

**OHIO AMBER ALERT STEERING COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 21, 2010**

Ohio AMBER Alert Chairman, Mark Patchen, called to order the January 21, 2010, meeting of the AMBER Alert Steering Committee at approximately 10:03 a.m. The first order of business was the roll call taken by Lana Joiner.

**I. ROLL CALL - PRESENT**

Governor's Designee, Ohio Emergency Mgmt. Agency – EMA	Mark A. Patchen, Chairman
Dept. of Public Safety, Ohio State Highway Patrol – OSHP	S/Lt. Rob Jackson
Ohio Association of Broadcasters – OAB	Executive VP Christine Merritt
Federal Bureau of Investigation – FBI	Agent Harry W. Trombitas
Attorney General's Office, Ohio Missing Children Clearinghouse	Brent Currence, Director
State Emergency Communications Committee – SECC	Wayne Fick
Victims Advocate	Linda E. Maloy
Local or Regional AMBER Plan	Michael R. Rankin, Esq.
Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police – OACP	Chief Clayton Harris

**ROLL CALL – ABSENT**

Ohio Department of Transportation – ODOT	Alan Phillips
Buckeye State Sheriff's Association – BSSA	Sheriff Ronny J. Shawber Crawford County

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Ohio State Highway Patrol – OSHP	Crystal Fletcher
Sunny95 Radio/Mid-Ohio AMBER	Clark Donley
City of Powell Police Department	Kevin Flaharty
Sharon Township Police Department	Dan Schwind
Mid-Ohio AMBER	Tiffiney Hatem
U.S. Marshal's Office	Jeff Balzer
Westerville Police Department	Del Robeson
Genoa Township Police Department	Dave Stout
Genoa Township Police Department	Molly A. Welch
Delaware County Sheriff's Office	Brittany Craig
Delaware County Sheriff's Office	Dave Buttler
London Police Department	Donovan Cooper
Madison Township Police Department	Jim Glasuize
Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP)	Jeff Hill Gary Vest

**A QUORUM WAS DECLARED.**

**I. APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 15, 2009, MINUTES (ADOPTED)**

The Committee dispensed with reading of the October 15, 2009, Ohio AMBER Alert Steering Committee Meeting minutes. Chairman Patchen asked for any additions, corrections or deletions to the

## Ohio AMBER Alert Steering Committee

January 21, 2010

Page 2 of 3

minutes. Being none, Mr. Harry Trombitas made a motion to adopt the minutes, Ms. Christine Merritt seconded. Motion carried by all.

### II. OLD BUSINESS

#### A. State AMBER Conference

Mr. Brent Currence informed the committee that the state AMBER conference will be held on April 20, 2010. News Plex representatives from the University of South Carolina will conduct a four-hour session at the conference. The session focuses on utilizing the media during an AMBER Alert and strengthens relationships between the media and law enforcement. The News Plex training staff are able to handle large groups and training is said to be excellent. Ms. Christine Merritt added that News Plex trains AMBER teams from around the country in a scenario-based training focused on understanding the issues of both the media and law enforcement. News Plex will be a vast majority of the conference. Since the funding will be coming from the DOJ, they will need a full accounting of all in attendance. The Columbus Police Department will host the conference from their academy, which is an excellent venue and seats approximately 500. Mr. Currence hopes to have an agenda out by the end of the month. All registration will go through the Attorney General's Office.

#### B. ID R Kids

Chairman Patchen informed the committee that over the last few months there have been discussions with BMV and schools in efforts on trying to form a pilot project on using the ID R Kids as an ID for the school systems. It was decided about three weeks ago by the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, Deputy Registrar that at this point they don't have the resources to implement a school ID program. The ID R Kids program is still valid through registrar offices for individuals to use and use is encouraged. This ends the AMBER sub-committee's work on a pilot program for utilizing ID R Kids as a school ID system.

Mr. Mike Rankin said that he had spoken with Ms. Carolyn Williams of the BMV and that she had agreed that BMV could not devote the resources to the program at this time. One benefit for a child who has a state ID is that law enforcement has access to information about the child and if the child is abducted or injured, there would be next of kin contact. Currently the cost for a four year state ID is \$8.50, \$3.50 of that cost goes to the deputy registrar for their expenses, which is mandated by law.

#### C. Twitter (to distribute alerts)

Mr. Brent Currence informed the committee that the administration side of his office had the idea of using Twitter as another way for distribution of alerts. This would be another way to get the alerts out to more people. He told them that the idea would have to be approved by the Steering Committee. The Twitter would be done on both Missing Child and Missing Adult Alerts. Twitter messages consist of approximately 140 characters. One concern is that with cellular phones where the messages keep getting forwarded, they could be forwarded where the message is not relevant. A motion was made by Mr. Mike Rankin for Mr. Brent Currence and S/Lt. Rob Jackson to work toward establishing a Twitter account and procedures for the distribution of alerts over Twitter. Motion seconded by Mr. Wayne Fick. Motion carried by all.

**Ohio AMBER Alert Steering Committee**

**January 21, 2010**

**Page 3 of 3**

D. Review of AMBER Alerts

The Steering Committee reviewed the three AMBER Alerts issued since the last meeting, one from Cuyahoga, one from Hamilton and one from Trumbull Counties. S/Lt. Rob Jackson briefed the committee on the three Alerts. The first one was a bi-polar father and he had threatened to put the mother in coma. The second Alert, the biological father had previous arrests for domestic violence. On the third alert, the biological father had an active warrant for child endangering and also had a civil protection order against him for the mother and child. On the third one, the father saw the alert on TV, phoned the mother of the child and turned himself in to authorities. All three Alerts met the AMBER criterion and resulted in successful recoveries. No changes or corrections to the Alert summaries were recommended.

D. Review of Missing Adult Alerts

The Steering Committee reviewed the 34 Missing Adult Alerts issued since the last meeting. Mr. Brent Currence informed the committee that there had been a total of 133 Alerts in 2009. There have been a total of 8 deaths since the inception of the program. With reference to the latest 34 Alerts, two were found deceased. One from Euclid suffered bouts of depression, is thought to have committed suicide, was found in a lake. One from Dayton was a manic-depressive, not taking medication, had suicidal tendencies and had made attempts on her life in the past, and was found in a river, believed to have committed suicide. All others were found safe. Mr. Currence voiced concern to the committee that the Ohio Missing Adult Alert criteria is broad and is resulting in a great deal of alerts being issued. People are beginning to not pay attention because of the large number of alerts. The committee agreed to form a working group to look at the Missing Adult Alert criteria and determine if changes are needed. The group will also look at standards and guidance for law enforcement that may focus the issue of alerts for high profile cases.

IV. MISCELLANEOUS

The next Steering Committee meeting will be on Thursday, April 15, 2010, at 10:00 a.m., Room 204, at the Ohio Emergency Management Agency, 2588 West Dublin-Granville Road, Columbus, Ohio, 43235-2712.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn meeting at approximately 11:10 a.m. was made by Mr. Mike Rankin, seconded by S/Lt. Rob Jackson. Motion carried by all.

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DATE

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**MARK A. PATCHEN, CHAIRMAN**  
**AMBER ALERT STEERING COMMITTEE**