

MEETING NOTES

MARCH 17, 2005

Location: Roanoke Police Department

IN ATTENDANCE:

Craig Harris, Vinton PD

Amy Freeman, Vinton PD

Bob Carpentieri, Virginia State Police

Laird Manlove, Crime Line

Meg Hibbert, Main Street Newspapers

Aaron Kremer, Main Street Newspapers

Joe Coyle, Roanoke Emergency Management

Carol Linkenhoker, Roanoke Emergency Management

Jim Grigsby, Roanoke Fire-EMS

George McMillan, Roanoke Sheriff's Office

Jim Brubaker, Roanoke Sheriff's Office

Erin Barnhart, Roanoke Sheriff's Office

Jennifer Faulkner, Roanoke Fire-EMS

Gerald Holt, Roanoke County Sheriff

Dutchie Mirolli, WVTF

Jennifer Conley-Sexton, Roanoke County Fire and Rescue

Ewell Hunt, Franklin County S.O

Aisha Johnson, Roanoke PD

Shane Moreland, WSLs-TV

Sgt. Jeff Herrick, Roanoke County Police

Jason Bond, VDOT

Lindsey Nair, The Roanoke Times

- I. Introduction: Aisha Johnson
 - A. Johnson tells group that she plans to work on a written media policy update to their present policy that will specify what type of information is released and what is not. Other departments say they have such policies.
- II. Sgt. Libby Legg, Roanoke Police Dept.
 - A. Amber Alert—Named after Amber Hagerman, Amber Alert is “the media’s gift to law enforcement.” 80% of citizens have radios, listen to news or read.
 - B. Tones are put out when there is a confirmed abduction, but the question of whether it is an abduction that rates an Amber Alert or not. What qualifies as an Amber Alert? Legg handed out a flow chart that can be used to determine whether a missing child qualifies for an Amber Alert.
 - C. Most missing kids are not Amber Alert candidates. Criteria:
 1. Is the incident an abduction?
 2. Has an investigation been conducted to verify the abduction or eliminate alternative explanations?
 3. Is the child’s information entered into VCIN/NCIC?
 4. Is the child in danger of imminent threat of serious bodily harm or death?

5. Is sufficient information available to disseminate to the public that could assist in locating the child, suspect, of suspect vehicle?

- D. If all that criteria is met, the alert is activated. Can be activated statewide or just regionally. Police notify media organizations and VDOT, who gets message boards activated. Takes about 40 minutes to activate them.
 - E. Shane Moreland says it took a half-hour for state police in Richmond to get Them information about a statewide amber alert, but Legg says if it is of Local concern, the Roanoke police will know about it. Call them.
 - F. Amber Alerts will not always go out immediately. Often times the police need To conduct an investigation first. Amber Alerts go out for a period of about 24 Hours.
 - G. Traffic emergencies bump Amber Alerts off the VDOT message boards.
- III. Complaints, comments.
- A. Meg Hibbert: Salem Police still will not use the paging system. Melinda Payne has said she will make the calls to the media she cares about and no one else needs to be called. Hibbert says it is not fair do descriminate.
 - B. Chief Grigsby asks whether HIPAA still seems to be a concern to co-op members. Everyone agrees it is still a concern. Most agencies shy away from releasing information because it is safer to do that than release it and get sued. Separation of fire/rescue agencies is not enough assurance that they won't get in trouble. It's expensive to defend oneself from a lawsuit, easier to clam up ahead of time.
 - C. Talk of having a HIPAA panel discussion or a FOIA panel discussion with county attorneys, official officers, expert.
 - D. Craig Harris makes mention of Roanoke Valley Police Memorial Service on May 12, 6:30 p.m.
- IV. Future meeting spots: Smart Traffic Center on May 26? TBA.