

Recyclable Metal Theft Task Force Minutes of January 13, 2016 Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Sydney Roberts, Director of the Illinois Secretary of State Police. Members in attendance were State Representative Jay Hoffman, State Representative Michael Unes, Sydney Roberts of the Illinois Secretary of State Police, Lt. Troy Phillips of the Illinois State Police and Master Sgt. Scott Whitecotton of the Illinois State Police.

Director Roberts asked for nominations for Chairperson of the Task Force. Representative Michael Unes nominated State Representative Jay Hoffman to serve as Chair. A voice vote was taken and Representative Hoffman was elected Chair on a unanimous voice vote.

Chairman Hoffman made a motion to have Co-Chairs of the Task Force and nominated State Representative Michael Unes to serve as Co-Chair of the Task Force. A voice vote was taken and Representative Unes was elected Co-Chair on a unanimous voice vote.

Co-Chair Hoffman thanked the committee members for serving and introduced Micah Miller from the Illinois Secretary of State's Programs & Policies Staff who will serve as support staff for the Task Force. Co-Chair Hoffman also introduced H.W. Devlin, Legislative Director for the Illinois Secretary of State's Office. Co-Chair Hoffman thanked Secretary of State White and the staff for their administrative support of the Task Force as there was no appropriation in the enabling legislation to support the Task Force.

Co-Chair Hoffman briefly reviewed for the membership the enabling legislation creating the Task Force, specifically outlining the goals and membership. Co-Chair Hoffman introduced the

remaining members of the Task Force in attendance. Co-Chair Hoffman indicated the Task Force was awaiting the names of the appointments from the Illinois State Senate majority and minority caucuses.

Co-Chair Hoffman read through the remaining members to be appointed to the Task Force as outlined in the enabling legislation. He asked the other members of the Task Force to provide their ideas for names of individuals they would like to see serve. He asked the members to provide these names to Micah Miller. Co-Chair Hoffman asked Legislative Director Devlin to reach out to the Illinois Municipal League to obtain a name to represent their group on the Task Force. Director Devlin indicated he would do so.

Co-Chair Hoffman asked Director Roberts to provide the members with an overview of the Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Council (MVTPC).

Director Roberts indicated the MVTPC was established via statute and is under the immediate authority of the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority. Funding for the Council comes from a \$1 fee applied to individual auto insurance policies amounting to approximately \$6-7 million annually. The MVTPC awards grants to state and local law enforcement groups to help prevent auto theft in Illinois.

Co-Chair Hoffman inquired as to whether the MVTPC might be able to provide money to support the Task Force. Director Roberts indicated it was a possibility and introduced Lt. Tom Chandler with the Illinois Secretary of State Police who is the representative for the Secretary of State on the MVTPC.

Lt. Chandler indicated the Illinois Secretary of State Police receive money from the MVTPC to assist their department in performing

audits of recycle and scrap processing businesses to ensure their compliance with current state law. State law requires these businesses to keep concise records on any transaction over \$100 for recycled and scrap metal. The grant money received by the Illinois Secretary of State Police allows the department to hire civilian employees to do audits of the businesses. If the auditors find questionable record keeping or transactions, they report it to the Illinois Secretary of State Police so an investigation on the business can be opened. Lt. Chandler and Director Roberts indicated that the money for the MVTPC and the awarded grants was swept in 2015 and the civilian audits have stopped.

Co-Chair Hoffman inquired to Director Roberts and Lt. Chandler as to whether the audits, if restored, could also cover other materials such as copper metal. Lt. Chandler indicated that would not be possible at this time because of the funding issue but audits could be expanded to include copper and aluminum. Director Roberts indicated expanding into other metals could be difficult because the MVTPC grants require the audits to focus on those recyclable metals used in vehicle manufacturing. Director Roberts indicated that the MVTCP is moving forward for Fiscal Year 2017 and reviewing grant applications but expressed concerns as to whether that money will be available in July of 2016.

Co-Chair Unes inquired about the uses of the grant money from the MTVPC. Director Roberts indicated it can be used for auditors, vehicle title fraud or any area dealing with motor vehicle theft. Director Roberts indicated there has been no decision on what areas the MVTPC and Illinois Secretary of State Police will focus on if money becomes available in Fiscal Year 2017.

Co-Chair Hoffman asked if the Illinois Secretary of State Police would be willing to do audits on other recyclable metal issues should money become available. Director Roberts indicated that

decision would have to be made by the MVTPC and not the Secretary of State Police.

Co-Chair Hoffman returned the discussion to legislation establishing the Task Force for the purposes of reviewing the remaining list of committee members to be appointed. Co-Chair Hoffman indicated he and Co-Chair Unes would reach out to the Senate caucuses to get their appointments. Co-Chair Hoffman reminded the current Task Force members to send their suggestions to Micah Miller with the Secretary of State's Office. Co-Chair Hoffman also indicated to the membership that even if some interested parties do not get an appointment to the Task Force, the membership would still like to hear from them and those groups would be invited to testify before the Task Force.

Co-Chair Unes agreed with Co-Chair Hoffman the more inclusive the membership and outside parties, the better. Co-Chair Unes indicated there are a lot of issues in the recycled metal area. He indicated more needs to be done and wants the Task Force to look to develop specific legislation. He indicated the issue may not be as prominent as it was a few years ago but the Task Force needs to be on top of the issue. He indicated the Task Force needs to work with dealers and suppliers and should look at his previous legislation that passed the House but did not pass the Senate.

Co-Chair Hoffman asked Micah Miller to get a copy of Co-Chair Unes legislation and circulate it to the current Task Force membership for review.

Co-Chair Hoffman indicated the Task Force is responsible for writing and submitting a report to the Illinois General Assembly by October 31, 2016 but if there was interest by the Task Force in introducing legislation prior to the reporting date that would be amenable.

Co-Chair Unes did a quick review of the legislation he had previously introduced on the issue. He indicated legislation will help reduce recidivism and it is a problem we can fix.

Co-Chair Hoffman reminded members to get their ideas for membership to Micah Miller as well as their ideas of persons the Task Force might be interested in hearing from on the issue.

Co-Chair Hoffman and Co-Chair Unes suggested the next meeting of the Task Force take place on Tuesday, February 16 at 10:00 a.m. in Springfield. The Task Force members in attendance agreed with this date. Co-Chair Hoffman and Co-Chair Unes asked Micah Miller to secure a location for the meeting but indicated the date could be subject to change because of the schedule of the Illinois General Assembly.

Master Sgt. Whitecotton recommended to Co-Chair Hoffman and Co-Chair Unes that representation from the Illinois Chiefs of Police Association be added to the Task Force. Co-Chair Hoffman indicated the statutory language calls for five members of the Task Force to be from law enforcement and recommended the Chiefs of Police Association be assigned one of those membership slots.

Co-Chair Hoffman and Co-Chair Unes moved the Task Force be adjourned. The Task Force meeting was adjourned at 10:27 a.m.