

**Law Enforcement and Public Safety Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes**

DATE & TIME: August 4, 2014 - - 6:00 PM
LOCATION: UC Law Enforcement Center, the Rotunda
PRESIDING OFFICER: Chairman TJ Briggs
LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Jay Mahler, Deputy Clerk/Confidential Secretary
PRESENT: Legislators Ronk (left at 6:35 PM), Gregorius, Loughran, Maio
ABSENT: None
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes
OTHER ATTENDEES: Sheriff Paul VanBlarcum, Ellen Kirkpatrick of Correctional Medical Care, and Steve Peterson from UC Emergency Management

Chairman Briggs called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

MOTION NO. 1: RESOLVED To Approve the Minutes of June 2, 2014 meeting
Motion Made By: Legislator Gregorius
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Ronk
Discussion: None
Roll Call Vote: No
Voting In Favor: Legislators Briggs, Gregorius, Maio, Ronk
Voting Against: None
No. of Votes in Favor: 4
No. of Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Carried

MOTION NO. 2: RESOLVED To Approve the Minutes of June 30, 2014 meeting
Motion Made By: Legislator Loughran
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Gregorius
Discussion: None
Roll Call Vote: No
Voting In Favor: Legislators Briggs, Gregorius, Loughran
Voting Against: None
No. of Votes in Favor: 3
No. of Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Carried

Motion No. 3: Resolution No. 272 – August 19, 2014

Text of Motion: **Resolved to approve Resolution No. 272** - Confirming The Appointment Of Steven J. Peterson As Director of Emergency Communications/Emergency Management

Motion Made By: Legislator Ronk

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Loughran

Resolution No. 272 Summary: This Resolution will confirm the County Executive’s appointment of Steve Peterson as Director of the Ulster County Emergency Management and Emergency Communications Department upon the retirement of Art Snyder.

Discussion:

Chairman Briggs, Legislator Ronk and Sheriff VanBlarcum all commented that Mr. Peterson was a great choice for the position.

Roll Call Vote: No

Voting In Favor: Legislators Briggs, Gregorius, Loughran, Maio, Ronk

Voting Against: None

No. of Votes in Favor: 5

No. of Votes Against: 0

Disposition: Carried

Motion No. 4: Resolution No. 276 – August 19, 2014

Text of Motion: **Resolved to approve Resolution No. 276** - Creating An EMS Advisory Board For The County Of Ulster

Motion Made By: Legislator Ronk

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Loughran

Resolution No. 276 Summary: This Resolution will create and Ulster County Emergency Medical Services Advisory Board.

Discussion:

Legislator Ronk said he liked the resolution and said that Rich Parrish attends the Fire Advisory Board meetings every month to report, but felt that EMS deserves its own Advisory Board. He advised the committee that he was going to recommended an

amendment to the resolution to add a representative from the Sheriff's office to the Advisory Board.

The Sheriff stated that he would be happy to be a member of the Board, and that he thought 21 members was on the high side.

Membership on the Board was discussed. Chairman Briggs stated that there was a hope that in the future Mr. Parrish as the EMS Coordinator, would be on a level playing field with Charlie Mutz, the Fire Coordinator.

Roll Call Vote:	No
Voting In Favor:	Legislators Briggs, Gregorius, Loughran, Maio, Ronk
Voting Against:	None
No. of Votes in Favor:	5
No. of Votes Against:	0
Disposition:	Carried

Legislator Loughran spoke about his intention to draft a policy through which the County could process claims for medical services to Medicaid or an inmate's private insurance provider.

Sheriff VanBlarcum introduced Ellen Kirkpatrick from Correctional Medical Care (CMC) to answer questions about billing. Ms. Kirkpatrick explained that she was an administrator on the clinical side of the service. She advised the committee that each inmate is screened upon arrival to obtain and verify their insurance status.

She explained the type of care that CMC provides, stressing the fact that inmates are not sent to the hospital unless it is an emergency. The facility at the County Jail is state of the art and even includes dentistry services. She said that they have had a lot of success activating Medicaid for inmates who may have had their benefits inactivated.

Legislator Loughran questioned why the county was responsible for medical bills for individuals who have not been convicted. Sheriff VanBlarcum replied that he believed that it was required by the Department of Corrections when an individual is in the county facility.

Sheriff VanBlarcum reminded the committee that the resolution adopting the contract with CMC was already passed and advised them that his office regularly polls other counties to try to adopt the best practices. He offered to reach out to the Commissioner of Corrections to have the Legislators' questions answered and asked that he be sent an email with all of the questions.

Legislator Gergorius inquired as to how the premiums were determined and recommended that the Legislature move forward with the Local Law to be able to charge private insurers while questions about Medicaid and Medicare are being answered.

Chairman Briggs discussed the scope of services that are offered in the CMC contract and explained that CMC is a service provider, not an insurance billing agency.

Ms. Kirkpatrick advised the committee that CMC evaluates the care of inmates while in the hospital to ensure that their stay is as brief as necessary. She informed the committee that CMC does a thorough evaluation of inmates when they arrive at the jail to ascertain their insurance status and to work with DSS to activate Medicaid policies if possible. She also stated that most of the medical care inmates receive is done at the facility and that inmates are only sent to the hospital in an emergency. She advised the committee that CMC is working with a “navigation” company to enroll uninsured individuals through the provisions in the Affordable Care Act that allows sentenced individuals to apply for insurance outside of the open enrollment period.

In 2014 25 people were sent to the hospital and only one of them had private insurance. Ms. Kirkpatrick informed the committee that prior to CMC’s intervention fourteen years ago, hospitals were keeping inmates for up to 3 additional days to evaluate them for alcohol and/or drug addiction which drove up costs. That practice was eliminated after CMC intervened. There is a case manager that maintains contact with inmates while in the hospital.

She further informed the committee that the Department of Corrections rules dictate that patient care must be taken over by the county, but that things such as elective surgeries are not required to be provided.

Sheriff VanBlarcum advised the committee that if an inmate is going to be hospitalized for a long period of time he personally calls the judge to request that the sentence be communicated. He advised the committee that judges are becoming less and less sympathetic to those pleas. He also let the committee know that CMC holds a national accreditation for health care services.

Legislator Loughran asked about the size and scope of the infirmary at the jail.

Legislator Ronk reminded the committee that the Sheriff has a standing invitation to all legislators to tour the facility.

There was discussion comparing the medical services available at Golden Hill to the services available at the jail. Legislator Ronk pointed out that the fundamental difference

between Golden Hill and the Jail was that Golden Hill is a facility where the primary purpose is to provide health care while the medical unit at the jail exists because it is a requirement.

Ms. Kirkpatrick reminded the committee that only emergencies and acute cases are sent to the hospital. All other services are provided by doctors and nurses working for CMC who staff the infirmary at the Jail 24/7.

Chairman Briggs asked the committee to compile their questions to the Sheriff to be addressed before the next meeting.

Legislator Ronk brought up Local Law No. 10, A Local Law Respecting the Outdoor Restraint of Companion Animals. He advised the committee that there are some things in the Law that need to be fixed before it should be moved forward. He felt that Section 3, stating what would be considered illegal says “including, but not limited to.” He questioned how the Sheriff could enforce something so open ended. He further pointed out that the sections of the law under tethering requirements contained contradictory language.

He stated that he was also troubled by the fact that the Local Law was not sent to the Law Enforcement Committee for consideration as it would fall to the Law Enforcement community to enforce it. He advised the committee that he would be discussing holding the Law off for a month with the Law and Rules, Governmental Services Committee.

Legislator Ronk recommended a joint meeting between the Laws and Rules and Law Enforcement Committees to discuss the Local Law.

Legislator Maio stated that she would not vote for the Law if it was not referred to the Law Enforcement Committee for consideration. Chairman Briggs agreed and offered to reach out to Legislator Rich Parete who Chairs the Laws and Rules Committee.

Legislator Ronk recommended that Brian Shapiro, former Legislator and Executive Director of the Humane Society of the US in NY, be asked to attend the joint meeting. Legislator Ronk informed the committee that he had already spoken with Mr. Shapiro about the initiative. Legislator Ronk also highlighted the potential for the Law to create neighbor disputes and “Hatfields vs. McCoy” type feuds.

Chairman Briggs advised the committee that he would reach out to Legislator Rich Parete and encouraged the committee to review the Local Law and make notes.

Motion No. 5: Resolution No. 286 – August 19, 2014

Text of Motion: **Resolved to approve Resolution No. 286** - Authorizing The Chairman Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute An Agreement With The New York State Division Of Criminal Justice Services For The Aid To Defense Program – Department Of Public Defender

Motion Made By: Legislator Loughran

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Maio

Resolution No. 286 Summary: This resolution will authorize the Chairman to execute an agreement with the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services in the amount of \$14,400 for the Public Defender’s Aid to Defense program.

Discussion:

Sheriff VanBlarcum once again stated his belief that the committee should not vote on any Resolution unless someone from the Department the resolution pertains to is in attendance to answer questions.

Legislator Briggs said he would ask the Clerk of the Legislature to make sure that emails are sent advising the Departments in question about meetings that their Department should attend.

Roll Call Vote: No

Voting In Favor: Legislators Briggs, Gregorius, Loughran, Maio,

Voting Against: None

No. of Votes in Favor: 4

No. of Votes Against: 0

Disposition: Carried

Motion No. 6: Resolution No. 287 – August 19, 2014

Text of Motion: **Resolved to approve Resolution No. 287** - Authorizing The Chairman Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute An Agreement With The New York State Division Of Criminal Justice Services For The Aid To Prosecution Program – District Attorney

Motion Made By: Legislator Gregorius

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Loughran

Resolution No. 287 Summary: This Resolution will authorize the Chairman of the Legislature to execute an agreement with the NYS Division of Criminal Justice in the amount of \$56,700 for the District Attorney’s Aid to Prosecution Program.

Discussion

Sheriff VanBlarcum again pointed out that no one from the Department was in attendance. He further commented that he was pleased that there was more assistance being given to the Aid to Prosecution program rather than the Aid to Defense program.

Roll Call Vote: No
Voting In Favor: Legislators Briggs, Gregorius, Loughran, Maio,
Voting Against: None
No. of Votes in Favor: 4
No. of Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Carried

Motion No. 7: Resolution No. 288 – August 19, 2014

Text of Motion: **Resolved to approve Resolution No. 288** - Authorizing the Chairman Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute An Agreement With The Ulster County Board Of Cooperative Educational Services To Provide A Deputy Sheriff As A School Resource Officer – Ulster County Sheriff

Motion Made By: Legislator Loughran
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Maio

Resolution No. 288 Summary: This Resolution will authorize the Chairman of the Legislature to execute an agreement with UC BOCES for a school resource officer in an amount not to exceed \$46,350.

Discussion

Chairman Briggs asked the Sheriff if the position was reimbursed by BOCES. The Sheriff replied that it was a part time person who does not receive benefits. He also mentioned that the resource officer is Jim Grable, a former Kingston Police Department officer. The Sheriff complimented Officer Grable’s work and professionalism.

Chairman Briggs also offered compliments about Officer Grable who he worked with though the first aid squad.

Roll Call Vote: No
Voting In Favor: Legislators Briggs, Gregorius, Loughran, Maio,
Voting Against: None
No. of Votes in Favor: 4
No. of Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Carried

Motion No. 8: Resolution No. 289 – August 19, 2014

Text of Motion: **Resolved to approve Resolution No. 289** - Authorizing the Chairman Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute An Agreement With The Rondout Valley Central School District To Provide A Deputy Sheriff As A School Resource Officer – Ulster County Sheriff

Motion Made By: Legislator Loughran
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Gregorius

Resolution No. 289 Summary: This Resolution will authorize the Chairman of the Legislature to execute an agreement with the Rondout Valley School District for a school resource officer. 100% of the officer’s salary will be reimbursed by the school.

Discussion

Sheriff VanBlarcum explained that the school reimburses the amount of a full time Deputy so he does not have to take a Deputy Sheriff off the street to provide the school with the resource officer. He said the officer is currently Hadir Omar and that the school loves having him.

Roll Call Vote: No
Voting In Favor: Legislators Briggs, Gregorius, Loughran, Maio,
Voting Against: None
No. of Votes in Favor: 4
No. of Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Carried

Motion No. 9: Resolution No. 290 – August 19, 2014

Text of Motion: **Resolved to approve Resolution No. 290** - Amending The 2014 Ulster County Budget - Appropriating Unexpended Grant Funds From The New York

State Division Of Homeland Security And Emergency Services – Emergency Communications / Emergency Management

Motion Made By: Legislator Gregorius
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Maio

Resolution No. 290 Summary: This Resolution will amend the 2014 Ulster County Budget in the amount of \$978,000.00 in unexpended grant funds from the New York Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services for the Department of Emergency Management/Emergency Communications

Discussion

The Committee verified that the Resolution was simply moving unexpended funds from one budget line to another.

Roll Call Vote: No
Voting In Favor: Legislators Briggs, Gregorius, Loughran, Maio,
Voting Against: None
No. of Votes in Favor: 4
No. of Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Carried

Motion No. 10: Resolution No. 302 – August 19, 2014

Text of Motion: **Resolved to approve Resolution No. 302** - Approving The Memorandum Of Agreement Between The County Of Ulster, The Ulster County Sheriff And The Ulster County Sheriff’s Employees Association – Amending The 2014 Ulster County Budget

Motion Made By: Legislator Gregorius
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Loughran

Resolution No. 302 Summary: This Resolution will approve the Memorandum of Agreement covering the period January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2015 between the County of Ulster and the Ulster County Sheriff’s Employees Association.

Discussion

None

Roll Call Vote: No
Voting In Favor: Legislators Briggs, Gregorius, Loughran, Maio,
Voting Against: None
No. of Votes in Favor: 4
No. of Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Carried

Sheriff's Report

Chairman Briggs advised the committee that the report was attached to their agendas and asked if there were any questions for the Sheriff. There were none.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Chairman Briggs thanked the Sheriff for arranging for Ms. Kirkpatrick to join them. There was a brief discussion about the size of the infirmary. The Sheriff offered to provide Legislator Loughran with another copy of the contract.

Adjournment

Motion Made By: Legislator Gregorius
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Maio
No. of Votes in Favor: 4
No. of Votes Against: 0

TIME: 6:45 PM

Respectfully submitted this 8th day of September, 2014

Jay Mahler, Deputy Clerk

Minutes Approved: September 8, 2014