

Colorado Rangers ("CLER") Board of Governors Meeting Minutes

10:00 AM, Friday, September 15, 2023
CLER Headquarters
330 Park Avenue
Ft. Lupton, CO 80621

Attendance – Board of Directors: Senator Kent Lambert, Chief Stephen Hasler, Chief John Fryar, and Chief Ronald Abramson (all via video teleconference), Senator John Cooke was absent and excused due to conflicting travel.

Attendance – CLER Command Staff & Support Staff: Deputy Chief Robert Pabst, Operations Division Chief Michael Morgan, Captain Nicholas Voth, Captain John Snider, Administrative Section Captain Aaron Ruffalo, CLER Controller Ranger Norm Townley, CPA, Board Secretary Ranger Carl Luppens, General Counsel Mark Ringer, Esq. (via video teleconference), and Ranger Chad Clifford (in person). No members of the public were present.

At 10:01 Chairman Lambert called the meeting to order and Secretary Luppens took roll. Chairman Lambert declared a quorum and the meeting began.

Chief Hasler identified errors in the draft minutes. With those corrections, Chief Fryar moved for the approval of the minutes, as corrected, of the April 14, 2023 CLER Board of Governors meeting, Chief Hasler seconded the motion, and the revised minutes were adopted unanimously.

Chairman Lambert invited Chief Abramson to give his report.

Chief's Report - Chief Abramson stated that the Rangers had been incredibly busy over the Summer. In addition to extensive duty hours Rangers have assisted in multiple arrests recently, including two recent arrests in Dillon and a felony warrant arrest in Ft Lupton. In Denver, in addition to standard large event duties, Rangers assisted Denver PD in a "hit and run" apprehension as well as a stabbing attack.

The Ranger team has proven to be extremely well trained and professional in all of these arrests and responds to challenges in accordance with their excellent training and judgment garnering numerous accolades from their police department partners.

Chief Abramson then addressed liability insurance. CIRSA has proposed a 102% increase in insurance premiums to approximately \$140,000. Previously the Rangers have held the "Gold" liability protection plan with a \$10 million coverage limit. Police insurance premiums are increasing statewide but, in the municipal context, many cities have had an increase in police insurance that was offset by concurrent decreases in the city's general liability premiums. The Rangers do not have the benefit of the municipal operations offset.

The Rangers have an excellent claims history with no liability claims in nearly six (6) years of operations and only two minor workers compensation claims. The Ranger command and administrative support staff have evaluated options including reducing maximum coverage, lowering deductibles and reducing auto coverage. CIRSA proposes these dramatic insurance premium increases with a very short time to accept (September 29, 2023 deadline).

A significant challenge to addressing significant operating cost increases is that many partner agencies have already prepared their budgets for 2024 and cannot easily increase Ranger service fees. New fee structures and amounts were discussed.

Chief Fryar asked "Who regulates CIRSA?"

Chairman Lambert noted that DORA regulates insurance operations in the state and should be concerned over discriminatory premiums. He also noted that police liability claims in Colorado decreased in 2022.

Chief Fryar explained that CIRSA bases premiums on existing claims that are in process so incidents that may have occurred in prior years, but are currently being adjudicated, influence their premiums.

Based on a review of the coverage options available, Chief Hasler recommended the Rangers moving forward with the \$2,000,000 coverage limit. Overlapping coverage from partner agencies may help with larger claims, and other alternatives and options were discussed.

Chief Abramson then turned the focus to Academy 10. The academy will be shifting from Adams County/Flatrock to Arapahoe Community College and the Highland Ranch Law Enforcement Training Facility for firearms. Other options were also under consideration. Due, in large part to liability insurance premium increases, the potential to have overlapping Academies 10 and 11 is not probable, so the expectation is to reduce from a combined class of 40 (which would have been filled) to a total of 25 new cadets this Academy cycle. Recruiting has been extremely strong this Academy cycle (with over 350 inquires & applications to date) and the class will be comprised of only the highest rated cadets.

CLER will supply a large number of instructors to save costs including in Firearms (with multiple Full Skills Lead Instructors), Arrest Control (with multiple Rangers who will be certified as PPCT Instructors), as well as Academics where skilled Rangers can teach courses, such as Chief Abramson (who is also an attorney) who will teach law classes along with other Ranger experts such as Dr. Stanley Jack, who will teach POST required medical courses.

Chairman Lambert suggested also considering Pikes Peak Community College and the Colorado Early College program for future Academy operations.

Support & Financial Update:

Chief Abramson announced that Support Division Chief Gray had retired after many years of outstanding service to our agency as well as the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office. He explained the restructuring of the administrative support staff and structure with Capt. Aaron Ruffalo assuming leadership. Lt. Cmdr. Murphy Robinson has returned to the Rangers as the Assistant to the Chief, reporting directly to Chief Abramson.

Capt. Ruffalo asked Ranger Townley to report on the financial status of the Rangers. The detailed financial statements had been previously circulated to the Board members. There is approximately \$208,513 in the operating account and approximately \$64,000 in the training account.

The badge reserve liability is approximately \$28,000. The Rangers have had about \$122,000 in income so far in 2023 with around \$68,000 in expenses in the same period for retained earnings of approximately \$54,000.

Administrative Ratifications:

General Counsel Mark Ringer, Esq. has been researching the adoption of the Board ratification of all acts of the Chief of CLER, and any persons acting on behalf of CLER, based on legal concepts and the practices of other municipalities. General Counsel Ringer will report to the Governors further at the December meeting.

Chairman Lambert opened the meeting for new business.

Public Comments:

There were no public questions or comments.

Schedule for Next Meeting:

The next Board of Governor's Meeting was scheduled for Friday December 8th, 2023 at 10:00am, in Fort Lupton with a teleconferencing option for Governors to attend.

Closing Comments:

Chief Abramson expressed his deep appreciation for the Board of Governors, the Command and Administrative staff and the hard serving individual Rangers.

Adjournment of Meeting:

It was moved by Chief Hasler and seconded by Chief Fryar to adjourn the meeting and it was adjourned at 11:03 AM by unanimous vote.