

WASHINGTON AUTO THEFT PREVENTION AUTHORITY

WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF SHERIFFS AND POLICE CHIEFS
3060 Willamette Drive NE, Suite 101 ~ Lacey, WA 98516 ~ Phone: (360) 292-7900 ~ Fax: (360) 292-7269 ~ Website: <http://watpa.waspc.org>

"The mission of the Washington Auto Theft Prevention Authority is to prevent and reduce motor vehicle thefts and other associated crime in the State of Washington."



WATPA MEMBERSHIP MEETING: March 19, 2009

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Don Pierce, Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs Executive Director; Mr. Dan Satterberg, King County Prosecutor; Chief Ken Hohenberg, Kennewick Police Department; Chief Steve Strachan, Kent Police Department; Mr. Mike West, Southtowne Auto Rebuild; Mr. Merle Pfiefer, General Public, Mr. Emil Dammell, PEMCO Insurance and Sheriff John Lovick, Snohomish County

GUEST: Captain Bill Decker, Everett Police Department

MEMBERS ABSENT: Chief John Batiste, Washington State Patrol; and Sheriff Harvey Gjesdal, Douglas County

STAFF PRESENT: Mr. Jim LaMunyon, WATPA Executive Director; JoAnna Arlow, WASPC Policy Director; Mr. Grant Clark, WATPA Public Awareness Coordinator; Ms. Nancy Morris, Accounting Services Support; and Ms. Cynthia Jordan, Division Assistant II

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Dan Satterberg, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF 1/15/2009 MINUTES:

Mr. Mike West made a motion to approve the minutes as printed. The motion was carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Mr. Jim LaMunyon gave the financial report. The expense sheet reflects a balance of \$148,000 in the administrative budget. To date WATPA has paid out \$373,000, of the \$4.5 million awarded in grants; in addition we will add another \$1 million today. Jim has been visiting with some of the task forces and conducting reviews of their grant award budgets, expenses, operations and administration. Discussions have included budget shifts and completing expenditures and invoicing costs prior to the award end date. Authority for current grant spending expires June 30, 2009. The money does not carry forward for the grants. Unexpended money remains in the WATPA account and the balance carries forward to the next biennium for appropriation by the legislature. Submitting invoices on a monthly basis is challenging for some of the task forces where there are multiple agencies coordinating billing. They are working through those obstacles.

We had an appropriation of \$6.92 million and did not use the entire appropriation, as we were conservative in order to maintain a balance in the account. The actual budget reflects more

*Washington Auto Theft Prevention
Authority*

JOHN BATISTE
Chief – WA State Patrol

EMIL DAMMEL
Insurance Industry

HARVEY GJESDAL
Sheriff—Douglas County

KEN HOHENBERG
Chief—Kennewick

JOHN LOVICK
Sheriff – Snohomish County

MERLE PFIEFER
General Public

DON PIERCE
Executive Director - WASPC

DAN SATTERBERG
Prosecuting Attorney – King County

STEVE STRACHAN
Chief—Kent

MICHAEL WEST
Automobile Industry

JIM LAMUNYON
Executive Director - WATPA

money than we will spend over the course of the biennium. We will be close to having spent \$6.5 million at the end of the biennium. We don't know what our budget will be for the next biennium. At this point the legislature is looking at all accounts with balances for possible sweeps. The Legislature could take money out of the WATPA account and based on revenue projections for the next two years still appropriate a budget that we can work with. If they take out too much then the revenue projections may not be enough to cover what is needed and will really impact us. It is important to share with the Legislature the work that the grant supported task forces have been doing and that sweeping the account could mean laying off deputy prosecutors and local law enforcement officers.

The revenue for the month of January was \$840,000, which was exceptional and may have been a result of business getting back to normal after the December storms. The month of February revenue dropped down into the \$400,000's.

FEDERAL STANDARD STICKERS:

In the State of Washington we have always been under the impression that the federal standard sticker, which appears on the driver's door, should not be tampered with if it gets removed due to an accident. There is a company that is selling replacement car door stickers. Insurers are recommending that auto repair shops use these replacement stickers when repairing or replacing doors. The Washington State Patrol (WSP) is the authority when it comes to VINS. WSP's stance is this type of replacement sticker is not legal in Washington State. The question for the Authority is should we proceed with action such as requesting an Attorney General opinion of the statute or do we need to take a look at changing our laws to either prohibit or allow these vendors to sell within Washington. The stickers do clearly state that they are a "Replacement Sticker," so they are not sold as an original.

A recommendation was made that this information should be made available to the task forces that we are currently funding and ask if this is a problem they are dealing with before we invest too much time or resources to investigate it further.

WATPA SPONSORED TRAINING:

There are three training sessions going on now:

1. We partnered with the Western State Auto Theft Investigators (WSATI) and co-sponsored their annual week long auto theft school. With WATPA paying the tuition for law enforcement and prosecutors the class is maxed out on attendees and there is a waiting list.
2. The WATPA Auto Theft Regional Training schedule has been announced with sessions beginning March 26 and ending June 10. There are two sessions offered each day and at this time we have about 210 people signed up to attend this training.
3. The Bellevue Police Department has done some preliminary work on the 1st Annual WATPA Auto Theft Conference planned as a 2-day seminar in September. This came in originally as a grant request for WATPA core grants. The cost of this would run about \$43,000 with about 200 participants. Currently besides the WSATI School there is no regular comprehensive auto theft training in Washington. You have to go out of state to get in depth auto theft training. This is an opportunity for WATPA to establish solid auto theft training in our state.

Mr. Satterberg made a motion to pursue the development of a WATPA Conference and to have the September 2009 meeting to coincide with that conference. Included on the agenda would be a presentation by the Authority sharing the work of the Auto Theft Prevention Task Forces and recognition awards for outstanding performances. Sheriff Lovick seconded the motion. Chief Strachan suggested that the Auto Theft Officer of the Year Award be named after Chief Harris who is retiring and has been a leader in the Auto Theft Reduction efforts. His suggestion was added as a friendly amendment.

The motion with the friendly amendment was carried unanimously.

EQUIPMENT GRANT APPLICATIONS:

There were 29 agencies that submitted Equipment/Technology grant applications. The grant applications were reviewed and final award decisions were made. Once successful agencies are notified, the list and award amount will be posted on the WATPA website.

2009 LEGISLATIVE SESSION UPDATE:

Mr. Pierce gave a legislative update and indicated it is not all good news but things are not as bad as they could be. The projection is WATPA will likely lose \$4 million of their budget and be left with about \$2 million per fiscal year. We recognize we all have to make sacrifices in these difficult budget times and that is why the WATPA offered up \$4 million out of \$14 million to help out the state. Any deeper cuts will cripple our ability to carry out our mission. It would mean having to lay off prosecutors, deputy sheriffs and police officers at the local level. One of the goals of the state was not to cut their budget in a way that hurt local counties and municipalities. Auto theft disproportionately affects the poor and they already are most impacted during tough economic times. Across the board, all agencies' budget outlooks are dismal and there will be lots of real cuts in services that we are all going to see and feel. We can only hope that in the final meetings that public safety will be a priority.

PUBLIC AWARENESS UPDATE:

Mr. Clark has been distributing WATPA promotional items at community awareness presentations. His presentations have been well received and have led to additional presentation requests.

WATPA 2009 MEETING SCHEDULE:

- May 21 – Kennewick, WA. This meeting will include regular business and the review and final decisions on the grant applications for the July 1, 2009-June 30, 2010 award period.
- September 17, 3rd Thursday (this gets us through the summer without a meeting)
- December 3 – changed from the 17th due to the close proximity to the holidays.

With no further business Mr. Satterberg adjourned the meeting at 12:30 PM.

**The next scheduled WATPA meeting will be held on
May 21st, 2009, 1 PM, Kennewick, WA**