

**ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

NAME OF COMMITTEE: Law Enforcement and Public Safety Committee
DATE & TIME: September 6, 2011 @ 6:30 PM
PLACE: Library Conference Room, 6th Floor, County Office Building

LEGISLATORS PRESENT: Chairman Jack Hayes, Legislators Roy Hochberg, Hector Rodriguez (left @ 6:55 PM), Michael Sweeney

LEGISLATORS EXCUSED: Deputy Chairman Thomas Briggs, Legislators Carl Belfiglio and Kenneth Ronk

OTHERS ATTENDING: Legislator Michael Madsen, Sheriff Paul VanBlarcum, Undersheriff Frank Faluotico, James Tiano (Sheriff's Office), Michael Freer (Sheriff's Office)

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER @ 6:35 PM

APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 2, 2011 COMMITTEE MINUTES:

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

RESOLUTIONS:

1. **Resolution Draft No. 0905, September 20, 2011** - Authorizing The Chairman Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute Two Contracts With The New York State Division Of Criminal Justice Services For Alternatives To Incarceration Programs - Public Defender

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

Discussion: None

2. **Resolution Draft No. 0908, September 20, 2011** - Authorizing The Chairman Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute An Agreement With The New York State Division Of Homeland Security And Emergency Services For Overtime Reimbursement - Ulster County Sheriff

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

Discussion: None

3. **Resolution Draft No. 0912, September 20, 2011** -Authorizing The Appropriation Of Funds From The Asset Forfeiture Reserve Fund For The Purchase Of Equipment Used In Confidential Investigations - Amending The 2011 Ulster County Budget - Ulster County District Attorney

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

Discussion:

Rodriguez: Q/What is the balance is of the DA's Asset Forfeiture Reserve Fund?
A/\$35,520.00

Sweeney: Q/Asked for a list of the law enforcement equipment that is being purchased. A/The Sheriff explained that there is a set criteria that is followed with regard to what it can be used for.

4. **Resolution Draft No. 0920, September 20, 2011** - Amending the 2011 Ulster County Budget And Authorizing The Appropriation Of Funds From An Insurance Recovery To Replace Law Enforcement Equipment - Ulster County Sheriff's Office

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

Discussion: The Sheriff explained that this Resolution is Insurance Recovery Revenue received from equipment damaged in the search/rescue/recovery operation involving the crash of a small plane into the Hudson River. A list was provided showing the damaged equipment being replaced.

Late Resolution:

1. **Late Resolution Draft, September 20, 2011** - Requesting Cooperation From New York State Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse in ascertaining information relating to the safety, security and appropriate operating practices of the Renaissance Project (Ellenville, NY) Drug and Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Center

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

Discussion:

Hayes: Explained the intent of the Resolution. It is a way to nudge the NYS Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse to respond to the Committee's request for information with regard to the operating practices of the Renaissance Project.

Hochberg: Questions the validity of the Resolution. He stated, "Wasn't the guy caught and prosecuted"?

Hayes: Stated "yes", we know who did it, but what is unanswered is why it happened. We did not know and still do not know if that facility is operating in a safe and secure manner.

Hochberg: Q/Asked how we usually obtain that information. Do we ask for an Audit?

Hayes: Offered copies of several letters that he has sent, to several different Government Agencies, and has barely received any replies.

Hochberg: Q/Asked if the Sheriff's Office or any Department spent money on this or has it only been a State Investigation? A/Sheriff/Yes, they have spent a lot of money of that specific incident, with regard to the Criminal Investigation.

Sweeney: Stated that clearly there is a problem here and if the State is unwilling to address it then as a Committee we need to make noise to make sure that they do address it.

UPDATE:

Sheriff: Handed out to the Committee the totals to date of the Ulster County Corrections monthly average population and phone commissions for 2011.

NEW BUSINESS: (4 Items)

2012 Budget Reviews - It was agreed that the Budget Reviews would start at the October 4th meeting (DA's and Sheriff's Office). This date is tentative and will depend if the Budget is released before or after the next Committee Meeting. If the reviews do not happen at the October meeting then an alternate meeting date will be made.

Hochberg: Q/Asked the Sheriff if he had any new line items in his Budget? A/No Q/Likewise to the Corrections Budget? A/Yes

Domestic Violence Awareness Month, October - Chairman Hayes is waiting for a reply from the Domestic Violence Council with regard to Domestic Violence Awareness Month. He visited with Dutchess County's Council and stated that they are a very active group, it is Legislative, as opposed to the Executive Branch. He said that it may be something to consider. Legislator Rodriguez stated this may be because of the way it is funded.

Inmates Health Insurance - The Sheriff stated that other Counties have passed Resolutions to charge back Insurance Companies. He is passing the information on as informational at this point but will continue to pursue the subject.

Video Traffic Monitor Devices/Violation Administration - This was an employee suggestion. Video monitoring for example would catch people running stop signs. The Sheriff suggested having their technology person (Tommy) come and speak to the Committee on the subject. The Chairman suggested that the County Attorney and Legislative Attorneys give an opinion with regard to what Legislation may be required. The Committee further discussed, and all agreed to pursue it further at their next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS: (5 items)

Ulster County Police Service Efficiencies Review - The Chairman spoke to Kyle Wilbur from DCJS and there may be funding available in the future to study Police Service Efficiencies. He wrote a letter to the Town Supervisors to inquire who is interested at this point in pursuing this

type of study. He has received positive responses from the City of Kingston, Supervisor John Valk , Town's Supervisors Association, the Chairman and the County Executive. The Chairman stated that people who have been involved in the past with this type of study were not happy with the results and the recommendations that were given. The results were not cost efficient. The Chairman will move forward on acquiring the necessary funding and will inquire if Mr. Benjamin at SUNY New Paltz would be interested in the CREO Study.

Laws pertaining to Protests at Military Funerals Update - The Law has passed the Senate, it is awaiting the Governor's signature. This Law will expand the area where you can protest. Legislator Madsen stated that his only objection was that it did not cover protests at all funerals.

Building Security Working Group Update - Stated that Dennis Young did a nice job going over Building Security. He stated that he has a copy of Geneseo County's Safety Policy. He recommended that the Committee review the Policy. With regard to the most recent earthquake and the evacuation of the COB, he feels that some safety measures worked and others did not work. For example, the PA system is not working. He has requested an after actions report from the County Executive with regard to the Earthquake and the Hurricane. The Committee discussed Communications with regard to Hurricane Irene. Communication was extremely limited.

Hochberg: Stated that he was under the impression that the Sheriff's Office has a control room.

Sheriff: Stated that they do have a control room, but explained that Art Snyder, Director of Emergency Management does also. A decision needs to be made so that when a Emergency is declared everyone immediately goes to one spot and then decides who the Incident Commander will be. It would be the one who obtains the most knowledge of the occurring event.

Madsen: Stated that with the power out everywhere in the City of Kingston, they had a two hour radio program, being run off a generator, where they could talk to people locally, after the two hour window the corporate world took it back over with the Top Forty. Communication stopped. Twitter was the only way people were receiving information, and that's a very small percentage of people. He said that he went around telling people where to get dry ice because he saw it on a tweet. He said that we do not have that communication with the public.

Sheriff: Stated that you can receive NY Alerts.

Nuisance Alarms Law Update - The Chairman stated that he will be in contact with some private Alarm Companies. He would like to hear from Private Industry and Voluntary Compliance. He wants to see if there is room for improvement there versus writing a Law. He stated that in some of his findings, there is a difficulty in-recovery of the money, and is resulting in Court Cases.

Renaissance Project Alternative to Incarceration Rehab Facility - Operating Procedures and Policy Update - Already discussed in the above Late Resolution. He stated that he did receive a letter from OASIS asking for him to resend a copy of the letter he previously sent.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/CONCERNS

Sweeney: Has concerns with some of the Bridges after Hurricane Irene. He asked if there were going to be inspections done to ensure that the remaining Bridges are safe; his concern is the amount of water that covered some of these Bridges. Chairman Hayes stated that he will look into it.

Sheriff: Gave a Hurricane Irene Update. He has video of the damage throughout the County and will send a copy to the Chairman and the Committee.

Hayes: Thanked the Sheriff and his Office for all of their efforts and their continuing efforts with regard to the Hurricane. He said that their accomplishments are truly heroic.

Motion to adjourn meeting @ 7:30 PM

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

Respectfully Submitted,
Tammy Wilson, Senior Legislative Employee
