

Spotsylvania County, Virginia
Public Safety Committee Meeting, January 8, 2020 Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ernest Bartosh, Citizen Representative, Committee Chairman
Jay Cullinan, Fire Chief, FREM
Matthew Embrey, Emergency Management Coordinator, FREM (entered the meeting at 2:11 p.m.)
Roger Harris, Sheriff, SCSO
Becky Skebo, 911 Communications Manager

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kevin Marshall, Board of Supervisors, Berkeley District
Jane Reeve, Director of Information Services (IS)
Ed Petrovitch, County Administrator

STAFF PRESENT: Donna Curry, Secretary, FREM

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Bartosh called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENTATION

Mr. Bartosh presented a plaque to Mr. Greg Cebula for his dedicated service to the Public Safety Committee while serving on the Board of Supervisors from 2014-2017. Mr. Cebula thanked the Committee for the plaque and for allowing him to serve in this capacity.

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

Sheriff Harris made a motion, seconded by Chief Cullinan and carried, to adopt the meeting minutes of October 2, 2019 as presented. Ayes: Cullinan, Embrey, Harris, Skebo. Nays: None. Abstain: Bartosh. Absent: Marshall, Petrovitch, Reeve.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Bartosh opened the floor for public comment. There being none, the public comment period was closed.

INFORMATION SERVICES (IS) PUBLIC SAFETY PROJECTS STATUS REPORT

Mrs. Reeve was absent. Keith Pusso, IS Division Director of Public Safety, stated that he was available to answer questions from the Committee members.

Sheriff Harris voiced his appreciation to having Mr. Pusso and Ms. Magee located in-house to assist with various projects and indicated that Public Safety is very fortunate to have them.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

STATUS OF THE PROPOSED PUBLIC SAFETY COMPENSATION PLAN

Chief Cullinan stated that the Public Safety Compensation Plan was approved by the Board of Supervisors and noted that morale and working conditions have dramatically improved in FREM.

Sheriff Harris echoed Chief Cullinan's comments and noted that there are only five (5) vacancies currently in the Sheriff's Office. He indicated that some of the individuals who left County employment are waiting for an opportunity to come back. He recognized Chief Cullinan and his staff for all of the hours that they devoted to this project.

Mr. Bartosh stated that he has received numerous positive comments concerning the new Compensation Plan.

Chief Cullinan stated that Mr. Petrovitch is focused on compensation increases for general Government employees in the upcoming FY21 budget.

Mrs. Skebo stated that her staff is moving toward a Career Development Program. Sheriff Harris stated he and Chief Cullinan stressed that they wanted all County government employees to get what they deserve with regard to compensation. He indicated that he felt the Board members would step up and do the right thing. Mrs. Skebo commented that she is unsure if any of the other counties included dispatch in their compensation plan increases.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Mr. Bartosh stated that, with regard to Board member representatives, Mr. Marshall will remain on the Public Safety Committee and another appointment will be made at its Organizational Meeting.

At this time, Mr. Bartosh opened the floor for nominations for Chairman. Sheriff Harris nominated Mr. Bartosh. There being no additional nominations, Mr. Bartosh closed the floor for nominations. Chief Cullinan seconded the motion. Ayes: Cullinan, Embrey, Harris, Skebo. Nays: None. Absent: Marshall, Petrovitch, Reeve. Abstain: Bartosh.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Mr. Bartosh opened the floor for nominations for Vice-Chairman. Sheriff Harris nominated Mr. Marshall. There being no additional nominations, Mr. Bartosh closed the floor for nominations. Chief Embrey seconded the motion. Ayes: Bartosh, Cullinan, Embrey, Harris, Skebo. Nays: None. Absent: Marshall, Petrovitch, Reeve.

APPOINTMENT OF SECRETARY

Mr. Bartosh opened the floor for nominations for Secretary. He nominated Donna Curry. Mrs. Skebo seconded the motion. Ayes: Bartosh, Cullinan, Embrey, Harris, Skebo. Nays: None. Absent: Marshall, Petrovitch, Reeve.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS *continued*

STATUS OF PUBLIC SAFETY CAPITAL PROJECTS

Sheriff Harris reported on the status of the following Capital Projects:

- Animal Shelter Project: The Animal Shelter Project is ahead of schedule and moving very well.
- Courthouse Project: The Courthouse Project is behind schedule due to a problem with VDOT. He noted that there is only one way in and out of the Public Safety Building which is through the

parking lot. He indicated that they are working through the issues and noted that the road block was moved to the intersection in an effort to avoid accidents with people backing into the intersection.

- Patrol Cars: Sheriff Harris noted that new cars have also been ordered for the Department.
- Back-up Communications Center:
He briefly explained that they recently had an issue in Communications where the City of Fredericksburg had to handle our 911 calls due to a total power failure. During the outage, the Communications Center was unable to take 911 calls. Mrs. Skebo stated that they were unable to receive calls for approximately one hour which included no radio calls and no computer aided dispatch (CAD). She indicated that the Center was completely dark. Sheriff Harris stated that this stresses the need for redundancy and a second location for the Communications Center. He indicated that he met with the County Administrator and requested that resolution of this issue be moved to the forefront.

Mr. Bartosh inquired as to whether the mobile command post is a viable option. The Sheriff indicated that it is not. Chief Embrey stated that the command vehicle is a stop-gap measure and indicated that a back-up center near this location is a bad idea. He explained that it needs to be on a separate power grid than the current system in case there is a power failure here, it won't affect the second location. Mrs. Skebo stated that they currently have a Mutual Aid Agreement with the City of Fredericksburg for this purpose. Chief Embrey suggested that moving forward, maybe something could be done from a regional approach. Mrs. Skebo stated that the City of Fredericksburg has the same phone system as presently used in the Communications Center and noted that the radios are intertwined which makes the City the best option.

Chief Cullinan stated that some of the space in the proposed classroom building at the Regional Training Center could be used as a back-up EOC, Communications Center, and training facility for dispatchers. He indicated that there have been some initial discussions regarding that specific use and noted that funding for the Training Center Project is two (2) years away.

- Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) Training Academy:
Sheriff Harris reported that the Sheriff's Office has decided to pull away from the Regional Academy and move toward a local academy similar to what FREM has done. By doing so would provide the opportunity to teach classes with current staff and decrease the amount of time for getting the individuals in the field. He stated that the Sheriff's Office previously received a unanimous vote to pull away from the program; however, the Board for the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) has been replaced due to the change in Governors. Therefore, the process to pull out will have to be started anew. He noted that three (3) rooms in the Public Safety Building have been approved by the DCJS as training rooms.
- Lake Anna: Sheriff Harris voiced concerns with regard to the increasing amount of traffic on the Lake which is causing issues with erosion. He stated that the sandbar at Waddy's Point became a popular meeting place for the "Glow Club" which had approximately 300 people in attendance with a DJ. The County Attorney is in the process of determining whether a permit is needed for

this type of activity. He indicated that he is advertising for deputies to train on boat patrol; however, he doesn't feel he has adequate manpower to devote to the Lake at this time.

Mr. Bartosh inquired about the Coast Guard Auxiliary and the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF). Sheriff Harris stated that DGIF is very good if they have the manpower to patrol.

- Firing Range: Sheriff Harris reported that the current firing range, which is utilized frequently by the Sheriff's Office, is in the process of being updated. He explained that currently there is no water or toilets available on site so they are going to use refurbished trailers for classrooms and bathroom facilities. He stated that they are updating the entire range with an electronic or hydraulic target system. They are hoping to obtain grant funding for the project but indicated that asset forfeiture funds could be used toward the project. Sheriff Harris also stated that they are going to work with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to make road improvements into the range. He concluded by saying that currently only sworn Spotsylvania County officers are permitted to use the facility; however, once the projected updates are completed, he would like to extend training to other localities as well.

Chief Cullinan updated the Committee on the status of the following Capital Projects:

- Apparatus Update: The new fire boat is expected to be delivered in February, 2020. Two (2) tankers, an engine and rescue are on order. He indicated that staff is currently looking for a cooperative contract for ambulance purchases.

- Station expansion/replacement:

Station 3 Replacement Project: Chief Cullinan reported that a parcel of property has been identified on Wallers Road, which is owned by the County, for the new location of Station 3. A Request for Proposals (RFP) will be going out soon for design services for Station 3 and Station 12.

Station 6 Expansion Project: Design work continues on the Station 6 Expansion Project. Mr. Bartosh inquired if the County will be selling the old Station 5 facility. Chief Cullinan explained that the facility is currently being used as a Logistics Building. He indicated that staff is in search of a County facility that the Logistics Division could be relocated to; however, the original discussion was to locate it at the Regional Training Center once the classroom building project was completed.

STATUS UPDATE REGARDING STAFFING - Sheriff

Sheriff Harris stated that the number of vacancies in the Sheriff's Office has been reduced to five (5), which he expects to be the new normal. Mr. Bartosh inquired if School Resource Officers (SRO) could be used during the summer months for extra patrol on the Lake. Sheriff Harris explained that many of the SROs typically attend annual training classes during the summer. If available, they are also used for serving warrants or assisting with summer camps. He noted that six of the SROs are now licensed to drive buses and take children to summer programs.

STATUS UPDATE REGARDING STAFFING – FREM

Chief Cullinan reported that FREM will be at full staffing once the Recruit Academy graduates. He stated that the implementation of the new Pay and Compensation Plan has had a major impact on FREM staffing.

Mr. Bartosh inquired if this will reduce the number of Academies needed in the future. Chief Cullinan indicated that there would be a decrease and noted that future Academies would be shorter in length or smaller in size.

Sheriff Harris reported that eight (8) officers started the Academy on Monday and should be on the streets in nine (9) months. He noted that conducted in-house Academies would also reduce costs to the County and the amount of time with getting the officers on the streets.

INSURANCE SERVICES OFFICE (ISO) CLASSIFICATION PROCESS

Chief Cullinan stated that he hopes to schedule another meeting with a representative from the Insurance Services Office (ISO) in March, 2020.

911 CENTER PERSONNEL CLASSIFICATION LEGISLATION UPDATE

Mrs. Skebo reported that not much has changed with regard to the Personnel Classification legislation that is currently being considered. She indicated that the Sheriff's Office has sent a letter of support; however, the County has not. She noted that the next meeting will be held in Washington, D.C. in February. Sheriff Harris stated that support from Senator Reeves is moving forward.

VOLUNTEER POLICY DEVELOPMENT FOR NEW COMPUTER AIDED DISPATCH (CAD) SYSTEM

The Volunteer Policy has been delayed until the County gets closer to the new CAD purchase.

Mr. Pusso reported that the County is currently in negotiations with the CAD vendor in hopes of presenting an agreement to the Board of Supervisors in February, 2020. He stated that Information Services was advised to carry on with the negotiations. He noted that the County made an offer to Central Square and it is currently awaiting a response.

Mr. Pusso reported that NG911/ESINet is moving forward.

NEW BUSINESS

2020 NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATORS WEEK RESOLUTION

Chief Embrey made a motion, seconded by Sheriff Harris and carried unanimously to approve the following resolution as presented and forward to the Board of Supervisors for its consideration at the next available meeting:

**A RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF
NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATORS WEEK
APRIL 12-18, 2019**

WHEREAS, public safety dispatchers and call takers are the first and most critical contact our citizens have with emergency services; and

WHEREAS, emergencies can occur at any time requiring law enforcement, fire suppression or emergency medical services; and

WHEREAS, when an emergency occurs, the prompt response of law enforcement, firefighters and paramedics is critical to the protection of life and preservation of property; and

WHEREAS, the safety of the public and first responders is dependent upon the quality and accuracy of information provided by public safety dispatchers and call-takers; and

WHEREAS, public safety dispatchers and call-takers are a vital link for our law enforcement and fire personnel by monitoring their activities by radio, providing information during fluid situations, and ensuring their safety; and

WHEREAS, public safety dispatchers and call-takers have contributed substantially to the apprehension of criminals, suppression of fires, and treatment of patients; and

WHEREAS, each public safety dispatcher and call-taker has exhibited compassion, understanding and professionalism during the performance of their job; and

WHEREAS, the Spotsylvania County Board of Supervisors would like to recognize and honor the contributions of all Spotsylvania County Communications personnel in the public safety arena for their continued efforts to preserve public safety through our 9-1-1, non-emergency lines, and the dispatch of first responders to thousands of calls for service each year.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Spotsylvania County Board of Supervisors that the week of April 12-18, 2020, be duly recognized as National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week and honor the men and women of Spotsylvania County Communications, whose diligence and professionalism keep Spotsylvania County citizens, visitors and property safe.

Ayes: Bartosh, Cullinan, Embrey, Harris, Skebo. Nays: None. Absent: Marshall, Petrovitch, Reeve.

2020 NATIONAL EMS WEEK RESOLUTION

Sheriff Harris made a motion, seconded by Chief Cullinan and carried unanimously to approve the following resolution as presented and forward to the Board of Supervisors for its consideration at the next available meeting:

**A RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF
NATIONAL EMS WEEK
MAY 17-23, 2020**

WHEREAS, emergency medical services is a vital public service that the members, both volunteer and career, of the **Spotsylvania County Department of Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Management (FREM)** stand ready to provide lifesaving care to those in need 24 hours per day, seven days per week, 365 days per year; and

WHEREAS, access to quality emergency care dramatically improves the survival and recovery rate of those experiencing sudden illness or injury and **FREM** plays a critical role in public outreach and injury prevention, while constantly evolving in its role as an important member of the healthcare community; and

WHEREAS, FREM responders will be the first to respond to terrorist or natural disaster events and are consistently training to respond to any possible occurrence, which will benefit the citizens and visitors to Spotsylvania County daily through the knowledge, skills, and ability of these highly trained individuals, who engage in thousands of hours of specialized training and continuing education opportunities in order to enhance their life saving skills.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Spotsylvania County Board of Supervisors that the week of May 17-23, 2020, be duly recognized as **National EMS Week** and honor the men and women of the Spotsylvania County Department of Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Management, whose diligence, professionalism, and service keep Spotsylvania County citizens, visitors and property safe.

Ayes: Bartosh, Cullinan, Embrey, Harris, Skebo. Nays: None. Absent: Marshall, Petrovitch, Reeve.

REPORTS

MATTHEW EMBREY, DIVISION CHIEF OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Chief Embrey commended Chief Cullinan and Sheriff Harris on their cooperation with the Christmas Parade and the Second Amendment Meeting.

Sheriff Harris stated that there are many things that Chief Embrey does that he receives little to no thanks for and noted that he is very valuable to the County. He thanked Chief Embrey for all of his dedicated work.

Chief Embrey stated that Mrs. Skebo and her staff assisted with the dispatch console that has been set up in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) with NGIN and VCIN, and noted that it has received approval from the State. He advised that the console is fully active as a dispatch console and was most recently used during the Stars and Stripes Event. He reported that the North Anna graded exercise will be conducted this year with the full-scale event scheduled for August 18, 2020. He noted that a “dress rehearsal” will be held on June 24, 2020 at Chancellor High School. He concluded by saying that Battalion Chief Mike Grubb will be standing in as the EOC Manager for the drill.

Chief Embrey reported that the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) has joined forces with the Traffic Incident Management System (TIMS) for a haz-mat based exercise which will include law enforcement, hospitals, and A. P. Hill. He explained the exercise, would be similar to the previous incident on Interstate 95.

Mr. Bartosh inquired if the County has to submit a Threat and Hazard Identification Risk Assessment Report (THIRA) annually. Chief Embrey stated that it does not.

JAY CULLINAN, FIRE CHIEF

Chief Cullinan stated that the Board of Supervisors will consider an Automatic Aid Agreement with King George at its next meeting. He indicated that he is still awaiting Agreements from Caroline and Culpeper Counties, respectfully.

Chief Cullinan reported that there are currently three (3) EMS agencies in the County and there seems to be a duplication of efforts. He explained that one (1) overall agency would streamline processes.

Therefore, he is planning to discuss the issue at the next Senior Agency Leadership Group (SALG) meeting. He stressed that this would strictly be an administrative component only and would prohibit the need for such things as having separate databases in the patient care reporting system.

Chief Cullinan stated that the Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) advised that beginning January 1, 2020, new providers will need to be fingerprinted at one of their designated locations. Staff is currently drafting an ordinance that would allow the Department to continue to fingerprint onsite in the Public Safety Building.

Chief Cullinan reported that the Department of Fire Programs is currently vetting candidates for a Fire Marshal Program. He indicated that the County Code currently does not reflect the same verbiage as the State Code. Therefore, the County Code needs to be modified to include the same language. Further, FREM is looking to modify the County Code with updated EMS fees so that the verbiage would include "150% of Medicare Allowable Charges" to avoid having to continually update the fees in the Code.

Chief Cullinan distributed annual statistical data to the group and noted that response times have been reduced while call volumes have increased.

BECKY SKEBO, 911 COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Mrs. Skebo had nothing to report.

KEVIN MARSHALL, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, BERKELEY DISTRICT

Mr. Marshall was absent.

ED PETROVITCH, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Mr. Petrovitch was absent.

JANE REEVE, DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION SERVICES (IS)

Mrs. Reeve was absent.

NEW BUSINESS *continued*

DETERMINATION OF MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2020

Mr. Bartosh provided the following Meeting Schedule to the group and asked if changes were needed:

- January 8th;
- April 8th;
- July 8th; and
- October 14.

There being none, the 2020 Meeting Schedule was approved by consensus.

Mr. Bartosh stated that there had been an issue with the present meeting with regard to not have a quorum. He requested that Mrs. Curry submit a Request for Legal Opinion (RFLO) to the County Attorney's Office to inquire if electronic voting is permissible for the Public Safety Committee in the event there is a need for such.

SHERIFF HARRIS

Sheriff Harris updated the members regarding a Second Amendment rally on January 20, 2020 in Washington, D. C. He indicated that there have been rumors that there are going to be attempts to block as many major thoroughfares as possible. He stated that he has directed his command staff to enforce the law, including the arrest of individuals and the seizure of vehicles.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Chief Cullinan moved, seconded by Sheriff Harris and carried to adjourn the meeting at 3:45 p.m. Ayes: Bartosh, Cullinan, Embrey, Harris, Skebo. Nays: None. Absent: Marshall, Petrovitch, Reeve.

The next meeting of the Public Safety Committee will be held on Wednesday, April 8, 2020 beginning at 2:00 p.m. in the Public Safety Building/Community Room, located at 9119 Dean Ridings Lane; Spotsylvania, VA 22553.