

Meeting Minutes
IDAHO LAW ENFORCEMENT, FIREFIGHTING AND EMS
MEDAL OF HONOR COMMISSION

Friday, February 11, 2011
10:00 A.M. MST

Office of the Idaho Attorney General
Statehouse, Room 210
700 West Jefferson Street
Boise, Idaho

Attorney General Lawrence Wasden, chairing the meeting, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Bob Wells informed the Commission that he personally knows two of the officers nominated from the Boise City Police Department, and therefore believes he should recuse himself, and will abstain from voting on those two nominations.

Chairman Wasden asked everyone present to introduce themselves and roll was taken.

The following commissioners were present:

Lawrence Wasden, Attorney General
Doug Borah, Idaho Peace Officers Association
Greg Bower, Ada County Prosecuting Attorney
William Flink, POST Academy
Dia Gainor, EMS Bureau Chief, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare (via conference call)
Martin Knoelk, Division Chief, Boise Fire Department
Blair Olsen, Jefferson County Sheriff
Joe Rice, Chief, Soda Springs Police Department
Bob Wells, Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security

The Chairman announced a quorum was present.

Others present: Teri Nealis, Commission Secretary
Sherm Furey, Chief Deputy Attorney General
Janet Carter, Executive Assistant to the Attorney General
Bob Cooper, Director of Constituent Affairs (OAG)
Michael Masterson, Chief, Boise Police Department (via conference call)
Chris Davis, tactical officer, Boise Police Department (via conference call)
Daryl Wheeler, Sheriff, Bonner County (via conference call)

Chairman Wasden asked if there were any changes to the proposed May 7, 2010 minutes. Hearing no comments, he called for a motion to approve. Blair Olsen moved to approve the minutes and the motion was seconded by Joe Rice. Chairman Wasden called for discussion. Hearing none, he called for the vote. The motion passed unanimously.

The agenda was reviewed; no amendments were made.

The Commission moved onto Item 3 on the agenda – to review the nominations. Chairman Wasden suggested a review of the rules & qualifications and the underlying statutes for those qualifications. Chairman Wasden read the definitions for “Law Enforcement Officer” “Firefighter” and “EMS Provider”.

Chairman Wasden then reviewed the “Rules & Qualifications for Awarding” with the Commission. He asked for questions regarding the reading, there were none. Next he reviewed with the Commissioners a chart listing who the nominees are and who is representing the nominating agency.

Chairman Wasden paused to introduce the others present at the meeting from the Attorney General’s office.

The Commission next reviewed the three nominations submitted for consideration for awarding of the Idaho Medal of Honor by the Boise Police Department (BPD). Chief Masterson provided a synopsis of the incident for which his department had submitted the nominations. Several Commission members had questions, which Chief Masterson and Officer Davis answered. The BPD provided a copy of the 911 call for this incident which was played at this time. The nominations were discussed at length.

Chairman Wasden asked if the Commission preferred to move on to the next nominations or decide on the BPD nominations immediately. Greg Bower moved to consider and decide the current matter rather than move on to the other nominations. Doug Borah seconded the motion. President Wasden called for discussion. Hearing none, he called for the vote. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Wasden asked if there was any further discussion concerning the BPD Medal of Honor nominees. Hearing no comments, he called for a motion. Greg Bower moved to award the Medal of Honor to Officers Adam Crist, Casey Hancuff and Jason Rose. Dia Gainor seconded the motion. Chairman Wasden called for discussion. Hearing none, he called for the vote. The motion passed unanimously (with one abstention by Bob Wells).

Next, the Commission reviewed the two nominations submitted for consideration for awarding of the Idaho Medal of Honor by the Coeur d’Alene Fire Department. Chairman Wasden read the incident summary for the Commission members and passed around color photos of the incident. Discussion and examination of the photographs ensued. The members then discussed their understanding of the incident and discussed the nominations at length.

Chairman Wasden asked if there was any further discussion. Hearing no comments, he called for a motion. Blair Olsen moved to award the Medal of Honor to Dylan Clark and Nathan Hyder. Bill Flink seconded the motion. Chairman Wasden called for discussion. Hearing none, he called for the vote. The motion passed unanimously.

The Commission moved on to the nomination submitted for consideration for awarding of the Idaho Medal of Honor by the Bonner County Sheriff’s Office. Chairman Wasden asked Sheriff Wheeler to give the Commission a summary of the events. Questions followed to Sheriff Wheeler by the Commission. Sheriff Wheeler confirmed that Jacobson was deputized by Bonner County,

which would then qualify him for the Idaho Medal of Honor, even though he was a Law Enforcement officer for the U.S. Forest Service.

Chairman Wasden asked if there was any further discussion. Hearing no comments, he called for a motion. Blair Olsen moved to award the Medal of Honor to Brent "Jake" Jacobson. Joe Rice seconded the motion. Chairman Wasden called for discussion. Hearing none, he called for the vote. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

Responsibility for ordering the medals. Historically, this has been the responsibility of POST; however, due to a transition in 2010, the Attorney General's office ordered them. Bill Flink asked if the Attorney General's office would again order for this year. Chairman Wasden accepted this responsibility with the caveat that POST would re-assume those duties next year, to which Bill Flink agreed.

Several Commissioners commented on how helpful it was to meet last year immediately following the ceremony. The Commissioners all agreed they would like to continue this practice; therefore the next meeting is tentatively scheduled for May 20, 2011, immediately following the 2011 Idaho Peace Officers' Memorial / Idaho Medal of Honor ceremony. This will not be a formal meeting, just a short "debrief" with those Commissioners in attendance and available to meet.

There was an issue with last year's ceremony and seating for the Commission members. Joe Rice indicated it would be nice if the Commission sat together. Bob Wells recommended the Commission sit together in a designated section with the audience, but not on stage. Dia Gainor and Blair Olsen concurred. Chairman Wasden also agreed that it is important for the commission to sit together and be recognized.

Chairman Wasden asked Bob Wells to check with the Governor as to whether he would be present to award the medals.

Martin Knoelk mentioned the Fallen Firefighters Memorial scheduled on June 3, 2011 and asked if the Commission members could attend the ceremony. Several members indicated their willingness to attend, dependent upon their availability.

Joe Rice asked about funding for the Medal of Honor Commission (i.e. travel and accommodation expenses which are currently borne by each agency). Chairman Wasden responded that given the current budget situation, it is unlikely the Commission will receive funding at this time. Bob Wells said that the Bureau of Homeland Security has a new video teleconferencing system, which will be installed in all the counties around the State. This could be used for future meetings, and would be provided at no cost. Chairman Wasden indicated that, given the important responsibility of the Commission, he believes it is essential for the Commission to meet in person. However, perhaps the video teleconferencing system could be used by the nominating agencies, as we ask them to be available during the Commission meeting to answer any questions.

Blair Olsen thanked the Commission secretary for putting together the indexed binders with all of the information for the meeting.

Chairman Wasden thanked everyone for coming and for the donation of their time in this important public service.

Bob Wells commented that the two Boise Police Department officers (whom he knows personally) are outstanding gentlemen and he believes they clearly deserve this award.

Martin Knoelk stated that as a new member he was privileged to be a part of the Commission.

Greg Bower moved to adjourn. Bob Wells seconded the motion. President Wasden called for discussion. Hearing none, he called for the vote. The motion passed unanimously.

The Commission meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.