

Spotsylvania County, Virginia
Public Safety Committee Meeting, January 9, 2019 Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Greg Benton, Board of Supervisors, Livingston District
Jay Cullinan, Fire Chief, FREM
Matthew Embrey, Emergency Management Coordinator, FREM
Roger Harris, Sheriff, SCSO* (*left the meeting at 2:37 p.m.*)
Kevin Marshall, Board of Supervisors, Berkeley District
Jane Reeve, Director of Information Services (IS)
Becky Skebo, 911 Communications Manager, SCSO
Mark Taylor, County Administrator
Troy Skebo, Major, SCSO* (*entered the meeting at 2:37 p.m.*)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ernest Bartosh, Citizen Representative, Committee Chairman

STAFF PRESENT: Donna Curry, Secretary, FREM

CALL TO ORDER

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

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

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

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

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

APPOINTMENT OF SECRETARY

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

DETERMINATION OF MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2019

Chief Embrey made a motion to adopt the following meeting schedule for 2019:

- January 9 (changed from January 2)
- April 3
- July 10
- October 2

Sheriff Harris seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Chief Embrey noted that the first meeting in 2020 would be January 1st. Therefore, he moved to schedule the first meeting in 2020 on January 8th. Sheriff Harris seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

Sheriff Harris made a motion, seconded by Mr. Benton and carried, to adopt the meeting minutes of October 3, 2018 as presented. Ayes: Benton, Cullinan, Embrey, Harris, Marshall, Reeve, Skebo, Taylor. Nays: None. Absent: Bartosh.

A brief discussion ensued concerning the transcription of the minutes with regard to summary minutes versus verbatim minutes. By consensus, the Committee requested that the minutes be presented in summary form and if a member wants something specific recorded in the minutes, then they will make that request at that time.

INFORMATION SERVICES (IS) PUBLIC SAFETY PROJECTS STATUS REPORT

Mrs. Reeve provided a status update on the following projects:

- Digital Alert System: the old system has been retired and the new system is up and running. She noted that the project was completed five (5) weeks before scheduled;
- ImageTrend: the program is now live and showing positive results. She noted that the project was completed nearly \$12,000 under budget;
- NG911: IS is currently moving forward with this project; and
- Text-to-911: the County is currently waiting on terms from the vendor.

Mrs. Reeve noted that safety concerns have been expressed recently and the need for panic buttons to alert dispatch that there is a need within the County departments. Therefore, IS has been working to install emergency 911 buttons on desk phones in reception areas throughout County departments. Implementation of this project has begun and will begin to roll out the third week in January.

Sheriff Harris thanked Mrs. Reeve and the IS staff, specifically Ms. Magee and Mr. Pusso, for everything they have done for public safety. He noted that having them located in the Public Safety Building is great.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/PRESENTATIONS

Mr. Marshall opened the floor for public comment. There being none, public comment was closed. Mrs. Reeve stated that she had recently spoken with Mrs. Collier and that she said hello to the Committee.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

STATUS OF THE PROPOSED PUBLIC SAFETY COMPENSATION PLAN

Chief Cullinan stated that discussion continues with the Finance and Human Resources Departments concerning the fiscal impact of the proposed Plan. He indicated that he realizes that this is something that may be beneficial to all County employees but can only speak on the Public Safety aspect. He concluded by saying that he will be making a presentation to the Board on January 22, 2019 regarding recruitment and retention issues.

STATUS OF PUBLIC SAFETY CAPITAL PROJECTS

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

- Engine 5 has been delivered and currently awaiting paperwork from Pierce Manufacturing to get it in service. It looks very nice and will be a very functional engine.
- Tower 1 and Rescue Engine 8 are currently in the completion stages at the Wisconsin plant. The County is anticipating delivery in February. He noted that each piece of apparatus is built from scratch and that the factory process is very impressive.
- An additional engine and tanker are currently on order from E-One.
- Two (2) ambulances are due to be delivered to the County in February.
- Station expansion/replacement – the County is currently evaluating six (6) bids from engineering firms for the proposed Company 6 expansion. He indicated that the qualifications are very impressive but no costs have yet to be presented.

With regard to Company 3, the County is trying to secure property for the new Station and then determine the engineering. He stated that they plan to use the design of Station 3 for the construction of the future Station 12.

Mr. Marshall inquired if consideration had been given for the personnel at Station 6 during construction and whether temporary housing may be required. He noted that the School Board had purchased trailers during a recent construction project and is willing to lease or loan them to FREM for during this construction project.

Sheriff Harris stated that the Sheriff's Office is currently in the process of constructing a metal building in the back of the Public Safety Building and will be used for housing gear that should not be left out in the elements. He indicated that once the weather clears, the concrete pad will be poured. The proposed structure will be enclosed on three (3) sides with doors in the front. The new boat and gators will be located there as well.

Mr. Marshall inquired if the building was going to be insulated and suggested that spray foam insulation be used as opposed to traditional insulation. He noted that this will prevent issues with condensation. Sheriff Harris thanked Mr. Marshall and advised that he would certainly look into this type of insulation.

STATUS UPDATE REGARDING STAFFING

Sheriff Harris stated that the Sheriff's Office has a bigger issue with recruitment rather than retention. He stated that it is difficult to compete with salaries offered by adjoining localities and noted that it has been rumored that Stafford County is going to increase salaries to equal Northern Virginia salaries. Sheriff Harris explained that it typically takes one year and nearly \$80,000 to get an employee in the field. He noted that they have expanded the recruitment area to include colleges and military bases. He concluded by saying that staffing is not at a critical level but certainly not where it needs to be.

Chief Cullinan stated that FREM has both recruiting and retention issues. With regard to recruitment, it is all about finding the right people with the right qualities. He reported that the current Recruit Academy began with 27 recruits and on January 28th, seventeen (17) will be graduating. He stated that FREM is about to begin another recruitment process. Chief Cullinan indicated that retention issues have

contributed to ten percent (10%) turnover in the Department for the past three (3) years. He stated that he meets with each FREM employee who chooses to leave County employment and nearly everyone states that salary is the determining factor. Some go north and others go south, both for immediate dollar increases as well as long term salary offers. Chief Cullinan expressed the need for building additional mechanisms in the current compensation plan to make people successful in their job. He reported that there are currently 22 open positions in the field in addition to individuals on Light Duty and Family Medical Leave (FMLA). Chief Cullinan stated that FREM has been using a lot of overtime to fill in the gaps. He noted that the volunteer agencies have been providing assistance during the day. He concluded by saying that sometimes struggles bring people closer together.

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

Chief Cullinan stated that Mrs. Reeve brought this issue up at the last meeting and requested that a policy be developed for the volunteers. He indicated that he didn't have much to add at this time.

Mrs. Reeve stated that the County has to have a clear policy on users to the system and noted that this issue was brought up during the audit review which is why the policy is so critical.

Chief Cullinan stated that FREM is currently in the process of refining the process for onboarding volunteers into the combination system which will aid in drafting the policy. He concluded by saying that the goal is to standardize the process for people coming and going in the system.

NEW BUSINESS

PEER SUPPORT TEAM PRESENTATION

Greg Leitz, Division Chief of Training, FREM, explained that the Peer Support Team is a joint effort with the Sheriff's Office and FREM to provide support services to first responders including:

- Suicide awareness;
- Crisis awareness;
- Chaplaincy services; and
- Grieving assistance.

Chief Leitz reported that two (2) classes have been offered thus far and they were poorly attended. He indicated that two (2) additional classes were being offered during the last week in January with approximately 30 people registered to attend. Chief Leitz explained that the Peer Support Team is trying to meet State requirements in that all members must have crisis mental health awareness training. He stated that they are in the process of developing a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the Peer Support Team.

Major Skebo noted that the Sheriff's Office brought the following to the team including:

- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Support Services; and
- Pre-identified counselors to assist with issues.

He stated that there is an area therapist who retired recently but specializes in first responder issues. He indicated that this may also be a resource available to the County.

Chief Leitz stated that there are various components working on marketing the Team and noted that he assisted with a video concerning mental health awareness. He reported that the Team is a few months shy from being identified as an official Peer Support Team.

Major Skebo stated that the Sheriff's Office formed a Wellness Team as the result of a grant that the County was awarded. This is a multi-faceted team consisting of volunteers who went through a selection process and then sent to professional training. This team provides the following support:

- Career development;
- Spiritual support;
- Physical support; and
- Financial support.

Major Skebo indicated that this team is up and running with a membership of ten (10) people and noted that it has been used on occasion. He concluded by saying that the Sheriff's Office is looking forward to working with FREM on the Peer Support Team.

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

A draft Annual Report of the Public Safety Committee was distributed to the Committee members for review.

Mrs. Reeve stated that she would like to add additional information to the Report.

Mr. Marshall suggested that the Report be sent to the Board of Supervisors as Board Communication once the information from Mrs. Reeve is included. Mrs. Curry indicated that she would update the information and send a final draft to the Committee for review prior to sending it to the Board.

STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS FORM UPDATE

Mrs. Curry reported that the members of the Public Safety Committee are no longer required to complete and submit a Statement of Economic Interests form per the County Administrator's Office.

REPORTS

BECKY SKEBO, 911 COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Mrs. Skebo had nothing to report.

TROY SKEBO, MAJOR, SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Major Skebo stated an individual is going into County buildings and identifying himself as an auditor. He then goes into unauthorized areas to post live videos on YouTube. He noted that the individual can film but not in unauthorized areas. He stated that this is becoming a bigger problem daily and urged everyone to be aware.

GREG BENTON, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, LIVINGSTON DISTRICT

Mr. Benton had nothing to report.

MATTHEW EMBREY, DIVISION CHIEF OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Chief Embrey reported that a dispatch console will be purchased for the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) through funds from the Local Emergency Management Planning Grant (LEMPG). He indicated that he had been working with Mrs. Skebo and staff so that the new console is similar to the current dispatch consoles. He expressed his appreciation to Mrs. Skebo and her staff for their support of this endeavor. Chief Embrey stated that he is currently the Chairman of the LEMP Committee and is moving forward with the George Washington Regional Planning District Commission (GWRPDC) to get a regular plan in place to assist localities in the region with getting plans up to speed to include assets. He indicated that the Committee is also looking to leverage grant funding.

He suggested that the Public Safety Committee consider having a budget discussion at its meeting in April or July to review budget items that are being considered for inclusion in the upcoming 2020 departmental budgets that could garner support from the Committee.

By consensus, the members requested that this item be added to the April 3rd meeting for discussion.

MARK TAYLOR, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Mr. Taylor had nothing to report.

JAY CULLINAN, FIRE CHIEF

Chief Cullinan reported that US Digital is up and running in the stations. This will help with response times in getting the message out sooner and improve working conditions in the stations. He expressed his appreciation to everyone involved with the implementation of ImageTrend. He noted that the State's version had limited capabilities but with FREM's new system, this was the first time ever to have zero reporting problems. Chief Cullinan indicated that this is a huge step forward for the Department and improved revenue recovery for the County. Chief Cullinan distributed statistical information for FREM responses during the fourth quarter of 2018. He noted that incidents had increased by 1,300 calls across the board which could be population driven. He concluded by saying that the good news is the system is maintaining.

Mrs. Reeve stated that there needs to be alternative back-up sites for public safety, including a back-up EOC.

A brief discussion ensued including: possible EOC location in the new classrooms at the Regional Training Center, consideration of a complete back-up 911 Center (currently using the Command Bus as back-up communications center which is very limited), significant impacts if a natural disaster hits the area with no identified back-ups and serious ramifications if planning is neglected, fiber availability (which is the least concern) but the system backbone is crucial as there needs to be redundancy, affects to NG911, and the need to start planning now.

Mrs. Reeve concluded by saying that a major incident could become a major issue for the County.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Chief Embrey made a motion, seconded by Major Skebo and carried, to adjourn the meeting at 3:23 p.m. The next meeting of the Public Safety Committee will be held on Wednesday, April 3, 2019 beginning at 2:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the Public Safety Building.