

**Wyoming Court Security Commission
Meeting Minutes
November 15, 2019 ~ Pinedale, Wyoming**

The Wyoming Court Security Commission met on November 15, 2019, at the Sublette County Courthouse in Pinedale, Wyoming. Court Security Commission members in attendance via personal appearance, video or phone were: Justice Keith Kautz, Deputy Director Leland Christensen, Judge Marv Tyler, Judge Wes Roberts, Representative Jared Olsen, and Sheriff Scott Matheny. Supreme Court personnel Lily Sharpe, Ronda Munger, Joe Hartigan and Becky Craig also attended. Also, in attendance was Judge Curt Haws, Chief Circuit Court Clerk Amy Knotts, Sergeant Tyson Gulbrandson, Municipal Judge Ruth Neely, and Reporter Joy Ufford from the Pinedale Roundup.

Tour of Sublette County Courthouse

A tour was taken of the Sublette County Courthouse and judicial facilities immediately prior to the meeting.

Call to Order – Justice Keith Kautz, Chairman

Welcome & Introductions

Justice Keith Kautz opened the meeting. He welcomed those who were in attendance and spoke about the tour the Commission members took of the Sublette County Courthouse and judicial facilities. Justice Kautz complimented the Sublette County Commissioners and others who were involved with the project.

Approve Minutes of August 14, 2019, Meeting

Justice Kautz addressed the next order of business on the agenda: approval of the minutes from the August 14, 2019, meeting. He asked for comments, additions, and corrections. Sheriff Scott Matheny moved, seconded by Leland Christensen, to approve the August 14, 2019 minutes after the correction is made to Leland Christensen's title on page 4. The motion passed unanimously.

Standards and Resolution Requested from the August 2019 Meeting

Ronda Munger reminded the members about the discussion at the August meeting regarding a resolution the district judges approved at a conference meeting in 2014 concerning the amendment of Court Security Standard 2009-1. The resolution required a district court judge to chair each county's court security management committee, with the judge having the ability to delegate the chair duties to another member of the committee. Ronda provided background on this matter. She referred the members to Rule 106 of the Uniform Rules for District Courts and Rule 1.07 for the Uniform Rules for Circuit Courts. These two rules both reference court security and endorse the judge's power to do as he or she feels is necessary with regard to court security when their court is in session. Additionally, Ronda spoke of the Board of Judicial Policy & Administration's (BJPA) October 27, 2014 resolution, which determined that, in accordance with Standard 2009-1, there is to be one circuit court judge and one district court judge on the court security management committee in each county. Ronda also discussed the December 2014 letter from Guy Cameron, Chairman of the Commission at that time, who posed the question to the BJPA, on behalf of the Commission, asking if the district judges' 2014 verbal resolution referenced above, and Standard 2009-1, were in conflict. She then drew attention to the BJPA minutes for March 2015 which indicate that the board did not believe there was a conflict between the two. Ronda also spoke about the Court Security Commission's discussion at its August

meeting regarding the Commission developing ways to improve the quality of the annual reports that are being submitted by the Local Court Security Management Committees. Justice Kautz indicated that he will send the documents Ronda provided for this meeting, along with a personal letter, to each chairman of the local court security management committees. He will also call the chairmen a month or two in advance of the annual reports being due.

Sublette Co. Local Court Security Management Committee—Challenges & Lessons Learned

Sublette County Circuit Court Judge Curt Haws advised that a challenge most courts in the state will face, unless it's a newly constructed building, is that their facilities were not designed to accommodate the security concerns that exist today. He commented that the Sublette County Circuit Court is in a newer building, yet it was still a challenge to put in a single point of entry for screening purposes and to have direct private access from the jail to the courtroom to ensure that people in custody don't intermix with the public. Judge Haws shared the 3 main lessons he learned during their project: teamwork leads to success, the local committees need to work closely with their county commissioners, and do not assume that the people who feel court security isn't an important issue won't change their minds. Judge Haws recommended that a uniform court security order be put in place across Wyoming to ensure that no matter which courtroom a person enters, they will know what to expect. District Judge Marv Tyler pointed out that court security isn't just for the security of the judge and court staff in the courtroom, it's to ensure that all people are secure in the courthouse: jurors, litigants, attorneys, witnesses, and the public—no matter what type of business they're taking care of in the building. He also spoke of the importance of there being abundant signage throughout the courthouse that informs the public about the items that are not allowed in the courtroom. Judge Haws mentioned that he found having a security presence available when the public first comes into the court office dramatically de-escalates the interactions between the patrons and the clerks. Justice Kautz asked for suggestions about what the Commission can do to assist the local committees to be more active. Judge Haws emphasized that education is the key, and that courthouse security isn't just a concern for urban areas—it's also critical for rural areas.

Security Class Update, Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy

Joe Hartigan spoke about the September training session that was held at the Law Enforcement Academy in Douglas, taught, in part, by two U.S. Marshalls. Joe and Justice Kautz presented a 2-hour class to 11 officers who were attending a 40-hour training session. Joe, having previously informed the U.S. Marshalls that Wyoming established a Court Security Commission, but that its mission might not be well-known across the state, was invited by the Academy, along with Justice Kautz, to speak to the class about the Court Security Commission and the local committees. During the class, Joe and Justice Kautz covered the Wyoming Court Security Act that created the Wyoming Court Security Commission; the five Wyoming Court Security Standards; the Wyoming Court Security Incident Report form and the types of incidents it covers; the Wyoming Court Security Committee Annual Reports that are due by July 1st; the Court Security Standards Checklist for local committees to use to conduct their own assessments (which the U.S. Marshalls asked to use for their trainings); and District Court Rule 106 and Circuit Court Rule 107. Justice Kautz spoke to the class about the importance of court security in Wyoming courts and asked that they share this knowledge with their local committees. Joe and Justice Kautz hosted a question and answer period and provided the class with folders that contained the materials that were discussed. Joe indicated the class was very well received. He will ask the Academy to notify him when future classes are planned so that he can distribute the information to the sheriffs' departments. Sheriff Matheny suggested it would be beneficial for each sheriff's security team to participate in this section of the Academy's class—which could ultimately generate more interest in the local committees. Discussion was held about the U.S. Marshalls possibly holding

a half-day or full-day training in different regions of the state. Sheriff Matheny will bring up the topic at the Sheriffs' upcoming meeting on December 3rd-4th.

Incident Reports—Reports Received Since the August Meeting; Email from Judge Stipe

Joe Hartigan discussed the incident reports he received since the Commission's August meeting. He noted that a total of 274 reports have been submitted to date. The 25 reports received since the August 2019 meeting are the most submitted in a 3-month period. For that period, the reports include the following types of incidents:

- 7 disorderly conduct
- 5 emergency medical needs
- 2 knives in courtroom
- 2 physical assaults
- 2 verbal threats
- 1 threatening phone call
- 1 escape attempt
- 1 suicide threat
- 1 fraud
- 1 counterfeit money
- 2 security breaches (doors found open/code given out to non-court personnel).

Of these 25 incident reports, Laramie County submitted 11, the Supreme Court 3, Campbell County 2, Converse County 4, Fremont County 3, and Platte County 2. Six out of the 24 reporting entities submitted reports. There are four counties that have never submitted an incident report since its 2015 inception date. Joe commented that having a definition of "incident" might increase the number of reports that are sent to him. He pointed out that there's a box to check on the report that asks if the incident was reported to the county's local court security management committee. This enables the local committee to examine the details of the incident and discuss whether it was handled correctly. Judge Roberts spoke about the current requirement that the incident reports be submitted within 5 days of the occurrence, but that it's sometimes difficult to do so within that time frame. He inquired if an electronic reporting system could be developed to streamline the reporting process. Ronda informed the members that an electronic system of reporting will be available at some point in the future. Joe and Judge Roberts expressed concern that perhaps the 5-day reporting requirement dissuades some reports from being submitted, and they suggested that the requirement be changed to "as soon as possible." Justice Kautz, Representative Olsen, Judge Roberts and Joe Hartigan will work together to reword Standard 2014-1 to enlarge the amount of time in which to submit the reports.

Justice Kautz spoke about the email he received from Judge Stipe wherein she asks if copies of the incident reports, or a synopsis of the incidents, could be provided to the local committees. She feels it would make the committees more aware of the types of incidents that are occurring around the state. Ronda Munger explained that the Supreme Court is currently exploring a mechanism to create a list-serve for its opinions, and that a similar system could perhaps be created for court security incident reports. The judges and local committee chairmen could sign up for the service, which would enable them to receive a summary of an incident report shortly after the incident occurred. Concern was expressed about ensuring that the reports are not available to the public.

Judge Tyler expressed appreciation to Joe for emailing national news reports to the judges about incidents involving courthouse safety violations. Judge Tyler shares the news reports with his local court security management committee, which generates discussions at their meetings.

Grant Funds Update

Ronda delivered a report about the grant funds that have been disbursed to date. She pointed out that in the Grant Agreement it's required that each county is to submit a one-page report to the Court Security Commission by September 30, 2019, that describes the expenditures, goals and objectives they've met as set out in their grant agreement. Only one of the seven counties did not submit a report. Ronda also pointed out that Carbon County was given an extension on its grant expenditure deadline in order to first complete building renovations that are needed before progressing to the areas where the grant funds will be used.

Justice Kautz expressed his thanks to the legislature for providing the grant monies for court security purposes. He commented that the \$400,000 in grant funds are being put to very good use by providing many high-priority needs for the seven counties.

Next Meeting

Ronda will gather possible dates for a meeting in January 2020. Discussion was held about where the next courthouse tour and meeting should take place. It was decided that the Platte County Courthouse will be the next venue. Ronda will contact District Court Clerk Mona McAuley about using their courtroom and hub.

Miscellaneous

Judge Roberts suggested that every courthouse should seriously consider conducting an ALICE Training (Alert-Lockdown-Inform-Counter-Evacuate). The training is very informative and trains individuals in proactive response options. Sheriff Matheny offered to discuss the topic at the Sheriffs' December meeting and will ask them to consider holding an active shooter training in their courthouses. Judge Roberts also commented that an important piece of Wyoming history to remember when people question whether courthouse security is an important issue, especially in our rural areas, is the Cokeville, Wyoming, elementary school hostage and bombing incident in 1986.

Judge Roberts also emphasized that the municipal courts need to be involved in court security education and need to consider creating court security management committees. Justice Kautz spoke about the orientation program the Judicial Education Committee created for new municipal judges and advised that he plans to add a court security component to that training. Judge Roberts volunteered to help with that portion of the curriculum.

Meeting Adjourned

Actions Taken:

1. The Commission approved the minutes from its August 14, 2019, meeting, after making a minor correction.

Action Items:

1. Justice Kautz will provide the materials from this meeting to the local court security management committees. He will also contact the chairmen of the local committees a month or two in advance of the annual reports being due.
2. Justice Kautz, Judge Roberts, Representative Olsen and Joe Hartigan will develop a definition of the word “incident” in order to make the Court Security Incident Report form a more useful tool. They will also draft a revision to Standard 2014-1 that will enlarge the amount of time the reporting entity has from the date an incident occurred to the date the incident report is due.
3. Ronda Munger will explore the possibility of developing the following:
 - A list-serve type of system whereby authorized entities would be provided with the incident reports shortly after each occurrence; and
 - An electronic system for submitting incident reports.
4. Sheriff Matheny will suggest the following at the Sheriffs’ December meeting:
 - That each sheriff’s security team participate in the court security section of the Law Enforcement Academy’s training sessions; and
 - That each sheriff should consider holding an active shooter training in their courthouse.
5. Ronda will send an email to the Commission members to gather available dates for the January meeting that will be held at the Platte County Courthouse in Wheatland, Wyoming.