

Public Safety Committee Minutes
May 6, 2020– 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Bill Peck; Committee Members John Lant, Jack Lawler, Darren O'Connor, Jean Raymond, Matt Veitch, Mo Wright; Supervisors Eric Connolly, Tara Gaston, Ed Kinowski, Dan Pemrick and Chairman of the Board Preston Allen; Spencer Hellwig, Chad Cooke, County Administrator; Steve Dorsey, County Attorney; Carl Zeilman, Michael McEvoy, Emergency Services; Michael Zurlo, Sheriff; Michael Prezioso, Mental Health & Addiction; Pam Wright, Clerk of the Board.

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

On a motion made by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Wright, the minutes of the March 4, 2020 meeting were approved unanimously.

Mr. Cooke said that in late 2019 the Board accepted funds from ILS for the Conflict Defender's office. Since that time, the structure of the Conflict Defender's office has changed. Last year they were contracting out with attorneys and now they have paid employees. Mr. Cooke said that he worked with ILS and they have amended the contract to be able to apply those funds to pay the salary of the Family Court Attorney, Neil Weiner. No resolution was needed. This update was for informational purposes only. Mr. Cooke said that the salary of the other Conflict Defender, George Conway, is covered through the Hurrell-Harring fund, a separate revenue stream from ILS.

A motion was made by Mrs. Raymond, seconded by Mr. Lant, to authorize a 2-year agreement and a 1-year renewal option with Cummins Sales and Service in the amount of \$19,924.82 per year for generator preventative maintenance at 800 MHz radio tower sites. Unanimous.

Mr. Zeilman said that they are trying to use as much grant funding as possible for expenses going forward.

A motion was made by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Lawler, to authorize a tower agreement with the Saratoga Springs City School District for the placement of a communications antenna and related equipment on the County's radio communications tower on Mt. McGregor. Unanimous.

Mr. Zeilman said that this will allow for expanded interoperability with the school buses that run in the district. The cost to the school district is \$1,800 per year and will cover the cost of electricity and one antenna space.

Mr. Wright asked Mr. Zeilman for an update on the Lake Luzerne tower. Mr. Peck said that this is regarding cell service expansion in the North Country which is instrumental both for health and safety. Mr. Zeilman said that there were slight delays with the Lakeview and Hadley sites. He had hoped that the agreements with Verizon would be ready for this meeting. Mr. Peck suggested that if the agreements would be ready within the next few days to bring them straight to this

month's Law & Finance meeting. Mr. Zeilman said that the agreements would be based off the agreement done in Providence and Edinburg, with the only difference being the dispersal percentage of income being 50/50 to property owner and the County.

Mr. Peck asked Mr. Zeilman for an update from his Department due to the Coronavirus pandemic. An update was already provided from Public Health by Cathi Duncan at the previous meeting today. Mr. Zeilman said that they have been operating as a unified command structure with Public Health, Office of Emergency Services, Sheriff's office, and Mental Health, seamlessly since early March. The OES's biggest role has been personal protective equipment for Fire, Police, and EMS, the Hospital, and Urgent Care systems. They are the repository between the State stockpile and all first responders. These agencies have been tasked with finding their own supplies however, once they prove they cannot do that, OES works with them to procure from the stockpile. Mr. Peck thanked all of the agencies involved in the command center for their teamwork. Mr. Peck said that Saratoga County has been ahead of the curve from day one and it's an impressive feat. Mr. Peck specifically thanked Mr. McEvoy for the outstanding job done during this time. Mr. Kinowski also thanked the emergency management team for their work.

Mr. Peck said that the rabies vaccination program which was scheduled for May 19th has been postponed and will be rescheduled for a later date.

Mr. Prezioso gave a update on the Mental Health Department. They were able to transition their work platform from entirely onsite to entirely off site. Fortunately, people are familiar enough with the use of video conference, etc. to be able to maintain their service capacity. Mr. Prezioso thanked the IT Department for their help. A support line was set up however, most calls are coming into the call center where Dr. Prezioso can take the calls directly. Dr. Prezioso said that working in coordination with the other departments has been a great asset. Comparing numbers from this period to the same period in 2019, the number of services delivered remained the same. They have not seen an increase in overdoses, but have seen increased numbers in relapses, related to alcohol specifically. Dr. Prezioso said that he has been in contact with Wellspring, a domestic violence agency. They have reported an increase of over 100% in calls to their hotline and the number of calls received for the hospital to provide support following episodes of sexual assault has also risen.

Mr. Wright inquired about Child Protective Services and if their calls have increased. Mr. Cooke said that he will find out.

Mr. Zurlo said that he will email statistics out to the Committee tomorrow morning. His office has two sergeants assigned to the command center. Their special needs registry has increased tremendously during the pandemic, so they are calling people every other day to check in on how they are doing. If people need a meal, they get in touch with the Office for the Aging. Mr. Wright thanked the Sheriff for calls made every other day, he reported that he has been told by some of his constituents that it makes them feel good.

Mr. Zurlo said that road patrols haven been busy, they are assisting when complaints arise regarding people not wearing masks.

Mr. O'Connor thanked Mr. Zurlo for weighing in on the proposal to hold high school graduations at the drive in. Mr. Zurlo said that other schools have started to contact him regarding graduations

possibly in football fields. The Sheriff's office will be working with the schools to try to make this work for the seniors.

Mr. Peck read a letter from Michelle Beebe, Director of Operations at the Home of the Good Shepherd. In the letter Ms. Beebe complimented the Office of Emergency Services for their help and support through this pandemic.

Mr. Lawler reported that there was a recent emergency situation in a neighborhood in his town. A hill the size of approximately two football fields collapsed 175 feet. A 100ft. section of a private road nearby is covered by over 30ft. of dirt and trees including 70-80ft oaks. They are using drones to keep an eye on the damage as they continue to have trees and landscaping collapse. Some homeowners were permitted to go into their homes for short periods of time to retrieve items, however it is unknown at this point when the damage will end. They are concerned if it rains or snows in the next coming days. At this point people are out of their homes until at least Monday. Mr. Lawler thanked the Sheriff's Department, Office of Emergency Services and the Highway Department for their support during this ordeal. It meant a lot to the people involved.

On a motion made by Mr. Veitch, seconded by Mr. Lawler, the meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Therese Connolly
Deputy Clerk of the Board