is under way to make the training more accessible and required to all sworn personnel in the event a supervisor is pulled away from that primary responsibility or during the course of an emergency or evacuation. Simply for the purpose of good practice.

Smoke detectors are in place and visually inspected each week and when the cell is occupied, but there is no set standard for operational testing. Weekly inspections of the area are conducted by on duty supervisors and any deficiencies noted.

Arrestees are provided with a blanket and food during their time of detention.

Chapter 6 – Campus Security And Policing

The Romulus Police Department, being a municipal law enforcement agency, has a waiver for standards contained in Chapter 6 which only pertain to college, university, or campus security or law enforcement agencies.

G. Applied Discretion Compliance Discussion:

There were no applied discretions assessed during this on-site.

H. Waivers of Standards:

This section provides specific information on those standards which qualified for waivers. Waivers are available to agencies when it is impossible to comply with a specific standard. A request to waive standard compliance must be made to the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police Accreditation Program Director in writing, on official agency letterhead, signed by the CEO. The following standards were granted non- applicable waivers:

Standard 2.6.1 Reserve / Auxiliary / Special Enforcement Personnel – The agency has a waiver as they do not employ personnel in these capacities.

Standard 2.6.2 Civilian Volunteers – The agency has a waiver as they do not utilize civilian volunteers.

Standard 3.5.9 Police Canines – The agency has a waiver for this standard as they do not have a police canine program.

Standard 4.5.3 Using Confidential Sources – The agency has a waiver for this standard as they do not utilize confidential informants.

Chapter 6 Campus Security – The agency has 13 waivers for chapter 6 in its entirety as it is not a college, university or campus law enforcement or security agency.

I. Standards Noncompliance Discussion:

The agency had one standard in noncompliance.

Standard 3.4.5 Medical Calls

ISSUE: No EMD function during year two of the assessment period.

AGENCY ACTION: The agency hired additional staff for the dispatch center and trained / certified all dispatchers to provide Emergency Medical Dispatch internally.

DISCUSSION: In year one, RPD's PSAP was under contract with the local ambulance

service, Rapid Response EMS, to provide emergency medical dispatch. When a medical call was received, the dispatcher would transfer the call to the ambulance company, who would then provide Emergency Medical Dispatch instructions to the caller.

During year two, Romulus P.D. was given approximately 3 weeks' notice that Rapid Response would be discontinuing service in Romulus for financial reasons and abruptly discontinued their EMD operation. This left RPD without the necessary time to sufficiently prepare, hire and train staff for EMD and Romulus fell out of compliance with the standard.

Chief Pfannes stated that they had to be approved for and hire more staff to be able to provide EMD services internally. He explained that they had a single dispatcher on duty, but due to their call load, the dispatch center needed at least two dispatchers to provide EMD and dispatch Fire as emergency medical calls cannot be placed on hold if a second call comes in at the same time. The Chief said the discontinuation of operations by Rapid Response EMS took them by surprise.

By year three, Romulus PD had fielded additional dispatchers, and certified all of them in Emergency Medical Dispatch, bringing the agency back into compliance with the standard.

This appears to be a unique situation that was outside of the agency's control, however they identified the issue, took steps to rectify the issue, and are once again in compliance with the standard.

J. Future Performance / Review Issues:

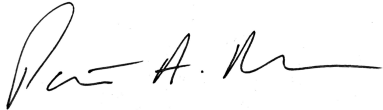
The initial accreditation of the Romulus Police Department was reportedly driven primarily by their accreditation manager. The AM retired during this three-year cycle and was replaced by a team of officers who had little to no experience with accreditation prior to this. They did an excellent job guiding the agency through this reaccreditation.

It is recommended that the accreditation team gain a deeper understanding of the application of the standards and the accreditation process by participating in mock assessments and perhaps applying to become MLEAC Assessors. This will position the agency for future success, and allow the team to compare their policies and operations to other agencies. Participation as a mock or on-site assessor usually benefits the agency by bringing back new ideas and best practices from other departments.

The assessors noted that the facility housing the police department is in need of renovation or replacement to better align the building for the purpose. The Chief and the Mayor have both indicated that this is a priority and expect to follow through on this project.

K. Summary and Recommendation:

Assessors conducted a thorough file review, supported by on-site observations and interviews. The Romulus Police Department was determined to be in-compliance with MLEAC accreditation standards, with one exception and waivers noted above. Reaccreditation is recommended.



Patrick Beeman, Team Leader

August 15, 2024

Date

Reviewed and Approved to be scheduled for a hearing before the MLEAC.

Ron Wiles, Program Director

Date