

Members:

Larry J. Straitiff, Chairman
Robert Billingsley
Hon. Lawrence F. Clark, Jr.
Marshall R. Davis
William R. Erickson, Jr.
Lieut. David Howells
R. Scott Schlechter
Keith B. Snyder
Hon. William F. Ward



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March 20, 2001

A meeting of the County Probation and Parole Officers' Firearm Education and Training Commission convened at 9:00 AM on March 20, 2001 at the Ramada Inn, State College, PA. The following Commission members and guests were present:

Larry J. Straitiff, Chairman
Robert Billingsley
Hon. Lawrence F. Clark, Jr.
William R. Erickson, Jr.
Lt. David M. Howells
Keith B. Snyder
Hon. William F. Ward

Chester A. Kope, Executive Director
R. Dan Klarsch, Administrative Officer
Gary Scicchitano (PBPP)
Linda Laub, Legal Advisor
Carmen Perfetta, (Guest) Schuylkill County
John Richmond, (Guest) Schuylkill County
Bernadette L. Doner-Muhlbauer

I. Commissioner Erickson called the meeting to order. He requested that a motion be made to accept the minutes from the January 30, 2001 meeting.

MOTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Snyder to accept the minutes of January 30, 2001. Commissioner Ward seconded the motion. A vote was taken and unanimously approved by the Commission.

II. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Mr. Kope stated that he received a request from Dauphin County Probation & Parole for an extension of time for Officer Randy Lutz due to a conflict with his active military status. Chairman Billingsley stated that the Commission Policy includes a statute that requires that this type of request be honored.

MOTION: Commissioner Snyder made a motion to grant the request for Officer Lutz. Commissioner Ward seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion passed. Commissioner Clark abstained.

Mr. Kope gave everyone a list of applicants that applied to take one of the four Basic Training Firearms Academies that will be held in this calendar year. Mr. Kope stated that three of the classes will be held at Fort Indiantown Gap and one class will be held at the Scotia Game Commission Range in State College, PA.

Commissioner Straitiff stated that the Commission must find alternative range sites before we establish next year's classes. Mr. Kope gave the Commissioners copies of the letters he sent to Major General William B. Lynch, the Adjutant General of Military and Veterans Affairs and to Mr. Vernon R. Ross, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Game Commission. The purpose of the letters was to request a meeting to discuss the possibility of entering into a joint agreement to pay for construction of a new range or pay for the expansion of an existing range.

Mr. Kope introduced Mr. Carmen Perfetta and Mr. John Richmond of Schuylkill County's Adult Probation Office. Mr. Kope stated he invited them to the meeting to discuss their firearms range near St. Clair, PA and the possibility of the Commission paying for the expansion or improvement of that range.

Mr. Perfetta stated that the probation department has entered into a lease agreement with the Reading Anthracite Corporation. This range presently has 22 positions and is approximately 300 yards deep and surrounded on three sides with high natural walls (from strip mining). They stated it could be expanded in two directions.

Commissioner Clark asked if the zoning commission, DEP, and other bureaus knew about the lease, or was that a potential problem? Mr. Perfetta stated the site is adjacent to an active gun club and so far there are no problems with any agencies. He stated that Chief Rennick lives in this area, and does not expect this to be an issue. Ms. Laub requested a copy of the lease agreement. Commissioner Erickson stated, that while it may be too late for this year, the Commission definitely should consider the Reading Anthracite Corp. range for next year.

Commissioner Clark stated that they just got the needs analysis statement, and found that there are 527 Dauphin County Officers who carry firearms. He stated that Dauphin County is ready to cooperate with the Commission and to build a firearms range. Commissioner Clark stated it could be possible to build a firearms range on county land located in Swatara Township. He stated that if a joint presentation were made now, it would be passed.

MOTION: Commissioner Ward made a motion directing Mr. Kope to draft letters to the Dauphin County Commissioners and to Chief Rennick in Schuylkill County similar to the letters that he sent to Military Affairs and the Game Commission. The draft letters should be sent to the Commissioners for review and approval. In the draft letter, he would also request that the Commissioners send it back to Mr. Kope who would refine and compile their suggestions and then would submit it to the Commission for final approval. Ultimately the final letter would be sent to the Dauphin County Commissioners. Commissioner Snyder seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion passed. Commissioner Clark abstained.

MOTION: Commissioner Billingsley made a motion that the Commission address Schuylkill County specifically, regarding the site at the Reading Anthracite Corporation, and he proposed that Mr. Kope draft a similar letter, with different language reflecting the information presented by the representatives from Schuylkill County. They should know that once a year they have the opportunity to utilize a range without driving across the state. Commissioner Ward seconded the motion. Commissioner Straitiff called for a vote. A vote was taken and passed unanimously.

Mr. Kope stated he received a call from the Crawford County Juvenile Probation Office informing him that their President Judge will not permit them to carry firearms. After a brief discussion, the Commissioners decided that in the future any new county that wants to carry firearms and send their officers to our Basic Firearms Training Academies, must send the Commission signed documentation from the President Judge stating that they are authorized to carry firearms. Chairman Straitiff stated that he and Commissioner Davis would schedule a meeting to review the Commission's Operational Policy in order to cover this issue.

MOTION: Commissioner Clark made a motion that in the future the Commission should receive some reasonable documentation from the county that their court has authorized them to carry firearms. Commissioner Ward seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously. Commissioner Straitiff asked when the new procedure should be implemented, since there are already training courses scheduled for this year. The Commissioners agreed that applications received before March 20 2001, would continue through the established procedures, but all applications received after today must include the aforementioned authorization.

The Commissioners discussed the budget, and decided that they wanted to present a budget that would show allocated expenses in order to avoid any questions regarding the available funds balance.

Mr. Kope stated that Dan Klarsch would be updating the Commission's web site. Commissioner Ward stated the minutes should not be part of the information on the web. Ms. Laub offered to assist Dan in this project.

Mr. Kope stated that the Commission rents a TV/VCR, overhead projector and other necessary equipment to conduct training. The equipment rental normally costs approximately \$300 per day and he would prefer to spend some money to purchase equipment with today's technology. The Commissioners suggested he contact the purchasing department and Mr. Phred Barber for information regarding equipment. A brief discussion followed.

MOTION: Commissioner Clark made a motion that the Commission authorize expenditures up to \$10,000.00 to purchase electronic equipment including a camera, projector, lap top computer or whatever else is deemed necessary to enable the staff to appropriately carry out the requirements and directives given them through this Commission. Commissioner Billingsley seconded the motion. A vote was taken and it passed unanimously.

III. COMMITTEE REPORTS

CURRICULUM

The curriculum committee will participate with the Train the Trainers Conference this week and next week as well.

POLICY

Commissioner Straitiff stated the Commission should have judges sign off on policy as aforementioned.

FINANCE

Mr. Kope gave everyone a copy of the financial report, showing a balance of \$713,717.10.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

V. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS

There were no public comments or questions.

VIII. LEGAL ISSUES

There were no legal issues.

VIII. ADJOURN MEETING

Chairman Straitiff adjourned the meeting.