

Colorado Rangers ("CLER") Board of Directors Meeting

10:00 AM, Friday 4 December 2020

CLER Headquarters

330 Park Avenue

Ft. Lupton, CO 80621

Attendance – Board of Directors: Senator Kent Lambert (via video teleconference), Chief Christopher Malanka (via video teleconference), Chief John Fryar (via video teleconference), Chief Ronald Abramson (in person). Senator John Cooke's absence was excused.

Attendance – CLER Command Staff & Support Staff: Deputy Chief Robert Pabst (in person), Support Division Chief Robert Grey (via video teleconference), Troop Captain Idilio Moncivais (in person), Troop Lieutenant John Snyder (in person), and Board Secretary Ranger Carl Luppens (in person).

At 1003 Chairman Lambert called the meeting to order and took roll. Directors Lambert, Malanka and Fryar were in attendance via video teleconference and Director Abramson was in attendance in person. Chairman Lambert declared a quorum and the meeting began.

Chief Fryar moved for the approval of the minutes of the 8 May 2020 CLER Board of Director's meeting as presented, Chief Malanka seconded the motion, and the minutes were adopted by unanimous consent.

Old Business:

Senator Lambert recognized Chief Abramson to provide a general welcome and meeting overview.

Chief Abramson reported that the Ranger activity had settled down successfully considering the unusual nature of 2020. Routine work with Denver providing security for the National Western Coliseum shelter and the Pepsi Center COVID testing site place patrol work for Monument and Ft. Lupton projects was discussed.

Senator Lambert inquired as to the nature of the Monument patrol work and he was informed that it was regular patrol work at their lake.

Chief Abramson also reported that the recruiting program had been strengthened under the leadership of Deputy Chief Robert Pabst since he took over in June. There are currently 45 applicants for the 22 positions in Academy #9 scheduled to start on June 4th, 2021. 12 cadets are carrying over from the cancelled 2020 Academy. These were individuals who were fully approved and ready for the prior Academy. There are 49 "prospects", individuals who have expressed interest but not yet paid an application fee. We have 90 to 100 total candidates. The revised and improved website has aided recruiting.

Chief Abramson mentioned that the Rangers have been "raided" by some partner agencies and, to reinforce recruits' commitment, the period that new Rangers will be required to serve without having to repay Academy tuition has been increased from two to three years and with the 120 duty hours per annum minimum commitment, 360 hours are now required to earn off the training expense. This is fair given that CLER is making the entire investment in these officers and other agencies are benefitting.

Chief Malanka commented that, based on past experience, 45 applicants would only yield 30% (15 long term Rangers). He also commented that, producing "quality reserve officers", would naturally be attractive to other police departments. He suggested that, besides a repayment "mandate" what were we doing to evaluate why rangers were leaving. Chief Malanka suggested formal exit interviews conducted by neutral third parties. He acknowledged that increasing the minimum commitment form two to three years was a good idea.

Chairman Lambert stated that he approved of the revised website and, in particular, laying out the qualifications, disqualifying factors and the commitment would allow prospects to “screen themselves” at the start of the process rather than after further investment in the process and training.

Chief Abramson stated that a class of 40 candidates was expected for 2021 but, with POST and Flatrock’s COVID restrictions allowing only 10 students per classroom, the number of candidates had to be reduced. With an entering class of 22, and a 10 to 20% attrition rate, we would end up with the maximum permissible.

Chairman Lambert said that it is hard to predict what COVID restrictions would be in June. He asked if we were considering a second academy in 2021 and Chief Abramson said that we were not.

Chief Abramson also mentioned that there are twelve additional potential Rangers in the pipeline who are already POST certified and therefore will not require academy instruction.

Deputy Chief Pabst reported on equipment. The Rangers have obtained 48 riot helmets donated by Denver Police Department, nine 24” X 48” rectangular crowd control shields, ten circular 24” diameter officer protection shields and 120 Motorola XTF 5000 mhz radios donated by Lake County, Florida due to the efforts and relationship of former Colorado Mounted Ranger John Zimmerman. All sworn Rangers have radios. Rangers use simplex to communicate internally within the ranks on callouts and have access to other channels like 8 TAC for mass regional response events and 5 TAC

Division Chief Gray is researching the procurement and related data storage issues for body worn cameras to comply with the new state law mandating cameras for all police effective July 1, 2023. It was reported that Ranger Aaron Ruffalo who works in a support position for the Colorado Springs Police Department has been very helpful with insurance issues and has particular expertise in body camera issues based on his work in Colorado Springs.

Deputy Chief Pabst reported, on behalf of Operations Division Chief Morgan, that Rangers had performed 7,000 hours of service since June 1, 2020. The nature of the service has changed since 2019; the Denver Coliseum, Pepsi Center COVID drive through testing site and Idaho Springs COVID testing were the major recipients of donated Ranger hours.

Ranger Townley gave the financial report . \$ 138,151 is in the checking account, \$1,808 in savings and \$160,309 in credit with the Flatrock Training Academy. Income has been \$48,286 in excess of expenses.

The 2021 annual budget and financials were reviewed and were approved by unanimous written consent promptly after the meeting. Chairman Lambert instructed the staff to file a copy of the financial statements for the public records.

Chairman Lambert commented that CRDC is an excellent data base tool for management and reporting.

Division Chief Gray reported that the Rangers have great prospects for Academy 9. Sergeant Reedy has put together an excellent schedule with 22 candidates in two teams. These recruits will graduate in October. Flatrock has not yet provided formal program approval.

Chief Malanka praised the CLER program and asked what has been done to provide for inclusion and diversity? Division Chief Gray responded that white males are the “constellation” of candidates and that every effort has been made to expand recruiting and affirmatively attract women and minorities. The Rangers are in the same situation as law enforcement in general.

Chief Abramson explained that “we cast a wide net” but the reality is that we can only pursue candidates who are able to spend a significant part of their time away from their families working for free. People with young families are not typically suited for this contribution. Once we get a female or minority recruit, we support them as much as we can. Deputy Chief Pabst commented that our expanded social media network should aid recruiting a younger demographic.

Senator Lambert suggested that younger candidates pursuing a criminal justice degree might be able to get academic credit for Ranger duty. He said to check with Colorado Springs Police Department and Pikes Peak Community College.

Division Chief Grey indicated that the insurance carrier, CIRSA, had just completed an audit and the Rangers had no claims and we are 2 ½ years into a 3 year probationary period. The bad news is that, due to the BLM and Defund the Police movements, law enforcement insurance rates have increased dramatically. 40% increases are typical with the Rangers annual liability insurance increasing from \$1,000 to \$1,400 per officer per year. The result is that CLER's 2021 budget for insurance is \$95,000 and the training academy is \$110,000.

Chairman Lambert asked if COVID was a contributor to insurance increases and that maybe we would be eligible for COVID impact relief funds? He suggested that we check with Senator Cooke and Homeland Security regarding COVID related funding.

Chief Abramson indicated that the Denver PD has paid the Rangers for their Coliseum homeless shelter security from COVID grants.

Division Chief Gray commented that, after academy and insurance, the rest of the budget items were minor and diminimus in impact and Senator Lambert commented that this "was a better budget than before". Division Chief Gray explained that the \$84,500 payments from our "partner" agencies was not expected to increase.

Chief Abramson stated that CLER has approximately \$300,000 in the bank and that as we grow from 80 to 100 Rangers the insurance expense has increased from \$80,000 to \$120,000. He asked, "What is the appropriate size for the Rangers?" Carrying costs could become too high if the agency grows much bigger.

Senator Lambert explained that, if the City of Denver revenue source related to COVID security went away or diminished significantly in 2021, since we have become dependant on Denver for sustaining revenue, the Rangers could go back to their initial mission of supporting just rural IGA partners.

Chief Abramson agreed that, if Denver went away, we would have to "right size" the agency.

New Business:

It was announced that Chief Malanka was going to retire as chief of police for Idaho Springs effective March 1, 2021 and therefore would be retiring from the CLER board of directors effective January 1, 2021 but intended to stay in touch with past and present Rangers. He applauded Senator Lambert and Chief Abramson for getting the Rangers through crises and said that he foresaw a great future for the Rangers.

Senator Lambert amplified the accolades and reminded everyone that 10 years ago the Ranger leadership started the transformative process from "community volunteers" to now a significant part of statewide law enforcement and that this brought with it a cultural change. He enthusiastically thanked Chief Malanka for his service and said God Bless and have a great retirement! The entire board (and the other Rangers in attendance) expressed this sentiment of appreciation.

Chief Malanka thanked Senator Lambert and Chief Abramson and expressed gratitude for Senator Lambert's lessons in diplomacy.

Chief Abramson thanked Chief Malanka for much but in particular that "he believed in the potential for a significant statewide volunteer force of sworn reserve officers" and that he was incredibly appreciative of the law enforcement leadership that Chief Malanka provided. "Colorado Rangers – Police" is the best "branding" thanks to Chief Malanka.

Chief Malanka thanked everyone for the sentiment and advised to "carry on" the mission.

Public Comments:

There were no public questions or comments.

Senator Lambert instructed Chief Abramson to get input from the Ranger's seven IGA partners regarding the replacement of Chief Malanka. He mentioned the "Baptisium of Fire"!

Schedule for Next Meeting:

The next Board of Director's Meeting was tentatively scheduled for Friday 26 February 2021 at 10:00, in Fort Lupton with video teleconference participation possible for board members due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Closing Comments:**Adjournment of Meeting**

Chief Malanka moved and Chief Abramson seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting and it was adjourned at 11:15 by unanimous consent.