

**PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM #318
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

Members: Chairman Gouldman & Legislators Castellano & Jonke

Tuesday

July 18, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 7:45p.m. by Chairman Gouldman who led in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislators Castellano, Jonke and Chairman Gouldman were present.

Item #3 - Approval/Protective Services Committee Meeting Minutes June 20, 2017

Chairman Gouldman stated the minutes were accepted as submitted.

Item #4 - Approval/Resolution/Creation of Technical Rescue Team/Commissioner Sutton

Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Anthony Sutton stated there is a growing need throughout the County for specialized rescues. He stated this is a proposal to develop a Technical Rescue Team. He stated that they came to the Legislature some time back to apply for a security grant in the amount of \$150,000. He stated that they have spent approximately \$80,000 so far equipping and developing the capabilities. He stated they now want to formally establish a team.

Chairman Gouldman questioned if this is a new team.

Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Anthony Sutton stated that is correct. He stated that they will start with rope rescue, which is a component of a Technical Rescue Team. He stated other components are confined space, swift water and high angle. He stated that there are people who are interested in being a member of the team.

Legislator LoBue questioned who would be doing the training.

Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Anthony Sutton stated they will probably use the grant funding to pay for outside trainers to come in. He stated that there is a plan in place addressing regionalization, so resources can be shared north and south of Putnam County. He stated there is a Technical Rescue Team in Westchester County and there is a Rope Team in Orange County.

Legislator Nacerino questioned how many members will there be.

Bureau of Emergency Services Deputy Commissioner Robert Lipton stated after an initial canvas there are 30 – 35 people who are interested. He stated that they would like to increase it up to 40 -45. He stated to do a rescue it takes a large number of resources in the background.

Legislator LoBue requested an example of when this team would be needed. She stated Putnam County currently has the Sheriff's ERT (Emergence Response Team), which is a special team. She requested clarification that the Technical Rescue Team would be in addition to the fire departments.

Deputy Commissioner Lipton confirmed that was correct.

Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Anthony Sutton stated that this type of training and specialization in a fire department is not warranted. He stated to have such a team throughout the County and offer mutual aid across the borders will be beneficial. He stated there have been many cases at Breakneck Mountain. He stated also you need rescuers who are trained to rescue a person who has fallen into a confined space. He stated if the rescuers are not trained in these “technical rescue” situations, the risk is that the rescuer could become another victim.

Legislator Scuccimarra stated that the amount of hikers who have needed emergency assistance while hiking Breakneck Ridge is having a negative affect on the local fire department and Firefighters. She stated it also pulls the volunteer Firefighters away from being available to respond to fire calls. She stated the New York State Parks Department (NYS Parks) does a wonderful job responding also. She stated that the NYS Parks employees do not treat injured hikers, they are called out when people are lost. She stated that a “Technical Rescue” team would absolutely be an asset to the western side of the County relative to reducing some of the stress on them that comes from the popular hiking sites in that area of the County. She stated that it is reported that there are 1,000 people hiking Breakneck Ridge Mountain per weekend.

Legislator LoBue stated that there needs to be some signs and action taken in terms of enforcement of safety for the hikers. She stated she has hesitation to support the creation of another rescue team to address the issues of Breakneck Ridge Mountain.

Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Anthony Sutton stated that it is not the only reason.

Legislator LoBue stated she would like to hear what they are.

Deputy Commissioner Lipton stated that there are rescues of drivers who go over embankments where the need for a Technical Rescue Team is present.

Legislator LoBue questioned none of the current rescue responders, Police, Firefighters and ERT are not trained to handle those situations.

Deputy Commissioner Lipton stated those scenarios require rope angle training. He stated that the current emergency responders are not trained in that.

Legislator LoBue stated she is requesting that the necessity be explained as to why the Technical Rescue Team is needed.

Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Anthony Sutton stated in layman’s terms the ERT, is a swat team. He stated that they are well trained to handle, a terrorist attack, an armed intruder etc. He stated that is their specialty. He stated the Technical Rescue Team members are trained on specific rescue techniques. He stated to rescue an individual who has gone over an

embankment, it takes knowledge of how to use, ropes, pulleys, and how to use mechanical advantage to pull an individual up to safety, while keeping the rescuer from becoming another victim in the scenario. He stated there are rescues of people who have fallen down elevator shafts which would require the skills of a Technical Rescue Team. He stated in regards to a Firefighter, a rescue on Breakneck Mountain is much different in terms of needed skills versus saving a person from a fire. He stated that he sees this proposal as one that will bring added rescue resources to Putnam County. He stated the good news is they are doing it with grant funding.

Legislator Nacerino questioned if there is a Technical Rescue Team in Westchester and Dutchess.

Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Anthony Sutton stated that there is a team in Westchester, no team in Dutchess and there is a rope team in Orange County.

Legislator Jonke stated it was mentioned earlier that the DEC rescued a person on Breakneck Ridge Mountain. He questioned if they have a team.

Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Anthony Sutton stated that was a unique situation. He stated a hiker along the trail discovered a body in a tree. He stated in that case it became a recovery not a rescue. He stated the DEC was brought in because it is State property, it was a crime scene and there were a number of other reasons the DEC had to be there.

Legislator Jonke questioned does the DEC have a rescue team.

Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Anthony Sutton stated they do have rescue capabilities and they have a lot of resources. He stated in a case when you are not pressed for time and can wait for them to get to the scene, they are qualified.

Sergeant Bill Meyers stated it was the State Park Police that handled the recovery case on Breakneck Ridge Mountain and brought in Rangers.

Lynne Eckardt Town of Southeast Councilwoman stated she understands grant funding will be used to form this team. She questioned what would be the ongoing costs of said team.

Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Anthony Sutton stated most of the equipment they use is purchased once. He stated the ongoing cost would be replenishing of ropes, which he does not have a dollar figure on that at this time.

Legislator LoBue stated the training would probably be the most expensive cost.

Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Anthony Sutton stated that the initial training will be required. He stated after that it will be more the team training together after that. He stated that they do have expertise on the part of members who do have certifications and are actual climbers, that is added benefit to the team.

Sergeant Bill Meyers stated that he believes there are grants available that will fund the cost of ongoing training.

Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Anthony Sutton stated that is a possibility. He stated that he hesitates to say that because there is no certainty with a grant application nor is there certainty in the future of the State's grant program in general.

Lynne Eckardt Town of Southeast Councilwoman questioned if Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Anthony Sutton is saying the help from across the river or wherever it comes from that currently responds to these types of calls is inadequate.

Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Anthony Sutton stated he would not say inadequate. He stated he would say the issue is timeliness, familiarity with the area that the work would need to be done. He stated also you never know what will be going on in the world when you need that asset. He stated it is good to have the capability in house.

Lynne Eckardt Town of Southeast Councilwoman questioned if the Putnam County team would be called to assist in other areas.

Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Anthony Sutton confirmed that is correct. He stated the expectation is that the majority of work would be done in Putnam County.

Lynne Eckardt Town of Southeast Councilwoman questioned if he thinks the majority of the work will be done on the western side of the County.

Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Anthony Sutton stated there are many things that can happen that the Technical Rescue Team would respond to.

Legislator Nacerino questioned if Putnam County has had to call in the Westchester or Orange County Teams.

Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Anthony Sutton stated yes they have had Westchester respond and they have had Orange County respond several times.

Legislator Jonke requested clarification in terms of the grant. He questioned if the funding is being applied for or has the County been awarded it.

Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Anthony Sutton stated the County has received \$150,000. He stated approximately two (2) years ago approval was given by the Legislature to apply for the grant.

Legislator Jonke stated if there are going to be many rescues conducted by said team on State Parkland property, he believes there should be some contribution from the State to keep this the team going and educated.

Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Anthony Sutton stated that there are in-kind services. He stated the State Office of Fire Prevention and Control have a lot of certified trainers. He stated they have been working with Putnam County to help establish the Technical Rescue Team and to help do the basic training.

Chairman Gouldman made a motion to approve the Creation of Technical Rescue Team; Seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

Item #5 - Approval/Resolution/Creation of The Hazardous Materials Response Team and The Fire Investigation Team/Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Anthony Sutton

Chairman Gouldman stated that currently the County has these two (2) teams The Hazardous Materials Response Team and The Fire Investigation Team. He stated the teams offer support to the local fire departments throughout the County. He stated this request is to establish an in County Code for these teams.

Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Anthony Sutton stated he did some research as did the Clerk of the Legislature to see if either of these teams was ever officially formed. He stated it was found that they were never formally established by the Legislature. He stated the County's Fire Police Team was formally established by this County. He stated the Fire Investigation Team is very active and has a lot of members and has been involved in a lot of investigations all over the County. He stated the responsibility of a Fire Chief is to identify the origin of a fire. He stated the Fire Chiefs do not necessarily have that experience or training. He stated that the Fire Investigation Team has been around for a very long time and are very successful. He stated as had the Hazardous Materials Response Team. He stated for clarification the role of the Hazardous Material Response Team is to contain the event, not clean it up. He stated once that is done then it is the job of the DEC or the person/agency that caused the spill to clean it up. If the responsible person/agency cannot be identified then there is a fund set up in the State of New York administered by the Department of Environmental Conservation and they will contract a company to clean up the spill. He stated the request tonight is to formalize the establishment of these two (2) vital teams.

Chairman Gouldman made a motion to approve a Resolution documenting the Creation of The Hazardous Materials Response Team and The Fire Investigation Team; Seconded by Legislator Castellano. All in favor.

Item#6 - Approval/Fund Transfer (17T131)/Buy Replacement ERT Uniforms/Sheriff's Department

Sergeant Meyer stated this request is to move 2016 State Homeland Security funding from the "other equipment" budget line to "uniforms".

Chairman Gouldman questioned how many uniforms will be bought.

Sergeant Meyer stated it will be uniforms for the entire team, which is 23 members.

Legislator LoBue stated there is no cost breakdown back up provided with this request.

Sergeant Meyer stated he apologized for that. He stated the person in charge of placing the orders for the uniforms is on vacation.

Legislator LoBue questioned if a breakdown could be prepared and sent for review as backup to the July 24th Audit and Administration meeting.

Sergeant Meyer confirmed that will be done. He repeated that these funds are 100% grant funds with no County match. He stated it has already been approved, allocated and there is a contract on it.

Legislator Jonke questioned what would be the most expensive part of the uniform. He stated it works out to be approximate \$1,500 per member.

Sergeant Meyer stated the winter jacket is approximately \$350.

Legislator Jonke stated that he would like the cost breakdown, documenting the cost of \$1,500 per member.

Sergeant Meyer stated that he will get that information to the Legislature in time for the July 24th Audit & Administration Meeting. He stated that the ERT Team is run with 100% funding for equipment and training.

Lynne Eckardt Town of Southeast Councilwoman questioned where are the uniforms purchased, she wondered if they are bought from the same place that provides the other uniforms for the Sheriff's Department.

Sergeant Meyer stated 99% is through a New York State Contract. He stated the price is set by the State.

Chairman Gouldman made a motion to approve to the Audit & Administration Meeting /Fund Transfer (17T131)/Buy Replacement ERT Uniforms/Sheriff's Department; Seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

Item #7 - Approval/Grant application/State Senators Murphy and Serino/Undersheriff Boscia

Sergeant Meyer stated this is earmarked funding, a contract with the State will be developed. He stated the Sheriff's Department wants to use the funding to build out security features at their command post. He stated as an example they want to install a camera on top of the command post, because there are no windows in the command post. He stated that they also want to enhance the radio equipment.

Legislator Castellano questioned if a drone could be purchased with this funding.

Sergeant Meyer stated he believes that would be an option. He stated there are some things still to work out relative to the use of a drone.

Legislator Jonke stated that he believes the drone technology still needs to evolve a bit.

Chairman Gouldman stated that the Committee does not need to approve this. He requested that Legislative Counsel Robert Firriolo speak to this process.

Legislative Counsel Robert Firriolo stated that the Code states the Legislature shall review all grant applications and subsequent renewals whether or not it is matching. He clarified that there is no approval required when there is no matching amount connected to a grant application.

Item #8 - Update/Traffic Safety Board Member/G. Gentile

Chairman Gouldman stated per correspondence from Sheriff Smith dated July 13, 2107, effective August of 2016 Mr. Guy Gentile was no longer a resident of Putnam County. He stated therefore his appointment to the Putnam County Traffic Safety Board ended at that time.

Legislator LoBue questioned if Mr. Gentile's name has been removed from the Traffic Safety Board's on-line roster.

Sergeant Meyer stated that it has been removed.

Item #9 - Other Business

a. Discussion/Legislature To Send a Letter of Support/Governor Approve-Volunteer Firefighters Cancer Benefit Coverage

Legislator LoBue stated she would like the Legislature to write a letter to the Governor regarding Insurance Coverage for the Volunteer Firefighters. She stated the Legislature did memorialize the initial action earlier this year. She stated there is an effort to secure insurance coverage for the volunteer Firefighters relative to job related cancer conditions. She stated the Bill has been successfully passed through the New York State Senate and Assembly. She stated it is now on the desk of the Governor waiting to be signed. She stated she would like a letter to be sent to the Governor urging his support.

Chairman Gouldman requested that the Clerk prepare a letter to the Governor requesting his support of the said matter. He thanked Legislator LoBue for bringing this suggested action forward.

Item #8 - Adjournment

There being no further business, at 8:25 p.m., Chairman Gouldman made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Legislator Jonke. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Deputy Clerk of The Legislature Diane Trubulsky.