

American Knife & Tool Institute
Executive Committee (BOR & Advisory)
October 14, 2008, Teleconference 5:00 p.m. Central

The Executive Committee Teleconference meeting of the American Knife and Tool Institute on Tuesday, October 14, 2008 was called to order at 5:00 p.m. CDT by AKTI President Goldie Russell (A.G. Russell). Regents present, A.G. Russell (A.G. Russell Knives), Gil Hibben (Knifemakers Guild), Les de Asis (Benchmade), AKTI Vice President Jeff Goddard (Kershaw). By proxy to David Kowalski: Bill Raczkowski (Gerber). Advisory members present: None. Others present: Jan Billeb, Executive Director; David Kowalski, Communications Coordinator

The conference call followed a series of conference calls earlier in the day interviewing potential Texas lobbyists: Eric Wright, Marc Rodriguez/Gilbert Turrieta, Lisa Anderson, Mark Seale, and Louis Bacarisse.

Goldie Russell complimented David Kowalski on the organization and efficiency of the information and interview process. All involved agreed that the process allowed for a lot of learning about how the Texas legislative system works and who the key players are that AKTI should concentrate efforts on.

After a brief review by every one of the strengths, weaknesses and proposed fee structures of each candidate, Goldie Russell raised two concerns: (1) money and how it would be paid and (2) how the effort would be driven and supervised given the current business climate and demands.

David Kowalski emphasized that in soliciting contributions that companies need to be reminded the threat of the Thomas court decision is to all one-handed openers, not just assisted-opening knives. And Texas is among the largest markets of most companies in the sporting knife industry. He also noted that if AKTI did not make the effort now that the Texas legislature would not meet again until 2011 and valuable time would be lost. Other court cases might support even broader knife bans in the state. He further suggested the Texas effort would mirror AKTI's SC effort where he maintained primary contact with the lobbyist who really was the driving force with lawmakers.

Les de Asis reminded everyone that if any one company had to litigate against the Texas ruling that it would cost them the proposed lobbyist fee or more individually.

Goldie Russell commented that all of the candidates seemed to feel the likelihood of an AKTI success was good.

Les de Asis moved to retain Marc Seale not to exceed \$32,500 per his proposal (Attachment 1). Jeff Goddard seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

David Kowalski outlined a game plan. He will notify all candidates of the decision. He and Jan Billeb will work on the AKTI boilerplate lobbyist agreement should Seale not

offer his own standard form. Discussion will follow on the specific language of revisions AKTI wants to pursue, and a plan of action of how to accomplish it will be developed with Seale. Future conference calls will be held as necessary to make decisions regarding specific wording and tactical plan after David Kowalski provides the Executive Committee with all of Marc Seale's feedback. (Attachment 2-Letter to TX Lobbyists with Background Information)

Meeting adjourned 4:35 p.m. CDT

Respectfully submitted,


Jan Billeb, Executive Director
American Knife & Tool Institute