

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

July 11, 2006 – 3:45 p.m.

PRESENT: Chairman Lawler; Supervisors Barrett, Connors, Grattidge, Janik, M. Johnson, Trottier, Gutheil; Wood, DeCerco; Spencer Hellwig, Mgmt. Analyst; Paul Lent, Ed Tremblay, Emergency Services; Dan Butler, Animal Shelter; James Murphy, D.A.; Bob Murphy, STOP-DWI Coordinator; Lou Pasquarell, Clifton Park Safety Officer; Sgt. Will Crandall, Saratoga Springs PD; John Bergeron, Roger Scott, Taxpayers; Press

Chairman Lawler called the meeting to order.

Mr. Barrett moved to approve the minutes of the June 13th meeting. Mr. Grattidge seconded. Unanimous.

Chairman Lawler stated that Sheriff Bowen sends his regrets that he could not make today's meeting, but copies of his report for the month of June has been distributed to each Committee member.

Mr. J. Murphy requested a **resolution to accept a Crime Victims' grant from the State in the amount of \$71,200.** He said this is to support his office's Crime Victims' Advocacy Services. He said he has had two women in his office who help victims of crime for the past six years. **Mr. Connors moved to approve this resolution. Mr. Trottier seconded. Unanimous.**

Mr. Butler distributed copies of the Shelter report for the month of June, and he briefly reviewed it. He stated their web site is currently down, as they has problems due to an electrical storm that took out their computers. Hopefully, this will be corrected in the next week or so, he said. Mr. Grattidge requested Mr. Butler to fax to each town the fact that their web site is down and when it comes back up.

Mr. Butler stated there was a couple who were recently married from the Town of Milton (Erin & Scott Kearns), and he distributed a couple of the favors they had which were dog biscuits with a note tied onto them with a ribbon stating a donation was made in their name to the Animal Shelter. He stated the Shelter received a \$200 donation, and he said he would like to use that money to purchase an air conditioner for the cat room. He also displayed a shadow box that was made by a DPW employee that contained

two of these dog bone favors that he said will be displayed at the Shelter. Chairman Lawler requested Mr. Butler to convey the Committee's thanks to them.

Chairman Lawler said Mr. Butler is looking for some guidance to submit to the Long Range Capital Planning Committee. I wanted him to tell us what his issue is, he said. Mr. Butler stated he wants to submit a request for a new facility, as the current facility is almost 29 years old. An addition was put on in 1987, and the life expectancy is about 25 – 30 years of housing animals in a building, he said. He said we do not need a Taj Mahal, but we do need a functional facility to meet the demands of the County for the next 30 years. Chairman Lawler said we should give thought to regulations taking care of animals. We need to make sure we have the facility to handle the animals as the County grows, he added. We need to make sure the infrastructure supports that growth. I think it is fine to turn this over to the Long Range Capital Planning Committee to see where it will fit into the plan, he said. He stated that plan goes out 5 years, and in my mind, it would be approved the first time around. Mr. Janik stated that facility certainly is lacking.

Mr. Butler said 30 years ago when it was built, it was what everyone was using. There is a lot more we're doing today than 30 years ago, he said. He said he has talked with C.T. Male, and they deal with Morton buildings that can be adaptable to animal housing. He said everything has to be where it can be washed and disinfected. Mr. Connors asked if there are certain requirements of Ag & Markets that would have to be contained in a new building that we do not have now. Mr. Butler stated the adoption area and quarantine portion should be looked at, and we would need more than one entrance. Chairman Lawler said he asked Mr. Butler to touch base with NYSAC to get some insight.

Mr. Lent distributed copies of his July report, and he reviewed it for the Committee. He said towards the end of June, we had a high water situation. We were very lucky compared to our neighbors, he said. During the height of the situation, we sent some crews over to Montgomery County. We had a concern with the Mohawk and Hudson Rivers running very high. We had good communication with the Hudson River-Black River Regulating District with them trying to manage the flows considering they racked up a near record on the outflow at the Sacandaga and Conklingville Dam, he said.

Mr. Lent said every year we get a certain amount of revenue from the State Emergency Management Office (SEMO) from FEMA to offset some of the expenses of the Emergency Services office. We need a housekeeping **resolution to accept \$44,338**. This is a slight increase over what we anticipated, he said. **Mr. Connors moved to accept this grant. Mr. Trottier seconded. Unanimous.**

Mr. Lent discussed a National Incident Management System (NIMS) requirement from FEMA from the Homeland Security Department which is a Presidential order directing that the federal government shall now incorporate all of its emergency planning and shall require people participating in emergency planning to embrace and endorse NIMS. He distributed copies of a fact sheet on NIMS for the Committee to peruse. They are asking for each county to adopt a resolution which endorses and embraces the planning aspects of NIMS and by doing so, it maintains our eligibility for grant money after September 30 of this year in order to be eligible for Homeland Security grants. One of the requirements is that the jurisdiction has to adopt a resolution embracing the NIMS policy. Our County Emergency Plan is being updated to be compliant with NIMS, and we should probably have that in draft form by next month, he stated. **Mr. Barrett moved to endorse NIMS as the foundation for emergency planning for Saratoga County. Mrs. Johnson seconded. Unanimous.**

Mr. Lent said we engaged the services of an engineering company to climb and inspect the 140' tower we have up on Spruce Mountain. We hired Greenman Pederson, and we had our tower climbed by a licensed engineer who reviewed it. He said he provided copies of their report to the Committee. There are several items the engineer has found that gives him some concern over the long-range viability of the tower. There is a new standard by which towers are measured that is quite conservative. Given the fact that this tower was built around 1969, it could never meet that new standard, he added. The cost to fix the tower would probably exceed the cost of a new tower and we would still be left with parts of an old tower. He stated the engineer's recommendation is to replace that tower with a new one. He doesn't call it an emergency situation, but one that should take some urgent review, he said. He suggested pursuing some alternatives, and he said he would like to report next month on what those would be before we commit to anything. Chairman Lawler requested Mr. Lent to come back at the August meeting with a report. Mr. Lent said regardless what we do, we will have to seek a jurisdictional review by the APA. He said he believes

that process can be streamlined and not painful given the fact that this is an existing structure.

Chairman Lawler said Mr. Lent has an update with negotiations with various landowners at the conclusion of this meeting. Chairman Lawler welcomed Mr. Scott, one of the landowners, to the meeting.

Mr. Lent said it seems the activity level has picked up significantly from various providers of a community alert system. There are many brand names of these. They have come to visit several of the communities around. Some Supervisors have called me to take a look at this from a County level, he said. Chairman Lawler said Waterford has already entertained a couple of presentations and are down the road in discussions with one, and they are planning a town meeting with them in September. He said he hoped to get a couple of volunteers from the Committee to work with Mr. Lent on this and should the County get involved, and if so, at what level. He said it may not make sense to do it on a County basis, but he does not know. He appointed Supervisors Connors and Trottier to meet with Mr. Lent and a couple of these vendors to come back in one or two months with some general recommendations. He urged them to come back in 60 days with a report. Mr. Connors said he would say the sooner the better. Chairman Lawler said that would be great.

Mr. Lent said work on our APA application for our new design has been progressing rapidly. We anticipate that we will be ready to file our application either by the end of this week or early next week. We have been exchanging information with the APA. Things are moving in a very positive direction, and this is coming together. This is a dynamic document, he said. Chairman Lawler said Mr. Lent is well aware that we would love to announce at Tuesday's Board Meeting that we are filing the next day. He said he has brought the Fire Officers' Association up to speed. There will be an announcement or a hanging on Tuesday, he jokingly stated.

Mr. Tremblay distributed copies of the Fire Services Report for June, and he briefly review it. He said he is still getting reports and information on the flooding and he is still getting reports on the fire departments that went to various locations. The first couple of days, some departments went to Montgomery County and ended up in St. Johnsville. Three other departments went to Delaware County. He briefly reported on these operations. Hopefully by next month, I will have a full report on that 10-day

operation, he said. We didn't offer any of our resources until we found out that we were in good shape, he added.

Mr. Connors asked Mr. Tremblay if he knew how many volunteer man-hours were invested in this 10-day operation? Mr. Tremblay said he couldn't even guess at this point, and he needs to get a full list of the operations.

Mrs. Johnson asked for an update on the new burn building. Mr. Tremblay stated the invitations will be going out for the July 27th groundbreaking at 3:00 p.m. ceremony for that. Work has been started on constructing the building itself. Ground work for the foundation will be started shortly thereafter. Mrs. Johnson asked if the existing building will be used after the new building is up? Mr. Tremblay said the existing building will be used for cold training, basically non-fire training for search and rescue. Mrs. Johnson asked if we will be continuing to maintain that because from the reports she reads, it sounds like there is no maintenance on it. Mr. Tremblay said we are having problems with the insulation burn panels that are within the burn building as far as getting them replaced. We have been waiting for Buildings & Grounds to do that for quite a few months with no success. He said they seem to be short handed. You need more than one person to hold those panels up, he said. Chairman Lawler asked Mr. Hellwig to find out why that has not been done and to let him know tomorrow when Buildings & Grounds plans on working on this.

Mr. Trottier asked if the Hadley-Luzerne fire department ever gets involved and invited down here. Mr. Tremblay said they are invited. They usually come down once a year at various times. They may not come down as a department, but their firefighters may come down and use it for training, because a lot of times there are firefighters up in that area who may get involved in a Warren or Washington County course because it is closer or offered when they need it.

Sgt. Crandall, of the County Traffic Safety Board, addressed the Committee and distributed some copies of information on Remington-ELSAG MPH-900 Mobile Plate Hunter which he said is a phenomenal law enforcement tool. This device is mounted in a police car and takes a quick picture of a license plate that goes by and compares it to a database. Depending what you load into your personal laptop, it will tell you if that vehicle is stolen, if the registration is suspended, if there is a warrant on the registered owner, if

the plate is associated with a terrorist individual and for scofflaws. In addition, it will do scofflaw license suspensions that in this County are a huge problem. This device is in use by the State Police, Schenectady bought two, and Albany PD bought one and found a stolen vehicle the first day they had it on the road. He stated the Traffic Safety Board is interested in the Public Safety Committee looking into funding for this for the police agencies in the County because they are expensive. These units run \$18,000 a piece with a 10-year service life. They require a laptop, but most of the agencies in the Traffic Safety Committee have grant money for laptops through the TRACS program that's coming up for 2006/2007. There is not a lot of training involved in this. He said this County is growing. He said Saratoga Springs PD borrowed this and used it for four hours on the Route 50 arterial, and it read every plate that went by. He said it has been tested by law enforcement across the country. We have 160,000 licensed drivers in the County and more than that for registered vehicles, he stated. With the businesses and people coming here, that number will increase, he said. He stated this will get us ahead of the curve in law enforcement. Mrs. Johnson asked how many of these units Sgt. Crandall was requesting. Chairman Lawler said geographically, one for the north and one for the south. He said he spoke with the Sheriff who likes the technology, but he may go his own route given the fact he is the primary law enforcement official for the County. I don't know how much sense it would make for him to be sharing or using part-time technology like that. Primarily, we are talking about the local police agencies, but I want to make it clear we are not committing the Sheriff to anything, he said.

Chairman Lawler said he would like a couple of volunteers to work with the Traffic Safety Committee and learn as much as they can about the technology. Sgt. Crandall said they will be using it again for a week at the start of the Track. He said this is as good as it gets for us. Supervisors Grattidge and Janik volunteered to work with the Traffic Safety Committee to learn more about this technology. Mr. Trottier asked if it has ever been challenged in court. Sgt. Crandall said according to State Police counsel, there is no expectation of privacy with a license plate. Chairman Lawler requested Supervisors Grattidge and Janik to come back to the Committee with their information.

Under an item for the Sheriff, **Mr. Barrett moved to accept a grant in the amount of \$37,468 from the Criminal Justice Services to cover expenses**

related to the Capital District Drug Enforcement Task Force. Mrs. Johnson seconded. Unanimous.

Mr. Connors moved to adjourn to executive session to discuss negotiations with landowners. Mrs. Johnson seconded. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine M. Sodemann