

MEETING MINUTES

Public Safety Committee (PSC) Meeting
Wednesday, April 6, 2016
2:00 p.m.

Attendance: Greg Cebula, Board of Supervisors, Berkeley District
Mark Cole, Deputy County Administrator
H. Monty Willaford, Fire Chief
Don Thodos, Major, Sheriff's Office
Matt Embrey, Division Chief of Emergency Management
Jane Reeve, Director of Information Services **entered the meeting at 2:10 PM*
Becky Skebo, 911 Communications Manager
Ernest Bartosh, Citizen Representative **entered the meeting at 2:08 PM*

Absent: Timothy McLaughlin, Board of Supervisors, Chancellor District
Roger Harris, Sheriff
Teresa Switala, Administrative Assistant to the Fire Chief

Others Present: Donna Curry, FREM Business Manager

CALL TO ORDER

Chief Willaford called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mary Lou Collier voiced concerns regarding emergency vehicles maneuvering through traffic; she also stated that she doesn't want to see any budget cuts to public safety budgets.

Chief Willaford stated that much training goes into being a released drive, and noted that fire and rescue personnel must complete heavy equipment driving.

PRESENTATION TO MARK KUECHLER

On behalf of the County and the Public Safety Committee, Chief Willaford presented Mark Kuechler with a plaque for his many years of service to Fire and Rescue. Mr. Kuechler served as the President of the Spotsylvania Volunteer Fire Department (SVFD), as well as, serving as a representative to the Fire & EMS Commission since its inception. Mr. Kuechler resigned from SVFD as he is moving back to Wisconsin to be closer to his family.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chief Embrey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bartosh and carried unanimously, to approve the Minutes of the January 6, 2016 Public Safety Committee meeting as presented.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Public Safety Technology Update

Mrs. Reeve distributed an updated Information Services (IS) projects listing. She expanded on additional security measures requiring stronger passwords. Mrs. Reeve reported that Cooper Communications, vendor for SpotsyAlert, is combining forces with Everbridge. She noted that Jay Krail is the Project Manager for this transition.

New Stations Update

Chief Willaford reported on the status of the new stations. He indicated that the black top has been put down at Station 5; however Station 11 has issues. It appears that the contractor didn't build to the site plan. He indicated that no curb and gutter has been installed. Chief Willaford asked Code Compliance to review the matter. Chief Willaford read an email concerning a 50-60' drop behind new Station 5. He noted that this is a serious safety concern. He also noted that there are missing items which will cause maintenance issues, in addition to the missing curb and gutter. Chief Willaford noted that if this is a contractor error, then there should not be a cost to the County.

Mrs. Reeve stated that there are issues with cell phone usage at the Station 5 as the location is in a dead spot. She stated that antennas need to be added for cell service and noted that it would be a change order to the contract. Chief Willaford asked Chief Embrey to follow up on this issue.

With regard to Station 11, Chief Willaford stated that an underground stream went through the property which posed construction issues pertaining to the site work and site plans. He reported that David Breeden had corrected the issues that he found and Jesse Beavon corrected issues that he found. Chief Willaford noted that both of the new stations have monolithic block on the exterior of the building and a white residue is appearing on the block. He explained that this is caused by salt seeping through the block. According to Mr. Beavon, there is a sealant that can be applied to deter the salt from seeping through.

Mr. Cebula inquired when the stations were going to be ready. Chief Willaford stated that the aforementioned issues should not delay the stations from opening. However, the site issue is a public safety problem and the Code Department may not allow Station 5 to open until it is fixed.

Mr. Cebula inquired about staffing for the stations. Chief Willaford stated that there will be no staffing changes with Station 5 as Chancellor Volunteer Fire and Rescue has not been fulfilling its commitment totally. Company 11 will have new staffing. The Board of Supervisors approved the hiring of fifteen (15) individuals who are currently attending the Recruit Academy. Three (3) additional people are in the proposed FY17 budget recommended by the County Administrator. He concluded by saying that those individuals will begin training in July and assigned to the field in October.

Mr. Cebula asked if there would be overstaffing for a few months. Chief Willaford stated that FREM's overtime budget is severely over budget at this time and that there are several field vacancies. He reported that fifteen (15) medics will be coming out of school in May, then will be precepting before Station 11 opens.

Mr. Bartosh asked if the problem at Station 5 was being resolved. Chief Willaford stated that every time he asks the question, he is told there is no money. Mr. Cole stated that if it can be addressed with the contractor there shouldn't be a cost to the County. He noted that the simplest solution may be to install a fence across the back of the site.

New Apparatus Update

Chief Willaford provided a schedule of when the new trucks would be arriving to the County: Squad 1 – April; Ladder 6 – May; Ladder 10 – May; Ladder 11 – July; Tanker 7 – June; Tanker 8 – June; Engine 2 and Engine 6 – July. He noted that Pierce chose one of the new trucks to display at an upcoming conference in Indiana, which he was planning to attend.

NEW BUSINESS

PSC Assistance with Regard to the Sheriff's Office and Information Services

Mr. Bartosh requested that this item be added to the agenda for discussion.

Mrs. Reeve stated that she continues to ask for additional staff and noted that three positions were recommended in the FY17 budget. She indicated that new projects will be prioritized and a tight control will be kept on the budget. She reported that IS plans to propose outsourcing for after-hours support during the FY18 budget process. Mrs. Reeve explained that upcoming requirements with regard to the new security system, someone will need to be available 24/7 to respond to IT issues.

Major Thodos stated that representatives of the Sheriff's Office meet monthly with Dr. Baker due to County incidents. He reported that they had just rolled out Phase 2 of the Active Shooter training.

Mrs. Reeve reported that, with regard to School communications, everyone is going to have to be on the same frequency when the new radios go live. She indicated that they have met with the Schools a multitude of times concerning the radio system.

Major Thodos reported that the Sheriff's Office has partnered with VDOT requesting a radio in order to maintain communications. He noted that VDOT had paid for the new sign board. Major Thodos indicated that VRE is their biggest concern as they have requested a safety plan for critical incidents. Thus far, the Sheriff's Office has not received a response from VRE for its platform area.

Stars and Stripes Spectacular

Mr. Bartosh requested that this item be added to the agenda for discussion.

Chief Embrey stated that two meetings have been conducted concerning the event. He reported that the Spectacular is scheduled for Saturday, July 2nd with a rain date of Sunday, July 3rd. He noted that consideration was given to having a second week of festivities; however, the price skyrocketed.

Future Public Safety Events/Activities

Mr. Bartosh requested that this item be added to the agenda for discussion.

The following upcoming events were noted:

May 20th: FREM Recruit Academy Graduation; and

May 21st: Wounded Warrior Benefit - Chick-fil-a will be feeding veterans and their families free.

Chief Embrey stated that FREM is trying to coordinate a drill to simulate a possible train derailment with Amtrak and VRE for training purposes.

Mr. Cebula noted that the Racetrack is scheduled to open on Saturday, April 9th and inquired if the Sheriff's Office was ready. Chief Willaford stated that they have security on site and they have their own fire truck for emergencies on scene. He indicated LifeCare will be

providing EMS services at these events. Chief Embrey noted that if there is not an active race underway, they can provide EMS services to anyone.

Mr. Bartosh inquired as to whether any mass casualty drills had been scheduled. Chief Embrey stated nothing has been scheduled at this point; however, there are opportunities for such training.

Fire and Rescue Fees/EMS Revenue Recovery

Chief Willaford stated that when the Board of Supervisors reviewed County fees, some Fire and Rescue fees were not associated with Community Development, specifically Revenue Recovery fees. Therefore, FREM is requesting to increase the ALS 1 fee from \$600 to \$650 and the mileage fee to increase from \$11.50 per mile to \$12.00 per mile. By doing so, Spotsylvania County will be in line with surrounding localities.

Public Safety Recruitment and Retention Compensation

Chief Willaford distributed information to the committee members concerning job advertisements for Firefighter Paramedics, Medics, and Emergency Medical Technicians and noted that the entry level salaries were much larger than what seasoned employees in these roles are currently making. He stated that it was important for employees to get a minimum step raise which should be a central issue for all County employees.

Mrs. Reeve stated that her department has been losing people to the City of Fredericksburg for \$15,000 increases and noted that Spotsylvania has become a training ground as there is no incentive for people to stay.

Chief Willaford asked the members what the Committee's next step is to have the Board of Supervisors review as a recommendation from the Committee. Discussion ensued including: career development, differential pay, incentives, annual step raises, possible work session with the Board of Supervisors and the Public Safety Committee, and strategic planning.

Mrs. Reeve made a motion that between now and the next Public Safety Committee meeting, the members make a list of top priorities for consideration to be submitted to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Bartosh seconded the motion. Mr. Cole noted that it is too late for funding in the FY17 budget. Chief Willaford made a friendly amendment to send a report to the Board once completed. Mrs. Reeve accepted the amendment. Mr. Bartosh seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Cole noted that the Board is concerned about employee salaries but also for the citizens of the County. Mr. Cebula stated that the purpose of the Committee is to present information to the Board concerning Public Safety.

INDIVIDUAL REPORTS

1. Greg Cebula, Board of Supervisors, Berkeley District:
Mr. Cebula had nothing to report.
2. Timothy McLaughlin, Board of Supervisors, Chancellor District:
Absent.

3. Mark Cole, Deputy County Administrator:
Mr. Cole had nothing to report.
4. H. Monty Willaford, Fire Chief:
Chief Willaford had nothing to report.
5. Don Thodos, Major, Sheriff's Office:
Major Thodos had nothing to report.
6. Matt Embrey, Emergency Management Coordinator:
Chief Embrey reported that he has organized a kick-off meeting with FEMA for submitting reimbursements for expenses associated with the winter storm. He stated that the recent VOPEX drill had been assessed and the County passed with flying colors. There were no areas requiring correction.
7. Jane Reeve, Director of Information Services:
Mrs. Reeve stated that there has been increased interest in cloud applications. She voiced concern that with this type of application, the County loses ownership of the data and it is not property protected.
8. Becky Skebo, 911 Communications Manager:
Mrs. Skebo had nothing to report.
9. Ernest Bartosh, Citizen Representative:
Mr. Bartosh had nothing to report.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Cebula made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bartosh, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 4:24 p.m. The next Public Safety Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 6, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. in the Community Room in the Public Safety Building, 9119 Dean Ridings Lane.