

Wyoming Court Security Commission

Record of Proceedings

Supreme Court Building, Room 237

Cheyenne, Wyoming

October 5, 2011

I. Call to Order

The Wyoming Court Security Commission public meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. on October 5, 2011, by Justice William Hill at the Supreme Court Building, Room 237, Cheyenne, Wyoming.

II. Roll Call and Introductions – Justice William Hill

In Attendance:

Commission Members:

Director Guy Cameron – Wyoming Office of Homeland Security
Judge Denise Nau – Laramie County Circuit Court
Justice William Hill – Wyoming Supreme Court
Chief Troy Lane – University of Wyoming Police Chief
Joe Hartigan – Supreme Court Security Officer

(VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE)

Judge Jeffrey Donnell – 2nd Judicial Court, Laramie, WY
Chief Justice Kite – Wyoming Supreme Court

(VIA TELECONFERENCE)

Sheriff Jack “Skip” Hornecker – Fremont County Sheriff
Representative Jon Botten – Wyoming House of Representatives

Absent:

Senator Drew Perkins – Wyoming Senate
Jeani Stone – Campbell County Attorney
Commissioner Mike Colling – Converse County Commission
Joann Odendahl – State Court Administrator/Supreme Court

Also Attending:

Rhonda Munger (for Joann Odendahl) - Deputy Court Administrator/Supreme Court
Becky Craig – Administrative Assistant/Supreme Court
Amber Green – Administrative Assistant/Wyoming Office of Homeland Security

Introductions:

Justice Hill introduced the new Supreme Court Security Officer – Joe Hartigan.

III. Appointment of co-chair

Justice Hill opened the floor for nominations to appoint a Commission co-chair for the next one year term. Justice Hill moved Director Cameron be appointed as the co-chair. Judge Donnell motioned for approval. Sheriff Hornecker seconded the motion. Motion carried.

IV. Approval of July 14, 2011 Minutes – Justice Hill moved to approve the meeting Minutes from July 14, 2011. Director Cameron made a request the last sentence from section VI, subsection C read, “Director Cameron stated that he would forward legislative concerns of the commission to the Governor’s Office, “ as opposed to, “Director Cameron will inform Chief of Staff, Kari Gray, of the Commission’s concerns to get the issues on the radar.” Judge Donnell motioned to approve the minutes with the requested amendment. Sheriff Hornecker seconded the motion. Motion carried.

V. David Harris, Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy (WLEA) – Training Standards and Court Security Standards

David Harris attended the meeting to discuss the court security officer training program offered by WLEA. Mr. Harris informed the Commission that Deputy David Coulter, with the Teton County Sheriff’s Office had to resign as trainer for the court security officer training program due to other obligations. Mr. Harris informed the commission he had reached out to U.S. Marshall, Joe Moore and Captain William “Bill” Long, Laramie County Sheriff’s Office and both are willing to assist with future trainings. The next training will be held on February 13-17, 2012.

Mr. Harris’ concern is there will not be enough participation in the training. There needs to be at least 12 attendees in order for the training program to be feasible. The academy had to cancel the last scheduled training due to lack of attendance. Mr. Harris was also concerned about if the program is meeting the needs of those who are attending. Justice Hill asked if there was a way the Commission could reach out to the counties to promote the training. Director Cameron suggested the Wyoming Office of Homeland Security facilitate arranging a conference call with WLEA and the county sheriffs and police chiefs to inform them of the upcoming training. Mr. Harris thought this would be helpful. Sheriff Hornecker agreed.

Sheriff Hornecker said from what he has observed those who have attended the training through WLEA are also seeking training from outside resources. His opinion is the reason for lack of participation in the program is due to the fact that it is not required training. Legislation may require legislative action to make the training a requirement to get more participation in the program. Chief Lane said he could bring the issue up at the next Peace Officer Standard Training (POST) Commission meeting in December.

Chief Lane inquired about the cost of the training per person and questioned if it could be a reason for lack of attendance. Mr. Harris said he would report the information of cost per attendee back to the Commission. Sheriff Hornecker feels the low participation is due to a lack of knowledge about the training program, not so much the cost.

Judge Nau feels the issue may be due to the fact the court security officers in most counties are rotated out. This would mean that not all officers are receiving the training provided by the program. Mr. Harris stated part of the training is educating the officers how to do a self-audit in order to share their knowledge with their colleagues. Justice Hill suggested this topic be discussed during the conference call with the sheriffs and police chiefs. Chief Justice Kite suggested maybe Joe Hartigan could help provide the training. Mr. Hartigan recommends that WLEA considers offering the Court Security Training in a train the trainer format that will enable those that take the course to come back to their respective agencies and/or be utilized by other agencies in the state to provide the POST certified training.

Justice Hill feels this is a topic of importance and should be addressed. He suggests Director Cameron follow through with setting up a conference call with WLEA and the sheriffs and police chiefs. He also suggests Mr. Harris follow up with the numbers of those attending the next training.

Judge Nau asked Mr. Harris if there was a judge participating in the training program to give a perspective of what a judge expects from the court security officers. Mr. Harris said there currently is not. Judge Nau volunteered to participate in the training. Mr. Harris said he would inform the academy of her offer.

VI. Judge Donnell and Director Cameron – Report on meeting with Senator Ross regarding the safety concerns of local county officials and municipal officials.

Director Cameron referenced the previous meeting minutes and the issues of the supplementary budget for high risk cases, the open carry of weapons, and the request for legislative support for enforcement of the Commission's standards.

Judge Donnell and Director Cameron had a teleconference with Senator Ross regarding the Commission's concerns about these issues. Senator Ross stated he would express the concerns of the Commission to his committee and seek the committee's interest in pursuing legislative action during a budget session. Director Cameron informed the Commission that there were no conclusions from Senator Ross prior to the Commission meeting. However, Senator Ross expressed concerns regarding the timing of the issues; the next session being a budget

session, as well as the need for two-thirds introduction to pass the House of Representatives. Director Cameron was also able to speak to Representative Brown and he shared the opinion of Senator Ross.

Judge Donnell said he was able to speak with Senator Nicholas regarding the support for a contingency fund for high risk cases. Senator Nicholas said he felt it was an important issue and would support it, but felt the funding should only be set aside for counties which may need it.

Justice Hill asked Judge Donnell if Senator Nicholas was informed that any request for funding for a high risk case would have to be requested through the policy board before the funding would be disbursed. Judge Donnell said he did inform him of the procedure process required to receive the funding.

Representative Botten said he was unable to speak to anyone on his committee regarding the issues of concern but was not surprised by Senator Ross's response. He feels if the issues are to be pursued for the upcoming session they would have a better chance if they were introduced on the senate side. However, he said he would be happy to present the issue of open carry on the house side as a single bill to at least get the concerns of the Commission to the House of Representatives.

Chief Justice Kite said there was interest and support from the county commissioners at the recent meeting in Jackson pertaining to the open carry issue. The county commissioners feel there needs to be legislative support to help with the enforcement of open carry of weapons before a tragedy happens.

Justice Hill read a letter from Converse county commissioner, Mike Colling, regarding the issue of open carry of weapons in Converse County. During the meeting all the commissioners unanimously voted their support to seek legislation to prevent the open carry of weapons.

Judge Donnell said he would like to see Representative Botten introduce the bill in the House of Representatives this session. He suggests the best way to approach it would be to amend the current statute by removing the word "concealed" from the statute. This would prevent open and concealed carry in public buildings listed in the current statute. Justice Hill is also in favor of this idea.

Chief Lane feels the majority of the police chiefs would be supportive of the bill. Sheriff Hornecker also feels the general body of the sheriffs would be supportive of the bill but there may be a few individuals against the bill due to personal and political beliefs. He will introduce the issue at the next sheriff's association meeting in December and will report back to the Commission their opinion.

Judge Donnell said he would also discuss the issue with Byron Oedekoven with Wyoming Association of Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police (WASCOP) to see if there would be support the bill.

Representative Botten said he would contact the Legislative Service Office (LSO) to get a draft of the bill going. He and Judge Donnell will work together on the bill.

Justice Hill suggested the concerns on the issue be presented to the Wyoming Association of Municipalities (WAM) as well.

Chief Lane asked Representative Botten if he should present the issue to the University of Wyoming's Board of Trustees to get their opinion. Representative Botten felt this was a good idea.

Justice Hill questioned how the Commission should follow up with Senator Ross and Senator Perkins. Director Cameron suggested a meeting with Senator Perkins should be scheduled for direction and his suggestions for legislative support to Representative Botten in the Senate. Judge Donnell and Representative Botten agreed this was a good idea as Representative Botten will need a co-sponsor on the senate if the bill should pass the house. Director Cameron asked if there could be a joint introduction of the bill in both houses. Representative Botten said it could be presented in both houses. Director Cameron suggested he arrange a conference call between himself, Judge Donnell, Representative Botten and Senator Perkins to discuss court safety concerns of the commission. Justice Hill questioned if the Commission should seek more legislative support if Senator Perkins is on board with the joint introduction. Representative Botten said the more support, the better chance the bill has of passing. Justice Hill said he would also be willing to discuss the issue with Governor Mead to gain his support of the bill. Justice Hill requested Director Cameron follow up via email with the Commission after the conference call with Senator Perkins. Director Cameron agreed to do so.

VII. Schedule of Next Commission Meeting

Justice Hill suggests the Commission wait to schedule the next meeting until there's a better feel for where the issue of open carry stands. The Commission agreed.

VIII. Adjournment

Justice Hill adjourned the meeting at 11:20 a.m.