

**ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE  
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**NAME OF COMMITTEE:** Law Enforcement and Public Safety Committee  
**DATE & TIME:** May 3, 2011 @ 6:30 PM  
**PLACE:** Library Conference Room, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, County Office Building

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

**LEGISLATORS EXCUSED:** Legislator Carl Belfiglio

**OTHERS ATTENDING:** Legislator Michael Madsen, Sheriff Paul VanBlarcum,  
Undersheriff Frank Faluotico

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**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER @ 6:35 PM**

**APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 5, 2011 COMMITTEE MINUTES:**

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

**RESOLUTIONS:**

1. **Resolution Draft No. 0502, May 17, 2011** - Authorizing The Chairman Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute An Agreement And Any Amendments To The Agreement With The New York State Division Of Homeland Security And Emergency Services For FY10 State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) - Anti Terrorism Funds - Amending The 2011 Ulster County Budget - Emergency Communications/Emergency Management And Health

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

Discussion: Chairman Hayes further explained the funding with regards to this Resolution. Legislator Ronk stated that he will be contacting the County Executive's Office to obtain a list that provides what exactly will be bought with the grant monies. The Committee further discussed the changes that will be taking place with regards to Interoperable Communication System upgrades and funding. Chairman Hayes stated that Art Snyder has grant opportunities in place.

2. **Resolution Draft No. 0510, May 17, 2011** - Amending The 2011 Ulster County Budget - Law Enforcement Terrorism And Prevention Program - Ulster County Sheriff's Office

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

Discussion: Chairman Hayes explained that this Resolution involves money that was not expended in 2010. The money will be used to purchase equipment to prevent, detect and respond to improvised explosive device (IED) attacks. This grant requires no matching county funding. Chairman Hayes stated that he has written to the County Executive asking for more elevated awareness with regards to Terrorism Prevention.

3. **Resolution Draft No. 0511, May 17, 2011** - Amending The 2011 Ulster County Budget - Appropriating Unexpended Funds From The New York State Office Of Homeland Security Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program- Ulster County Sheriff's Office

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

Discussion: Chairman Hayes explained that this is money that was not expended in 2010 and is being appropriated in 2011. The remaining funds will be used to purchase and provide training for a mobile computer software system that will interconnect other police agencies in the County and allow instant access to the County's record management system.

#### **New Business (2 items)**

Indian Point Nuclear Facility protocols as pertains to Ulster County / Chairman Hayes stated that he has been in communication with Art Snyder and there are nuclear concerns in the wake of Japan's quake. The concern is with regards to the Indian Point evacuation zones and the question is should they be widened. Chairman Hayes stated that the Federal response to these concerns is that there are no current plans to change the 10 mile Evacuation Planning Zone.

Sweeney: Stated that what was discussed at last month's Committee meeting was whether or not Ulster County is in the Evacuation Zone and believes that the Undersheriff stated that we are. His concern is whether or not the County has a plan in place with regards to the million people that are going to head up I87 to Ulster County in the event of a disaster. Chairman Hayes stated that he would ask Art Snyder to attend a Committee meeting to discuss those concerns but believes that at this point, Ulster County has a limited role. The Undersheriff stated that if there is a disaster at that nuclear plant, that I87 would be closed. You would not be able to ride through the hot spots; you would have to head towards Pennsylvania and Connecticut. Chairman Hayes stated that most of the shelters are set up in Orange and Dutchess Counties and that Ulster County was never a big sheltering location.

Ulster County Corrections monthly average population and phone commissions for 2011 / Sheriff VanBlarcum handed out the Monthly Report to the Committee. He stated that the numbers are better this month than last, and anticipates the numbers to be higher for next month. The Undersheriff explained that last year they had a heavy influx in the female population for June & July, and as a result, now has been granted permission from the Commission of Corrections to double bunk in 12 cells. He added that those twelve cells were designed for double bunking and as of today, new bunks have been installed. He explained that you are not allowed to double bunk to make money, but are allowed to double bunk to save money. They are moving forward

with the plan to double bunk in the male cells as well. They further discussed competitive market prices and how that is affecting the facility with regards to other Counties.

### **Old Business (3 items)**

Ulster County Police Services review / Chairman Hayes stated that at this point he is trying to gather information with regards to the topic. He had discussions with the Undersheriff with regards to the last time this review was requested ten years ago. The Undersheriff explained to the Committee the many steps that would have to take place for this merge to happen, and that it takes a considerable amount of time, and gave the example of 15 to 20 years to complete. He covered many pros and cons with regard to the topic. One of the biggest obstacles at this point is how to finance the merge. The Undersheriff stated that he doesn't see it happening in the immediate future for Ulster County, but believes that it will happen at some point. He recommended asking DCJS for a new analysis to be performed. He also added that with regards to shared services, believes that Ulster County is already doing that.

Sweeney: Q/What is the difference between a Sheriff's Department and a County Police Department. A/The difference is Checks & Balances. A Sheriff is elected every four years by the people of the County, with a County Police Department, you would have a Board of Commissioners. It is a very different Check & Balance System.

Hayes: Stated that a consolidated County Police Department does have the potential for efficiencies but reiterated what the Undersheriff stated about time. He stated it also raises a lot of questions with regards to Home Rule.

Madsen: Stated that it is a way of identity for many Municipalities.

Committee: Discussed many pros and cons.

VanBlarcum: Stated that he spoke with the County Executive and it is his understanding that the County Executive did not ask the Committee to research a County Police Department. He is requesting information with regards to the overlapping of services within agencies for cost saving purposes.

Hochberg: Talked about new technology and suggested incorporating all new programs/technology on the County level as a matter of policy. He feels that as a formal policy, new programs/technology would be incorporated in the most efficient and effective way. It would make it much easier for smaller municipalities to take full advantage of all the new programs/technology that the Sheriffs Office has to offer moving forward in the future.

Hayes: Stated that he will ask for clarification from the Chairman of the Legislature and the County Executive with regards to what is being asked for on the subject matter being discussed. He stated that this would be a huge project and does not feel that the Committee has the resources to undertake such a large time-consuming project. He stated that he would update the Committee at the next meeting.

Briggs: Has concern that this raises a lot of Home Rule issues. Stated that we should not dictate to the townships on what the County feels is best.

Hochberg: He's not suggesting taking anything away from the townships; his suggestion is a way for all the municipalities to stay on the same page with regards to training and technology. He stated that growth is here and that the towns have an important function.

Hayes: Stated that he appreciates the concept of the strategic planning but also agrees with Legislator Briggs about the Home Rule resistance that will occur from Municipalities.

Faluotico: Stated to the Committee that there is already a very good collaboration happening monthly when the Police Chiefs Association meets. Chairman Hayes attends these meetings and anyone on the Committee is welcome to attend. He stated that the Town Supervisors and Chiefs attend these meetings and they all collaborate together and effective decisions are made. He stated without reinventing the wheel and arguing Home Rule, believes the Chiefs Association is already in place and is very effective. He stated the URGENT Team evolved from the Chiefs Associations collaboration. He stated that there are no home turf issues.

Briggs: Agrees, he stated that it's cooperation, not dictation.

Laws pertaining to disorderly/protesting person at funerals / Chairman Hayes stated that he received from the Sheriff what Law Saratoga County is trying to pass; he added that there are also other Counties inquiring about the same issue. The Sheriff stated that he does not believe that it is a big problem in Ulster County. Chairman Hayes stated that he would forward that information on to the Committee. He does not feel that at this point, with existing Laws (and the fact that there is not a huge concern in Ulster County) that there is a need to pursue this further. Legislator Madsen made the point that if it was pursued, he would like the verbiage to state no protesting at any funeral, not just military funerals.

Delaware Aqueduct, West Branch Tunnel Leak, United States Federal Emergency Management Agency Technical Assistance Request Update / Chairman Hayes stated that the Technical Assistance Request is moving forward. He has the following two reports and will forward to the Committee electronically.

- Regional Aqueduct Planning / An Overview of the Planning Structure and Process
- Delaware Aqueduct Rondout - West Branch Tunnel Bypass Project / NYSOEM Briefing

The agencies are looking at the probability for preparation of a plan with regard to addressing a failure of the Delaware Aqueduct Rondout - West Branch Tunnel or any portion of it. They are looking at the tunnel from the Reservoir all the way to NYC. The concerns remain ongoing. He stated that with regards to Wawarsing, he is working on points of contacts for Emergency Planning.

#### **Motion to adjourn meeting @ 7:25 PM**

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

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

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