

Public Safety Committee Minutes
March 13, 2012 – 3:00 p.m.

Present: Vice Chairman Wormuth; Supervisors Lawler, Jenkins, Lucia, Veitch, Southworth, Peck, Collyer, Grattidge, Wood and Daly; Spencer Hellwig, Mgmt. Analyst; Steve Dorsey, County Attorney; Jim Murphy, District Attorney; Dan Miller, Paul Lent, Ed Tremblay, Paul Parker, Emergency Services; Michael Woodcock, James Bowen, Sheriff; Bob Murphy, STOP DWI Coordinator; Ryan Moore, Mgmt. Analyst; Margot Ammon, Helen Cranshaw, League of Women Voters.

Vice Chairman Wormuth called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

On a motion made by Mr. Lucia, seconded by Mr. Veitch the minutes of the February 14, 2012 meeting were approved unanimously.

Sheriff Bowen requested a resolution to reappropriate 911 wireless funding in the amount of \$102,471 which was State grant money to the county and placed in the 2011 budget and wasn't spent. This money will be used to update the CAD system and purchase equipment for the 911 system.

A motion was made by Mr. Jenkins, seconded by Mr. Veitch to approve the reappropriation of State grant money in the amount of \$102,471 into the Sheriff's 2012 budget to be used to update the CAD system and purchase equipment for the county 911 system. Unanimous.

Mr. Bowen said the Town of Greenfield has contracted with Empire Ambulance to take over their EMS calls. He said the Sheriff's Department has no way of communicating with Empire Ambulance. The communications center needs to have some way of being able to talk to Empire Ambulance, but they don't have the equipment to do that. The mutual aid system was set up for the non-for profit ambulance corps. Greenfield is now contracting with a profit making organization that is being paid. Mr. Bowen said in order to do this right, and protect the people of the county, the County should lease to Empire, portable radios and pagers for a certain fee every year so the Sheriff can communicate with them. Sheriff Bowen estimated that Empire Ambulance should be paying between \$30 - \$35 a call.

Mrs. Wormuth said the county wants to provide the best protection for residents of the county; however, it would be inappropriate for the county to give Empire Ambulance the equipment. Whether they purchase or lease the equipment will be their decision, but the use of the county airwaves will be something that we will have to develop a protocol for. It should be done in a specific manner so that it doesn't interfere with any of the other protocols throughout the county or the Sheriff's ability to appropriately dispatch.

Mr. Bowen said that every one of the volunteer ambulance corps has agreed to the dispatching and mutual aid, and all the policy and procedures are in effect.

Mr. Lawler said the county should get the right insurance protection, so taxpayers are never going to be part of a settlement that is going to cost tax dollars to support a settlement with a for profit organization.

Mr. Bowen said his concern is that Empire Ambulance has not talked to the county to try and work anything out, and Greenfield has entered into a contract that will go into effect April 1, 2012.

Mr. Dorsey said that he couldn't recommend to the Board that it would be legal to allow Empire Ambulance to either lease or purchase radio space from the county. He is recommending that Empire Ambulance should purchase their own radio space

Mr. Bowen said the mutual aid has been servicing the town of Greenfield since the ambulance corp. in Saratoga Springs closed. This will remain in effect until there is a contract approved by the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Peck said the county 911 system was put into place to increase the public health and safety of our communities. It is only necessary that Greenfield is able to use the airwaves that their taxpayers helped pay for.

Mr. Lawler asked, if the county could give county resources to a for-profit entity? He said he didn't see the difference in giving the cost of the dispatching service versus the cost of the radio. Mr. Lawler said he would like legal advice as to whether that would be okay.

Mr. Dorsey said that he would contact Empire Ambulance attorneys to get some information.

Mrs. Wormuth suggested that NYSAC might be a good resource if Empire is not willing to be cooperative.

Mr. Lawler said he is not interested in what another county attorney's opinion is. He said he wants an opinion from our county attorney that addresses these issues.

Mr. Peck said that he and Mr. Hellwig would be responsible to speak to Supervisor Rowland to let him know that the committee does not support the April 1, 2012 contract date with Empire Ambulance.

Mr. Bowen said they would stay with the mutual aid agreement that is currently in effect. He said his office would contact the other not for profit ambulance corps and they will continue to service Greenfield.

Mrs. Wormuth asked that Mr. Lent copy the members of the Public Safety Committee on the notification.

Mr. Murphy distributed a copy of a letter from the State in reference to the 2012 STOP DWI Plan and the program budget for at total of \$337,533.

Mr. Murphy said on Thursday, March 15th the Safe Spring Program would take place at Skidmore College. The county has been funding this program for 20 years, and this year there will be 312 students coming from area high schools.

A motion was made by Mr. Lawler, seconded by Mrs. Southworth to approve the 2012 STOP DWI Program for a total of \$337,533. Unanimous.

Mr. Tremblay distributed a copy of the Fire Training Report to all committee members highlighting the following State Fire Training Courses for the month:

Firefighter Survival – A 3 unit, 9-hour course was held at the Schuylerville Fire Station with 18 firefighters attending.

Emergency Escape System- Train the Trainer course consisting of a three unit, nine hour course held at the Schuylerville Fire Station with 18 completing the course.

Fire Officer 1 – An 8 unit, 24-hour course held at the Malta Ridge Fire Station #21 with s17 starting the course.

Mr. Tremblay said the utility truck that is being loaned is ready. He requested a resolution to authorize the Chairman to sign an agreement, which was reviewed and approved by the County Attorney and the Halfmoon Waterford Fire District. The agreement states that the county will take possession of the vehicle on April 1st for a period of five years.

Mr. Tremblay said there are 16 county fire investigators that handle approximately 60 fire investigations a year. Right now the equipment they carry, they carry between them because they don't have the room to carry everything. The truck would have everything required to handle a scene investigation.

Mrs. Wormuth asked Mr. Tremblay to report back to the committee with the decision of where the truck will be stored.

Mrs. Wormuth asked who would be responsible if the truck were to be destroyed?

Mr. Tremblay said any repairs or maintenance of the vehicle is the responsibility of the county.

A motion was made by Mrs. Southworth, seconded by Mr. Lawler to authorize the Chairman to enter into an agreement with Halfmoon Waterford Fire District for the loan of a 1996 Ford F350 utility vehicle to be used by the Saratoga County Fire Investigation Unit to respond, when requested, to fire scenes throughout the County. Unanimous.

On a motion made by Mrs. Wormuth, seconded by Mr. Sausville the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Sansom