

Colorado Rangers Board of Governors Meeting Minutes

Colorado Law Enforcement Shared Reserve ("CLER")

10:00 AM, Friday, September 20, 2024

CLER Headquarters

330 Park Avenue

Ft. Lupton, CO 80621

Attendance: Board of Governors: Chairman Lambert, Senator Cooke, Chief Fryar and Chief Hasler were in attendance via teleconference. Chief Abramson was in attendance in person at 330 Park Avenue and participating in the teleconference.

Attendance: CLER Command and Support Staff: Deputy Chief Robert Pabst, Administrative Section Captain Aaron Ruffalo, CLER Controller Ranger Norm Townley, CPA and Emergency Management and Communications Officer Lt. Chad Clifford (in person). Board Secretary Ranger Carl Luppens and General Counsel Ranger Mark Ringer, Esq. (via video teleconference). No members of the public were present.

At 10:01 Chairman Lambert called the meeting to order. Roll was called by Secretary Luppens; Chairman Lambert declared a quorum and the meeting began.

Chief Fryar moved to accept the minutes of the May 10, 2024 CLER Board of Governors Meeting as submitted and Chief Hasler seconded the motion to approve. Without revision or objection, the minutes were approved unanimously.

Chief's Report: Chairman Lambert invited Chief Abramson to give his report. Chief Abramson stated that the prior Summer, the traditional "busy season" for Ranger support of partner law enforcement partners and communities, was very busy, even busier than projected. The 18 new Rangers sworn in in May provided valuable contributions. A significant demand came from the Ft. Lupton police department, after the lengthy Severance patrol support, which required substantial effort. Ft. Lupton has 20 active officers out of the 28 officers authorized with several headed for maternity leave. Rangers were filling the gap. There are now approximately 70 active sworn Rangers supported by seven civilians.

Auraria PD

Chief Abramson reported the Auraria multi-college campus "protest" security effort would continue. The FBI is predicting that the pro-Hamas protestors would return and it would take a significant law enforcement presence with appropriate restrained responses to keep the peace. It was noted that the Denver Police Department would not provide additional resources to Auraria even though the campus lies within the City and County of Denver.

Legislative Financial Support

40 surplus X-26 P Tasers were donated to the Rangers from the Adams County Sheriff's Office and another 40 from the Auraria Police Department.

The Rangers new fee structure with alternatives for standby "on call" work and additional payments for "extra services" has been financially successful.

Chief Abramson invited discussion of the activities with the Colorado legislature.

Chairman Lambert stated that Ranger Lt Commander Murphy Robinson put the After Action Report on the Auraria campus "protests" to the Governor together. He hoped that the jurisdictional issues are not confused with Auraria being in the City and County of Denver but having its own police authority. Since the Rangers work under the authority of partner agencies and have derivative authority, deploying in a location where more than one police department with which the Rangers have mutual aid agreements, could cause confusion but, in Auraria, the Denver Police Department was aware of the Rangers presence and activities and that the Auraria Campus Police Department was leading the response.

Overlapping Jurisdictions Ranger LT Chad Clifford observed that Rangers may be working in areas with multiple jurisdictions, like when the Colorado State Patrol is being the lead agency at the State Capitol, which is within the City and County of Denver and the jurisdiction of the Denver Police Department. In the recent Auraria incidents, the Rangers detained 13 rioters, but the local (Auraria) police department made the formal arrest. This is a good policy for many reasons including the local police department's relationship with the local courts and officer availability to testify.

Chief Abramson observed that limiting the protestor/rioter "encampments" really reduced the law enforcement resources needed. An ongoing de-escalation strategy should be not to let problems grow to the point where they are entrenched and much more difficult to deal with.

Regarding funding for the Rangers from the 2024 Colorado legislature, the Ranger's long term financial needs were negotiated, and some near-term funds were deferred for potentially larger future grants.

Chairman Lambert asked Lt Clifford and Senator Cooke to discuss the funding situation at the State Capitol. A discussion of training funding, ballot initiatives, Veteran Trust Funds for training was had.

Chief Abramson reiterated how important it will be to get CLER more formally recognized in the Colorado statutes to clear up any confusion or uncertainty and to make the Rangers eligible for an FBI ORI number allowing direct access to criminal data bases. He also announced that the next Ranger Reserve Police Academy will be held at Arapahoe Community College.

Lessons Learned Chief Abramson announced that the Rangers ventured all the way to Monte Vista at the request of the new Las Animas County Sheriff. This was a long travel but the Rangers were able to staff the event and their presence brought safety and order to a rodeo and concert event that had experienced several fights and other disruptions in the past. Chief Hasler mentioned that local fire departments may be able to provide overnight housing for Rangers on long travel assignments.

The Rangers actions in Lake County for the Leadville 100 mountain bike and trail running races have contributed to much safer outcomes; prior to the Rangers assistance there were annual fatalities.

Drone Program. Chief Abramson explained that several Rangers are drone pilot certified (Type 107 rating) and that drones are emerging as a valuable and widely used law enforcement tool.

Chairman Lambert observed that Colorado State University in Ft. Collins offers a drone operator training course that many sheriff's departments have taken advantage of. As a "land grant" college, CSU may have access to special funding programs.

Deputy Chief Pabst stated that drones approved for law enforcement use are much more expensive than typical consumer drones.

Operations Review Chairman Lambert invited Ranger Norm Townley, the Ranger's Controller to give the financial report.

Ranger Townley reported that the Rangers' financial position is outstanding. For the year ended 12/31/23, income was \$ 154,904 and expenses were \$ 192,513. This produced a net loss of \$ 37,610. The "loss" was due to some significant receivables not yet having been paid. Several partners, such as Denver for extra service at Bronco football games, are making substantial additional payments to the Rangers. The Rangers had \$ 275,309 in assets, which is all cash. CIRSA liability insurance is the single largest expense at \$140,000 per annum even with a \$60,000 discount for "no claims" having been made.

Chief Hasler inquired about being behind the budget. Chief Abramson responded that service fees are still coming in from partner agencies and there should not be a loss for the year. Chief Hasler then asked if the Rangers could secure liability insurance coverage under the policies of mutual aid partners since the Rangers do not work except under the direction of other departments. Chief Abramson responded that CIRSA requires independent coverage. He then suggested that the Rangers consider self-insurance since saving the annual payment of \$140,000 could add up to the \$2 million in coverage in fourteen years without any investment earnings.

Chairman Lambert suggested it would be quite reasonable for the state legislature to fund the liability insurance at a minimum.

Deputy Chief Pabst reported that the Rangers had provided 11,878 hours of service to the State of Colorado with the partner agencies year to date.

Chairman Lambert opened the floor to new business, open discussion, or public comments. There were none.

Chairman Lambert then scheduled the next meeting for December 13 at 10:00 AM.

Chairman Lambert invited Chief Abramson to make his closing comments.

Chief Abramson said that Chairman Lambert had said it all perfectly and he had no further comments.

Chief Hasler moved to adjourn, Chief Fryar seconded the motion, and, without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 11:11.