

**ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

NAME OF COMMITTEE: Law Enforcement and Public Safety Committee
DATE & TIME: December 7, 2010 @ 6:30 PM
PLACE: Library Conference Room, 6th Floor, County Office Building

LEGISLATORS PRESENT: Chairman Jack Hayes, Deputy Chairman Thomas Briggs, Legislators Carl Belfiglio, Roy Hochberg, Kenneth Ronk, Michael Sweeney, Hector Rodriguez

LEGISLATORS EXCUSED: None

OTHERS ATTENDING: Deputy County Executive Robert Sudlow, Sheriff Paul VanBlarcum, Tom Kadgen (LWV)

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER @ 6:32 PM

APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 2, 2010 & NOVEMBER 9, 2010 MINUTES:

Motion offered by Legislator Belfiglio, Seconded by Legislator Rodriguez, All in Favor, Carried.

RESOLUTIONS:

1. **Resolution Draft No. 122108, December 21, 2010** - Authorizing The Chairman Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute An Agreement With The Town Of Ulster For Use Of The Ulster Police Firearms Range And Training Facility

Motion offered by Legislator Rodriguez, Seconded by Legislator Ronk, All in Favor, Carried.

Discussion: This contract is from January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011. This agreement is with the Town of Ulster for the use of the Ulster Police Firearms Range and Training Facility, located on Ulster Landing Road. The Sheriff's Office is required by law to provide firearms training and practice for its sworn officers and seeks to use this facility for such purpose.

New Business:

1) Security of Ulster County Buildings: Sheriff VanBlarcum stated that with regards to changes to security at the County Office Building, that starting in 2011, the building will shut down at 6:00 PM on Friday nights. Part-timers will back fill the retiree's positions/schedules. A Security work schedule was handed out to the Committee. The schedule shows the work schedule for the month of January, it shows all the County Buildings that require Security Officers. He is hoping to hire a couple more part-timers that would fill in for vacation time, sick time, and personal time.

Hayes: Stated that with regards to the list that was provided by Mr. Sudlow of all the County Offices Buildings that doing an overall security overview is a big job. He feels that there is a great need to look at the security in all the buildings, but as a Committee does not know if they are able to handle the scope of the overview that this entails.

VanBlarcum: Stated that he has attended meetings with regard to the Security in the County Office Building. Everyone was in agreement as to how they would like to move forward. Funding and how much you want to put the public out of their way is an issue. He stated that there should be one entrance for the Public, one entrance for the staff, a magnetometer, and at least one or two armed guards. That is for the COB, the other County buildings were not discussed at that time.

Sudlow: Stated that they are looking at the real estate portfolio in general and are trying to maximize the best properties. There are concerns with many of the buildings that the County is currently using. He agreed with the Sheriff that funding is a big factor.

Hayes: Asked if the only security is from the Sheriff's Office, either in suggestion and/or manpower. A/Yes, the Courts are State regulated, all other security is provided by the Sheriff's Office.

VanBlarcum: Stated that his office is very capable at securing all the necessary buildings and feels that they are doing a great job. In the last four years there have been no incidents. The building of concern is the County Office Building. As stated before, separate entrances and a magnetometer in the COB is what has been suggested. Probation has an armed guard.

Belfiglio: Q/Asked for clarification as to the Security in the COB if they are armed or unarmed? A/Unarmed, they are Security Guards, not Police Officers; the certifications that are required and the pay grades are different.

Hayes: Stated that with certain subject matter regarding this topic that this Committee may have to have discussions in a closed door setting. Some of the subject matter and their discussions may have to stay confidential with regards to security.

Hochberg: Q/Is there an evacuation plan with regards to the County Office Building? A/Yes

Hochberg: Suggesting using cameras in the County Office Building. Legislator Rodriguez agreed that cameras could be used as a deterrent. When cameras are obvious, people do react differently. Legislator Belfiglio explained how the cameras are used in the Town of Esopus. He believes that they could be a deterrent but believes armed guards would be better.

Hayes: Stated that the discussion is getting detailed and what he would like to get back to is what this Committee can do overall with regards to this subject. He suggested getting a cost analysis on obtaining a template and look at the overall security with regards to Buildings & Grounds, technology, something along the lines of best practices. Where should best practices be with Government Buildings? Chairman Hayes is going to get back to the Sheriff as to where a template or program can be purchased. The Sheriff stated that the County Clerk's office at

the beginning of this year or the end of last year canvassed all the surrounding Counties as to type of security that they are using. He stated that information could be beneficial with regards to what you are trying to accomplish.

Hayes: Would like to develop a Subcommittee and meet with the County Executive, the Sheriff, and the Committee and come up with a frame work as to how to look at security.

Motion was offered by Chairman Hayes to form a Subcommittee with regards to building security, Seconded by Legislator Briggs, All in Favor, Carried. (Information to follow)

Hayes: stated that he met with Keri Reynolds and Pat Cuomo. He stated that they have done a lot of work with regards to the questions that he sent out asking for criteria on placing individuals in these locations. He handed out a page from the NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services; it lists all the facilities in Ulster County. He has also included a couple of NYS websites that state the guidelines for level of care determination. It is his understanding that Assemblywoman Gunther and Senator Bonacic are both also looking into this. Chairman Hayes stated that he will be in contact with District Attorney Holley Carnright to discuss the subject matter. This continues to be an ongoing situation and concern in the Ellenville area. Legislator Briggs will be attending a meeting tomorrow night that will be discussing operations at the Rehab Facility and will report back to the Committee. Chairman Hayes stated he would like to canvas all the Town Supervisors as to the Facilities in their individual Towns/Villages. He added that a lot of this is going to fall back on New York State Policy. He feels that Comptroller DiNapoli has done some outstanding audits and with regards to this subject, there is a very good chance an audit may follow. He received an eye opening letter from an individual who is a resident at the Renaissance Project. He will retract names and get that letter out to the Committee for their viewing. He feels that there are definitely areas that could be improved upon.

Briggs: stated that as a resident of Ellenville he agrees that the incident that occurred is very tragic but also adds that he has never heard of any major problems with the Renaissance Project and feels that they have always been good neighbors to Ellenville. He asks that the Committee keep an open ear with regards to this program and their facility.

Sweeney: Q/Since most of this is coming down from the state, what as a Committee can be accomplished? A/Hayes/That's why he wants to review this, so that he can answer that question. He stated that if there is the ability as a County to obtain an oversight function and it affects Public Safety, then as a Committee we have a requirement to do so or to obtain a closer relationship with the oversight agencies.

Belfiglio: Agreed with Chairman Hayes on getting the Towns involved, he also feels that the Supervisors can speak for their towns and about any problems they may be experiencing. He agreed that this subject matter may be too large for this Committee and would like to encompass a Task Force Committee to investigate this, and possibly get Mental Health involved.

Briggs: Stated that Good Samaritan does not have Mental Health intervention because they have their own counselors on staff. A lot of the programs that are offered can be year long

programs. Even as a Supervisor of Corrections, supervising a Residential Substance Abuse Treatment Program, as the people go through the program, they become peer advisors within the program. Good Samaritan and Renaissance have very similar programs. He explained that it is similar to the prison system only with trustees.

The Committee further discussed the numbers of facilities that are in Ulster County and that the Town Supervisors and the Police Agencies should be actively involved. They all agreed that these Agencies need to be supervised and public safety needs to be addressed.

Briggs: Stated that at this point, information should be gathered and analyzed. Look at if these facilities are sanctioned by the Department of Mental Health, most of these facilities are accredited facilities and through that accreditation there are standards that are set and have to be followed. Additional information may be needed through DCJS (Department of Criminal Justice Services); then this information should be passed on to Legislators and State Senators. He stated that the State has Committees that would oversee these matters.

Sudlow: Stated that Legislator Stoeckeler would certainly have a fair amount of information as someone who is an Executive Director of a Facility as to what the requirements are and to acquire hands on experience on a day to day basis what has to be done to receive whatever funding streams they receive. Chairman Hayes stated that he has spoken to Legislator Stoeckeler and he has agreed to assist in anyway that he can.

Hayes: Reiterated that there are a number of areas that the Committee should reach out to in regards to information gathering.

Old Business:

1) Dam Safety/Update - On November 19, 2010 the NYCDEP was at Ellenville and announced that they will repair the system for the West Branch Tunnel. Projected for 2013. Chairman Hayes stated that he still would like to see an Emergency Action Plan. It is his understanding that they have to produce an Emergency Action Plan and added that he may have to foil this information. Legislator Briggs stated that through the Town and the Fire Districts that it is his understanding that there is an Emergency Action Plan in place. He stated that he will check with his Captain. Chairman Hayes and Legislator Briggs will follow up and report back to the Committee.

Belfiglio: Q/Are they going to shut the water off and then divert the water to a different area while the pipe is being fixed? A/Hayes/They are going to build a parallel tunnel first and the flow will continue. There will continue to be a flow for ten more years. It will be ten years from now before they shut that tunnel down and tap in and make a diversion. There will be two tunnels, one in Wawarsing and one under the Hudson from Roseton across the river to Dutchess County.

Sweeney: Q/Has there ever been a Geological Study stating how bad the damage is underground? A/Hayes/A Geological Survey is projected to be out in June of 2011.

2) Bridge Safety/Update - Stated that if you go to the dangerous bridge site on-line it takes the DOT Bridge Report and categorizes the bridges by how dangerous they are by rating them from 0 to 10. He stated that the group that offers this report are people that have a vested interest in seeing more bridge work done and states to use the word "Dangerous" is a little impetuous in possibly trying to get the work done quicker. He spoke with Commissioner Sheeley and he stated that they deal with this issue through Capital Projects and when a Bridge needs replacement then they move forward with replacement. Chairman Hayes stated with regard to Capital Improvements he feels that the County is right inline with protocol.

3) Medical Examiner Protocol/Update - Chairman Hayes is going to request from Orange County what their protocol is. The Sheriff added that Undersheriff Faluotico will have the information that he has gathered to the Committee by end of year.

4) Second Hand Dealers Law/Update - Chairman Hayes stated that Bill Luedeke (retired Police Officer and in the jewelry business) is looking at it and would like to give the Committee some input on the subject in the future. He stated that he falls in-between the new Law proposal and the old Law proposal and Chairman Hayes stated that he very much respects his opinion. (Information to follow)

5) Residential Facilities Housing Court Placed Individuals Subcommittee/Update - Covered this topic above under New Business/ Security of Ulster County Buildings

Additional Information: The Sheriff requested that the Committee pass along to all the Legislators that starting in January there will no longer be Security at the County Office Building after 6:00 PM. He is going to follow up with an e-mail.

Motion to adjourn meeting @ 7:32 PM

Motion offered by Legislator Rodriguez, Seconded by Legislator Belfiglio, All in Favor, Carried.

**Respectfully Submitted,
Tammy Wilson, Senior Legislative Employee**
