

**Law Enforcement and Public Safety Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes**

DATE & TIME: May 5, 2014 - - 7:00 PM
LOCATION: Legislative Chambers, 6th Floor, COB
PRESIDING OFFICER: Chairman TJ Briggs
LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Jay Mahler, Deputy Clerk/Confidential Secretary
PRESENT: Legislators Ronk, Gregorius, Loughran
ABSENT: Legislator Maio
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes
OTHER ATTENDEES: Sheriff Paul Van Blarcum, Fire Advisory Board members: Tom Planz, Greg Greer, C. William Ecker, John H. Quick
Chairman Briggs called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

MOTION NO. 1: RESOLVED To Approve the Minutes of April 9, 2014
Motion Made By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Gregorius
Discussion: None
Roll Call Vote: No
Voting In Favor: Legislators Briggs, Ronk, Gregorius, Loughran
Voting Against: None
No. of Votes in Favor: 4
No. of Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Carried

Legislator Briggs advised the Committee that there were no resolutions before the committee this month.

Sheriff's Report – Sheriff Paul Van Blarcum

The Sheriff's monthly Telephone/Board In Revenue report was distributed.

Legislator Ronk asked the Sheriff what his projected budget was.

Sheriff Van Blarcum said \$1.19 was projected for 2014. He explained that he had originally projected \$900,000 for 2014 but after discussions with the County Executive's Office he was comfortable raising it to \$1.2. He was confident that the number would be reached.

Legislator Ronk asked if there was a contingency plan for when Dutchess County completes the installation of pods to increase the number of inmates that can be housed at their jail.

Sheriff Van Blarcum said that his office was in the process of developing a couple of plans and working on the 2015 budget projections.

Legislator Briggs congratulated the Sheriff and his Office on their continued good work. He advised the Sheriff that Officer Becker was extremely helpful during a recent Ambulance call in the Ellenville area.

Presentation of the Fire Advisory Board

Legislator Ronk introduced members of the Fire Advisory Board, Sub-Committee on a Fire Training Center.

Tom Planz advised the committee that there was a lack of an **approved** fire training facility for live fire training. He pointed out there are a few privately owned facilities in Ulster County, but no County owned facility. He said that Ulster County is the only county in the Hudson Valley without a county owned training center providing for live fire training.

Mr. Planz explained that the center of a training facility, and the main focus of the sub-committee, is the “burn building” for live fire training.

Mr Planz narrated a Power Point presentation which showed the fire training facilities of Orange, Sullivan, Green and Dutchess counties. The training centers included classrooms, and various outdoor training buildings. All of them had a burn building.

Most of the training centers included large garages where other county departments stored vehicles; Sheriff’s Office, County EMS, Haz-Mat, etc. Mr. Planz pointed out a number of instances where Ulster County vehicles were housed around the county in privately owned facilities.

The presentation was concluded after about 20 minutes. Mr. Planz reminded the committee that many of the facilities housed multiple departments and then said that Ulster County’s 911 Center could use a new home and let the committee know that UC Department of Emergency Management/Emergency Communications Director Art Snyder shares an office with his secretary.

Legislator Ronk advised the committee that while the new UC Law Enforcement Center was being built, space for a new 911 Center was offered, but was declined.

Mr. Planz again highlighted the various County emergency vehicles stored throughout the county. He acknowledged that building the facility would require a Capital Project and would not be cheap.

Legislator Ronk pointed out that Orange County is building a new Burn Building for \$2.2 million dollars. The burn building seen in the presentation in Walker Valley cost approximately \$700,000 - \$800,000. Legislator Ronk clarified that that estimate included prevailing wage figures

Mr. Planz asked the committee what the next step was and said that a Master Plan was needed. He pointed out that Marletown was the geographic center of the county and that SUNY Ulster Community College putting a new water pipeline in which would satisfy the water need. He said staffing and facility maintenance would need to be considered.

Sheriff Van Blarcum asked if the training center could be built “piece-meal.” He said that his office has been working on a plan for housing Sheriff Vehicles for 8 years and desperately needs covered storage for vehicles.

Mr. Planz said that the Burn Building is the most important aspect to the Fire Advisory Board. It was also pointed out that the location of the Burn Building has to be away from residential areas because of the smoke.

Sheriff Van Blarcum asked if there was anyone actively looking for grant money for the project and offered his staff’s assistance in investigating funding streams.

Legislator Ronk asked if the Board members felt that fire fighters would be willing to travel to the training center because the county is the geographic size of Rhode Island. The response was that it depends on the course being offered.

For the benefit of the committee members, Legislator Ronk asked Mr. Planz how many instructors it takes to conduct a Firefighter 1 course. The answer was 4.

There was a brief discussion on the number of instructors required for the various courses and whether they were state or county instructors.

Legislator Ronk advised the committee that about 3 years ago he fought to put money in the county budget for the equipment for 2 additional county fire instructors bringing the current budget allocation up to 4 instructors.

Mr. Planz recognized that it isn't a great time to look for money since the county is looking for millions for new radio system.

There was then discussion on the need for continued education trainings as well as training of new recruits and the number of hours that the state provides free of charge. The committee was advised that there are certain courses that must be taught by state instructors, but that county trainers can assist.

Legislator Ronk pointed out that as the population of fire fighters begins to age out of the profession, more entry level trainings that will consume more of the state training hours.

Legislator Loughran asked how many volunteer fire companies there are in the county. There are 52. Only one is paid, the City of Kingston.

Legislator Ronk advised the committee that some of the EMS companies are paid. And some have paid Paramedics but volunteer drivers and EMTs.

Legislator Loughran asked if the Board has asked any of the Towns to contribute toward the cost of the center.

Mr. Planz advised the committee that the vision is to have a county owned facility.

Legislator Briggs asked where Emergency Management Director Snyder and Fire Coordinator Charlie Mutz were on the project. And that this request should be coming from them.

Legislator Ronk suggested that the committee ask Mr. Snyder and Mr. Mutz to come to a committee meeting and ask what their proposal is to address the Fire Advisory Board's concerns. He continued by saying that the Fire Advisory Board is what the county Legislature has to advise on the topic. He pointed out that Mr. Mutz is rarely at the monthly meetings of the Board.

Legislator Briggs stated that he feels the proposal needs to come through Mr. Mutz.

Legislator Ronk pointed out that in the meantime live fire trainings will have to be conducted at the Walker Valley facility and recommended that some money should be appropriated in the county budget to replace the burn panels. Each panel costs \$10,000.

Legislator Briggs agreed.

Mr. Planz advised the committee that Mr. Mutz had money budgeted to give to facilities. He had \$1,000 per facility in his budget, but only distributed the money if requested. That money has since been removed due to budget cuts.

Legislator Briggs offered to meet with Mr. Mutz. Legislator Ronk said he would also go. Legislator Gregorius asked for a more specific request so that costs can be projected.

Legislator Briggs invited the committee to join him for a discussion with Mr. Mutz and will report back to the committee in June.

Legislator Loughran reminded the Board that the Sheriff offered the assistance of his grant person to assist with investigating funding, but that the person would need some direction on what the project would entail.

Legislator Briggs asked if there was any other business. He thanked the members of the Fire Advisory Board for their work, commitment and service.

The topic of the age of the communication system in the field and at the 911 center was briefly discussed.

Legislator Briggs advised the Board that he spoke to Director Snyder about the matter and he expects to be proposing a capital project.

The estimated cost of the training center was said to be \$5-\$7 million.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Adjournment

Motion Made By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Gregorius
No. of Votes in Favor: 4
No. of Votes Against: 0
TIME: 7:55 PM

Respectfully submitted this 2nd day of June, 2014
Jay Mahler, Deputy Clerk
Minutes Approved: June 2, 2014