

Minutes

Court Security Committee October 27, 2010

The Court Security Committee met on October 27, 2010 at Court Operations, 225 Spring Street, Wethersfield in conference room 4B.

Members in attendance: Hon. Barbara N. Bellis, Atty. Susan A. Brown, Mr. William H. Carbone, Hon. Patrick L. Carroll, Atty. Joseph D. D'Alesio, CJM Russell E. Downer, Jr., Atty. Melissa A. Farley, Hon. Matthew E. Frechette, Ms. Jamey L. Harris, Ms. Diane Hatfield, Atty. Richard Loffredo, Atty. Michael Ruben Peck, Hon. Susan Reynolds, Capt. Dennis Roche, Mr. Thomas A. Siconolfi, Atty. Robin Smith, CJM Louis A. Springo, Jr., Hon. Patricia A. Swords, Mr. Richard Zaharek, Atty. Jennifer L. Zito.

Also in attendance: Atty. Jill Begemann, Atty. Karen A. Berris, Mr. Keith J. Pryor, Atty. Denise Poncini.

The meeting was called to order at 1:33 PM by Judge Carroll.

1. Judge Carroll welcomed the members in attendance and requested the attendees to introduce themselves. Judge Carroll introduced two new committee members: Chief Judicial Marshal for the Milford-Ansonia Judicial District Louis A. Springo, Jr. and Chief Judicial Marshal for the Windham Judicial District Russell E. Downer, Jr. Judge Carroll also introduced Attorney Jill Begemann, in attendance on behalf of the Appellate Court.
2. The minutes from the May 12, 2010 meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved.
3. Judge Carroll introduced Attorney Berris, Deputy Director of Jury Administration, to provide an update on the work of Jury in relation to the security of jurors. Attorney Berris informed the Committee that they are in the preliminary stages of gathering information and plan on conducting focus groups with the jury clerks, observing the procedures utilized in the Danielson courthouse to see if they can be a model for other courthouses, and adding questions to the juror questionnaire regarding security. Attorney Berris will continue to report back to the Committee on her progress.
4. Judge Frechette provided a report from the Visitor Policy Subcommittee. Judge Frechette summarized the current version of the provisions in the Security Manual and the changes proposed by the subcommittee. Following discussion, the proposed revisions were unanimously approved by the Committee, as amended to change a typographical error. The provisions will be submitted to Judge Quinn for her approval.
5. During the last meeting, the Committee discussed creating a physical security checklist. Since the last meeting, it was learned that Judicial Marshal Services is currently utilizing a checklist adopted from the National Sheriffs Association, which was recently recommended by the Conference of State Court Administrators and the Conference of Chief Justices. Mr. Zaharek provided an overview of how the checklists are currently utilized. In the future, prior to Judicial Marshal Services completing the checklist, the Administrative Judge is to be contacted.

6. Judge Carroll raised the issue of what to do when a member of the public uses a camera phone to take a picture while in the courthouse. Attorney Poncini read proposed legislation that she drafted which would make it a misdemeanor for an individual to violate the Chief Court Administrator's guidelines concerning the "Use and Possession of Electronic Devices in Superior Court Facilities." A conversation ensued regarding the proposed legislation and the current guidelines.

7. Attorney Mike Peck raised the issue of an emergency notification system. He spoke of an incident when he tried to call the Middletown courthouse when the phones in the courthouse were down. A conversation ensued regarding how best to notify the public when the telephones in a courthouse are down. Depending on how long the phones are going to be down, the information will be posted on the Branch's website. It was suggested that the Branch's website should include a generic message to call either the Office of the Chief Court Administrator or External Affairs if a member of the public is unable to make contact with a courthouse.

8. Jamey Harris provided an overview of the reaccreditation process that the Judicial Marshal Academy is currently going through.

9. Diane Hatfield spoke about the recent class of graduates from the Judicial Marshal Academy and informed the Committee that a new class will be starting in November. Ms. Hatfield also provided an overview of the work being done in regard to the Judicial Marshals' policies and procedures.

10. Attorney Sue Brown raised the issue of marshals entering the offices of the public defenders during their security sweep of the courthouses. Attorney Brown will gather additional information on the issue and report back to Judge Carroll.

The next meeting of the committee will be scheduled at a future date.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:38 PM.