

CAPITOL COMPLEX SECURITY WORKING GROUP

Minutes of 8-31-2015

Lt. Governor's Office, State House

Meeting called by: Lt. Governor Phil Scott at 10:01am

Attendees: Members present – Lt. Governor Phil Scott, Senator Peg Flory, Rep. Alice Emmons, Capitol Police Chief Les Dimick, Sergeant at Arms Janet Miller, and Commissioner of BGS Mike Obuchowski

Also present - Security Director of BGS Peter Danles, Catherine Benham, Joint Fiscal Office and Chief of Staff to the Lt. Governor, Rachel Feldman via phone

Minutes recorded by: Chrissy Gilhuly, Legislative Council, Committee Assistant

Adjourned: 12:09 pm

Overview

The Committee started the meeting by recognizing the terrible tragedy surrounding Lara Sobel; making it clear that this committee is not meeting in reaction to the shooting (the committee has been working on state house security for last year and a half) , but it does highlight the importance of security and the importance of working in tandem .

The Capital Complex Security Working Group was created in part to determine how each entity can communicate and work together effectively: Governor's security, BGS, Capital Police, and Sheriff's Office and the state police and local police.

The committee discussed how to bring the law enforcement divisions, together and determine who reports to whom. A strategic plan was recommended. All agreed, it is important to keep the State House open and accessible to the public "peoples house" but also keeping mind the safety of people and assets.

Update from BGS, Director of Security

BGS has been working with AHS and BGS on standard protocol; creating a template to use with all agencies. The plan calls for rolling out one agency per month starting with St. Albans (training, security assessment). Process will include annual drills and instituting a security audit. A Safety committee has been established. Some of these actions can be implemented immediately; some need money from budget, some longer term.

Important to note that BGS jurisdiction does not extend to the State House.

Update from Sergeant at Arms

Margolis Summary Recommends:

Five major themes or essential challenges identified

1. Physical security devices and visitor management, particularly in the State House Building
2. Emergency response training for staff, specifically in the Capitol Police Department.
3. Interagency communication,
4. Jurisdictional authority
5. Training

The Sergeant at Arms provided an update on all 5 topics to the Committee. The Committee discussed and approved hiring a consultant to help the Sergeant at Arms clearly prioritize security recommendations using the Margolis report as a base.

Update from the Joint Fiscal Office

JFO explained that there are currently \$202,000 available funds for consulting and training.

It was decided that the Committee would like to move forward as soon as possible to hire a contractor. The goal is to have a report with recommendations that can be presented this legislative session, especially if funding is required. The JFO and Sergeant at Arms will work on developing the scope of work draft. The scope of work will use the Margolis report as a base from which to build and prioritize recommendations for specific next steps.

The Committee would like the consultant's report to include an executive summary.

Security for outside entities:

The question was raised about groups using the statehouse and related costs and issues. The Committee would like to welcome everyone into the statehouse. However, there are groups that may require extra security. The outside entity currently pays for extra security, but sheriffs are difficult to secure in the summer. The Committee would like to learn more about which groups need extra security; and if legislative sponsorship has been required in the past. As it stands, when extra security is needed on the statehouse lawn, BGS hires staff and charges the group. The Committee agreed it would be prudent to engage the Joint Rules Committee regarding conditions, day, time, etc.

The Sergeant at Arms will coordinate with the Joint Rules Committee to arrange a discussion with the Committee.

Executive Session: 11:33 am

Senator Flory moved to go into Executive Session to discuss a record exempt from inspection and copying under the Public Records Act. Committee unanimously agreed to go into executive session.

Out of Executive Session at 11:50am

Next Steps:

The Joint Fiscal Office will work on hiring a consultant. The Sergeant at Arms will work with Joint Rules on reserving the buildings