

Meeting Minutes

Idaho Medal of Honor Commission

Tuesday, June 14, 2005

11:00 a.m. MDT

Conference Room
Idaho Falls Power Building
140 S. Capital Ave.
Idaho Falls, ID

Present at the meeting location

Bill von Tagen, Deputy Attorney General

Ron Anderson, Meridian Fire Chief

Mike Becar, Executive Director, Peace Officer Standards & Training

Blair Olsen, Jefferson County Sheriff

Joe Rice, Soda Springs Police Chief

Present via conference call

Bill Douglas, Kootenai County Prosecuting Attorney

Megan Ronk, Policy Advisor to Governor Kempthorne

Absent

Doug Borah, President, Idaho Peace Officers Association

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bill von Tagen at approximately 11:10 a.m. (MDT).

The meeting agenda was amended and approved. The prior meeting's minutes were also reviewed and approved upon motion and a second.

Mike Becar provided a report on the first Medal of Honor ceremony, which was held on May 13, 2005. Idaho's first Medal of Honor was awarded posthumously to Idaho State Police Trooper Linda Huff. Mr. Becar noted the medal cost, \$55 plus shipping, and that this cost was paid by the Idaho State Police. Mr. Becar further noted that, for next year, the medal and the citation would have to be changed to note the addition of Emergency Medal Technicians ("EMTs").

Bill von Tagen updated the Commission on the website. Ron Anderson noted that his personal information needs to be updated to reflect his new position as Meridian Fire Chief.

Members of the Commission felt that the first year of its existence went very well. There is a desire to get firefighters more involved in the ceremony and all regretted that they did not participate in this first year. The Commission hopes to improve upon its first-year performance by working to get the firefighters more involved, including getting a mailing list for the fire chiefs. It is hoped that the Commission can receive additional

nominations for the Medal of Honor and that, as firefighters feel some ownership in the medal, participation will increase.

The Commission then reviewed the criteria for the Medal of Honor and proposed changes for next year. The proposed changes will be presented to the Commission members in advance of the next meeting to be discussed and possibly voted on during the next meeting. One change in the criteria will be that nominations need not be simply for acts that occurred during the prior calendar year, but for any prior acts if they meet the other criteria. Previously, only the posthumous medals could be awarded for acts occurring prior to the immediately preceding calendar year. Several members pointed out that, because official investigations, many times all of the materials are simply not available to be presented to the Commission until the second or third year following the occurrence of the event.

The nominations procedure was also discussed. It was agreed that the nominations should be drafted in the same form as the citation. In addition, the sponsoring agency must provide four 8x10 photos, should attach any news articles relating to the event, should provide a summary narrative, and should provide any incident or investigation reports.

The timeline for nominations was also discussed. It was agreed that the timeline is a little too restrictive and that additional time should be allotted to the Commission for consideration of nominations. It was decided that the Commission will require that nominations be submitted not later than February 21st, and the Commission will select award recipients not later than March 15th of the year in which the medal is to be awarded. The Commission also noted that the Idaho Peace Officers Association has offered to pay for the cost of the medals that will be awarded to any Idaho peace officers.

The Commission discussed when to hold its next meeting. It was decided to hold the meeting in conjunction with either the Idaho Association of Counties' meeting in Boise or the Idaho Chiefs of Police Association's meeting, which will be held in Twin Falls. Both meetings are scheduled for the middle or end of September.

Having concluded all of its business, the Commission adjourned at 12:25 p.m.