

# Meeting Minutes

Idaho Medal of Honor Commission

Monday, September 12, 2005  
2:00 p.m. MDT

Overflow Room  
Twin Falls City Council Chambers  
305 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. E.  
Twin Falls, ID

## Present at the meeting location

Bill von Tagen, Deputy Attorney General, Commission Chairman  
Mike Becar, Executive Director, Peace Officer Standards & Training  
Blair Olsen, Jefferson County Sheriff  
Joe Rice, Soda Springs Police Chief  
Harlo Clark, Oakley Fire Chief

## Present via conference call

Ron Anderson, Meridian Fire Chief  
Doug Borah, President, Idaho Peace Officers Association  
Dia Gainor, Bureau Chief, Emergency Medical Services, Dept. of Health & Welfare  
Melissa Ward, secretary to Bill von Tagen (taking minutes)

## Absent

Bill Douglas, Kootenai County Prosecuting Attorney, Commission Secretary  
Megan Ronk, Policy Advisor to Governor Kempthorne

Chairman Bill von Tagen called the meeting to order at approximately 2:00 p.m. (MDT).

The meeting agenda was reviewed; no amendments were made. The prior meeting's minutes were reviewed and approved upon a motion by Chief Rice, a second by Sheriff Olsen, and aye votes from all present.

The Commission contact sheet was reviewed; no amendments were made.

Mike Becar presented the revised Nomination Form. He noted that, as opposed to repeating "law enforcement officer / firefighter / EMS provider", he changed this string of titles to be encompassed by the phrase "public safety officer". Bill von Tagen suggested that prior citations could accompany the form as an example of the information sought. Dia Gainor noted a correction: The title "emergency services officer (EMT)" should be changed to "emergency medical services (EMS) provider". Chief Anderson thanked and commended Mr. Becar for the revised form, commenting that it was a much cleaner form and that he hoped it would help generate more nominations. Dia Gainor made a motion to approve the new nomination form with one correction, changing "emergency

services officer (EMT)” to “emergency medical services (EMS) provider”. Chief Anderson seconded the motion, a vote was taken, and all voted to approve the new form.

Bill von Tagen asked everyone to review the revised Rules and Qualifications. He noted that the nomination deadline had been moved to February 21, as agreed during the last meeting. Dia Gainor inquired about the elimination of the date range qualification (accepting nominations only for those incidents taking place during the prior calendar year). Mr. von Tagen explained that, as learned from the first year, this rule eliminated worthy candidates. Sheriff Olsen made a motion to approve the revised rules and qualifications, seconded by Mike Becar. All present voted aye, and the new rules and qualifications were approved.

Bill von Tagen asked everyone to review the updates to the Commission stationery and Internet pages. Mr. von Tagen suggested that anyone with digital photographs of the first year’s ceremony e-mail them to him for possible inclusion on the website. He also noted that the image of the medal, included on the website and on the stationery, would need to be updated, as it currently mentions only law enforcement and firefighters. Dia Gainor suggested adding the Medal of Honor website address to the Commission stationery.

Everyone reviewed the 2005-2006 Timeline. Bill von Tagen requested, due to the potential difficulty of his and perhaps other Boise-based Commission members’ traveling during the legislative session, that the January meeting be held in Boise. It was also suggested that the March meeting to discuss nominations and choose recipients be held in Boise. Mike Becar asked that the date of the March meeting be moved up to March 15 to allow for more time to order and receive the medals. There was also discussion regarding the publishing of Medal of Honor articles. It was suggested that, in addition to the Idaho Peace Officers Association (IPOA), articles be submitted to other law enforcement, firefighter, and EMS publications. Mr. von Tagen requested that Melissa Ward e-mail the most recent Medal of Honor article submitted to IPOA to all Commission members. Mr. Becar made a motion to approve the updated timeline with one change, moving the March meeting to March 15 (thereby moving the medal order date up, as well). Dia Gainor seconded the motion, and all voted aye to approve the 2005-2006 Timeline.

It had been suggested, during informal discussion before the meeting began, that each medal reflect the recipient’s individual profession. In other words, if the medal were awarded to a law enforcement officer, it would be imprinted with “Law Enforcement”. If awarded to a firefighter, it would be imprinted with “Firefighter”, and if awarded to an EMS provider, it would be imprinted with “Emergency Medical Technician”. Currently, the medal design reflects the words “Law Enforcement” on one side and “Firefighter” on the other. Bill von Tagen asked Mike Becar to research the possibility and cost, if any, of this change and report back to the Commission. Mr. Becar inquired of Dia Gainor as

to the color of ribbon that should accompany EMS medals. (Law enforcement medals are placed on a blue ribbon, and firefighter medals on a red ribbon.) Ms. Gainor suggested orange. Mr. Becar also mentioned that, as Doug Borah had previously reported, IPOA would fund the cost of all Medals of Honor awarded to law enforcement officers. He inquired as to whether similar firefighter and EMS organizations would fund the cost of those medals. Ms. Gainor stated that the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare would fund the cost of Medals of Honor awarded to EMTs, and Chief Anderson stated that the Idaho Fire Chiefs Association would fund the cost of medals awarded to firefighters. Mr. Becar also inquired about the cost of framing the citations and photos of recipients. Bill von Tagen commented that the Attorney General's Office paid a portion of these costs this past year and that Idaho State Police paid the remainder. Mr. Becar commented that, depending on the number of recipients, perhaps the associations would be willing to fund these costs, as well.

It was decided that the next meeting would be scheduled, tentatively, for Thursday, November 10, 2005. Chief Anderson suggested holding the meeting in Nampa, where a Fire School would be taking place that week. Most agreed that another 2:00 p.m. meeting would work well.

Having concluded all of its business, Chief Rice made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Doug Borah seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the meeting adjourned at approximately 2:40 p.m.