



EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

TRAINING ROOM | 3060 WILLAMETTE DRIVE NE | LACEY, WA 98516
March 27, 2020 | 9:30 AM

CALL TO ORDER

President John Snaza opened the meeting at 9:30 AM. There was a quorum present, most via conference call, with the following Board members participating:

President John Snaza, Thurston County Sheriff's Office	President-Elect Craig Meidl, Chief, Spokane PD (by phone)
Chief Steve Crown, Wenatchee PD (by phone)	Sheriff Bill Benedict, Clallam County (by phone)
Vice President Sheriff Rick Scott, Grays Harbor County Sheriff's Office (by phone)	Mitzi Johanknecht, Sheriff, King County (by phone)
Chief Rod Covey, Port of Seattle PD (by phone)	Treasurer, Chief Brett Vance, Montesano PD (by phone)
Chief Gary Jenkins, Pullman Police Department (by phone)	Special Agent in Charge Ray Duda, FBI Seattle (by phone)
James Raymond, Sheriff, Franklin County Sheriff's Office	Ray Duda, SAC, FBI Office/Seattle

The following WASPC staff were in attendance:

- Steve Strachan
- Kim Goodman
- Deb Gregory (by phone)
- James McMahan (by phone)
- John McGrath (by phone)
- Jamie Weimer (by phone)

The following guest was in attendance:

- Barbara Smith (by phone)

Update on Jail Issues & Capacity – John McGrath

John has requested that all jails submit a weekly jail population and staffing report to him that is then forwarded to the State EOC. Several jails have had issues with staffing and may have to shut down temporarily. John is working with the Jail Managers on how we might consolidate smaller jails.

There has been a significant drop in jail populations across the state. There are no positive instances of COVID-19 inside the jails. There are about 80 inmates around the state that are quarantined and 30 jail staff members.

John is continuing to work with Dr. Marc Stern on best practices for jails. The supply of safety equipment and cleaner is getting low and John is working with the jails on how to ensure they have what they need. We also need to ensure there is adequate space for the expected arrival of DV's.

The Northwest Shuttle service has been discontinued as of last week. It has seemed to help the jails as they are only taking felonies and the anticipated DV's. John is working on a plan to create a different strategy to assist with the shuttle that will give jail commanders more control of the system.

Emergency Operation Center – Steve Strachan

Steve Strachan discussed his role on the Emergency Operation Center (EOC), which advises the Governor during times of statewide emergencies. There are planning groups attached to the EOC that are staffed mostly by state employees. Steve is on the Advanced Planning Unit, and works with Captain Dan Atchison from the Washington State Patrol.

WASPC has GTWO's going out on a regular basis with news, information and resources. We're attempting to be selective so as not to inundate members with too many emails. WASPC has also established a resource page on its website to share policies, procedures and best practices for our members, making information quick and easy to access.

Firearm Background Checks – FFL's (essential vs. non-essential)

Steve credits Jamie Weimer for staying on top of this issue, along with James McMahan, to strike the right balance in maintaining public safety. We want the public to know that we are not doing anything to prevent people from exercising their 2nd Amendment rights. WASPC has stressed to FFL's that they must get background checks processed even if their store is closed due to the virus in order to meet the requirements of the law.

Jamie is working with agencies to find out (1) who may need assistance in processing applications and (2) who has capacity to assist.

A number of Chiefs and Sheriffs have received correspondence from a group of FFL's requesting that they sign on to a letter to the Governor asking him to designate their business as essential so they may remain open. Chief Crown was one of those contacted. He has declined signing on. It is Steve Strachan's recommendation to the Board that WASPC as an organization not weigh in about this issue. Law enforcement will continue doing its job and enforcing the laws for public safety and ensuring that background checks are getting done in the right way.

Sheriff Johanknecht reported that the King County Sheriff's Office is doing background checks, but is mainly focusing on the work of answering 911 calls and have made it clear that we are not enforcing who's open and who's closed.

Sheriff Rick Scott asked if any Board members had received a video from Tim Eyman about the City of Edmonds banning all firearms. He indicated his office has received it twice. There's no context to the video as to when it was taken. Steve will contact Interim Chief Jim Lawless of Edmonds PD to learn more.

Legislative Special Session for COVID funding and possible supplemental budget

There are some informal discussions with the Legislature and the Governor's Office about convening a special session sometime in the next six months. It would be to repair any statutes created and scale back some of the recently passed funding bills. It would discuss the idea of creating a state COVID-19 relief package. James has forwarded two potential bills to (1) relieve or assist LE and Jails for the cost of overtime being expended during the virus outbreak and (2) Housing when an officer needs to go into quarantine but doesn't want to do that at home to avoid potentially infecting their family or having their family infect them. If the state starts expanding funding, WASPC wants to make sure we are in that discussion.

Chief Gary Jenkins said the state Department of Commerce released funding for this purpose about two weeks ago. James asked the Chief to forward any information to him about that.

Suspending LEOFF rules to allow recent retirees to return to duty for a period of time to their home agency

Sheriff Johanknecht asked if we might consider assisting with getting the LEOFF retirement rules suspended for a period of time to allow recent retirees to return to duty to assist during this outbreak. James asked the Sheriff to send him any written information she may have put together regarding this, or any identified statutes or DRS rules that would need to be waived to make this happen. James can take that information and get into the discussion pipeline. Chief Covey suggested a discussion with CJTC to discuss waiving the polygraph.

Spring 2020 Exposition & Training Conference Update

Based on discussions with the Executive Board at the March 17, 2020 meeting, WASPC has cancelled the vendor show portion of the conference. Steve Strachan asked if now was the time to make the decision to cancel the entire conference. Based on the information we have now, Steve recommended that the Board make the decision today to cancel the conference in its entirety.

Board elections are scheduled for May, but staff will come up with some recommended ways to deal with this so that elections can occur based on the Bylaws and other information. The Executive Board agreed by consensus to cancel the conference.

Potential Budget Cuts

Steve discussed possible changes in the budget as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. Money that was budgeted in the recent legislative session is not being spent until we have a clearer picture of the state's budget picture over the next number of months.

COVID-19 Testing for Law Enforcement

Steve is working hard to get an answer about getting members of law enforcement tested for the virus and determining who has the authority to make that decision. Sheriff Rick Scott is on an emergency planning board in Grays Harbor County and understands that the County Public Health District is authorized to make those decisions. Steve thanked the Sheriff for this information and will follow up.

Essential vs. Non-Essential Business Enforcement

Steve Strachan advised that the Governor is getting more of the state's regulatory agencies involved in enforcement of businesses who are remaining open even though not specifically designated as essential. This provides a platform for complaints from the public and helps get those types of calls directed away from the 911 centers. Barbara Smith, WASPC's communications consultant, is working on a message to be sent to the membership on roles and responsibilities.

Public Health Take-Over of Items Ordered for First Responders

Sheriff Mitzi Johanknecht reported that LE agencies in King County put in their order for PPE's through the county. Some ordered their equipment from private vendors. The orders have apparently come in, but the King County Department of Public Health took those orders and items are not being distributed to the LE agencies. It appears the items are being stockpiled in temporary quarantine facilities that currently aren't being used. The sheriff wanted the Board to be advised that this was occurring in her county. She plans to follow up on this today and will provide the Board with an update as she receives additional information.

President John Snaza thanked everyone for taking time today to participate in the call. He closed by wishing everyone continued health, wellness and safety.

There being no further business to conduct, the Board adjourned at 10:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Deb Gregory
Executive Assistant