

Public Safety Work Group Meeting

July 25, 2013

Public Safety Workgroup Members Present

The Honorable Marla Graff Decker
Amy Atkinson (represented by Leah Hamaker)
Chief Craig Branch
Captain Steve Carey
Chief Jim Cervera
John Childrey
Lee Day
Colonel Steven Flaherty (represented by Lt. Col. Bobby Northern)
Robert Foresman
Mark Gooch
Chief Dave McCoy
Jillian McGarrity
Donna Michaelis
Chief Doug Middleton
Chief Chris Perkins (represented by Deputy Chief Timothy Jones)
Dr. Deborah Pettit
Mike Reilly
Shannon Taylor
Garth Wheeler
Chief Jim Williams

The meeting was called to order at 1:00PM by Secretary Decker.

The minutes from the June 11, 2013 Workgroup meeting were approved as written. Motion by Lee Day, seconded by Mark Gooch. The motion passed unanimously.

The first item on the agenda was the **Public Safety Study- Executive Summary** (see handout provided in packet). Donna Michaelis provided a brief overview on the 'Assessing Pending Virginia Legislation on Armed Persons in Schools -Reviewing the Requirements, Impacts and Implications on HB 1557, HB 1730 and HB 2277' Study. A more detailed presentation on the entire 25-page report will be provided by Dr. William Pelfrey (Associate Professor, VCU) at the upcoming Task Force meeting on July 31.

There are considerations that must be addressed on these pieces of legislation, including cost. Discussion ensued on forming a recommendation that we should continue to fund School Resource Officers as funds become available. Localities that want SROs and use them appropriately should be encouraged to do so.

There was also discussion on the issue of the identification by local law enforcement of those other individuals (teachers and other school staff, retired law enforcement, volunteers, SSOs, etc.) who may be armed when responding to an incident on school grounds.

The next item on the agenda was the **Executive Summary of the School Design Sub-Group** (see handout provided in packet). Chief Doug Middleton provided an overview of the work of the Sub-Group, which was assigned to consider relevant information associated with School Design.

After some discussion on the Sub-Group Teams' recommendations, Secretary Decker suggested a link to the Department of Education website also be added to Infrastructure Team Recommendation 4.

As the Workgroup members had not had sufficient time to review the report prior to this meeting, Secretary Decker asked that any questions on the report be sent to Chief Middleton or Phil Miskovic prior to the full Task Force meeting on July 31.

The next item on the agenda was a presentation on the **Outstanding Workgroup Recommendations** (see handouts in packet).

Donna Michaelis provided an overview of the three recommendations (PS-20, PS-21 and PS-22) that are going forward to the Task Force at their July 31 meeting. All three passed the Workgroup on June 11, 2013.

PS-23 is the new recommendation for Workgroup consideration, which recommends the name of the Virginia Center for School Safety of the Department of Criminal Justice Services be changed in legislative code to the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety, in order to highlight and include the legislative mandates relating to institutions of higher education.

Motion by Garth Wheeler, seconded by Chief Branch, to pass PS-23 and move forward to the Task Force for consideration. The motion passed unanimously.

Garth Wheeler then referenced the presentations made by Chiefs Branch and McCoy at the June 11 Workgroup meeting on the campus safety challenges faced by institutions of higher education. Following the June 11 meeting, DCJS solicited both VACLEA and VACP for feedback on these issues. VACLEA requested that four recommendations be considered by the Workgroup (see handout provided in packet).

Based on Recommendation #1-Minimum Training Standards (PS-26), a discussion ensued on the fact that there is no definition in the *Code of Virginia* on what is required to be established as a police department.

A motion was made by Garth Wheeler, seconded by Craig Branch, to pass this two-part recommendation and move it forward to the Task Force for consideration. The motion passed unanimously.

After explanation and discussion of the six-part Recommendation #2-Best Practices and Policy Considerations (PS-27), a motion was made and seconded to pass the recommendation and move it forward to the Task Force for consideration. The motion passed unanimously.

Next, after explanation of Recommendation #3-Funding for Training Support (PS-28), a motion was made and seconded to pass the recommendation and move it forward to the Task Force for consideration. The motion passed unanimously.

Lastly, after explanation of Recommendation #4-Capital/Operating Costs Analysis (PS-29), a motion was made by Chief Branch and seconded by Lt. Col. Northern to pass the recommendation and move it forward to the Task Force for consideration. The motion passed unanimously.

In follow-up to Chief Middleton's report (Building Codes Team Recommendation #2), Donna Michaelis then recommended (PS-24) the formation of a standing committee at the state level consisting of design and architect professionals, school officials, police/sheriffs, fire officials, emergency managers, and building officials. This standing committee would be tasked with identifying and addressing conflicts in law and regulations regarding infrastructure improvements on new and/or existing school and campus facilities. The committee would also research and disseminate best practices on infrastructure design and improvements for localities. Motion by Donna Michaelis, seconded by Chief Cervera. The motion passed unanimously.

Chief McCoy then recommended (PS-25) the addition of 'campus police officer' to the definition of 'law enforcement officer' in paragraph F of §18.2-57 (assault and battery), which has increased penalties for assault and battery against certain individuals (paragraph C). Motion by Chief McCoy, seconded by Chief Williams. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

None.

Next Steps

Donna Michaelis announced the next Task Force meetings would be held on Wednesday, July 31, Tuesday, August 13 (*NOTE: the August 13 meeting date has been changed to Monday, September 16), and the final meeting of the Task Force will be held Monday, September 23.

Secretary Decker particularly encouraged member attendance at the *August 13 meeting, as there will be discussion of the full Public Safety Study being presented to the Task Force at its July 31 meeting by Dr. Pelfrey. In addition, statewide association leaders should be prepared to make their positions known via Public Comment on the 'guns in schools' issue.

The meeting concluded at 2:30 PM.