

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: FIRE PREVENTION & CONTROL (Including Office of Emergency Services)

DATE: SEPTEMBER 27, 2007

Committee Members Present:

Supervisors VanNess  
Bentley  
Belden  
Haskell  
Geraghty  
Girard  
Sokol

Others Present:

Marvin Lemery, Director, Office of Emergency Svces.  
Karen Putney, Administrator, Fire Prevention &  
Building Code Enforcement Department  
William Thomas, Chairman  
Joan Sady, Clerk, Board of Supervisors  
JoAnn McKinstry, Deputy Commissioner of Adminis-  
trative & Fiscal Services  
Trish Nenninger, Second Assistant County Attorney  
Supervisor Stec  
Supervisor Mason  
Supervisor Gabriels  
Representing Warren-Washington Counties  
Regional Emergency Services Training Center  
Committee:  
Brian LaFlure  
Charles T. Mellon, Jr.  
James Clarke, the Laberge Group  
Peter Wohl, Vice-president, Economic Development  
Corporation Warren County, New York  
Katy Goodman, Secretary to the Clerk

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Mr. VanNess called the meeting of the Office of Emergency Services Committee to order at 10:46 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. Geraghty and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk.

Mr. VanNess stated Karen Putney, Administrator of the Fire Prevention & Building Code Enforcement Department, was present to discuss a resolution request with the Committee members.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Mrs. Putney and she distributed copies of a Request for Transfer of Funds to the Committee members, a copy of which is on file with the minutes. Mr. VanNess noted the request was for \$830 and it was to purchase furniture. He reminded the Committee members that the Fire Prevention & Building Code Enforcement Department had recently been separated to form the Office of Emergency Services.

Mrs. Putney advised the office chairs for the Department's clients and a larger desk for one of the

Building Inspectors were purchased from the eBay on-line auction site. She explained the funds being transferred were to purchase the remainder of the chairs that were needed for the Office which would be at State contract prices.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden and seconded by Mr. Sokol to approve the Transfer of Funds, as presented. Mrs. Putney confirmed for Mr. Belden that the funds were in her budget. The motion was carried unanimously, and was referred to the Finance Committee. A copy of the Transfer of Funds is on file with the minutes.

Mr. VanNess stated there was another issue that pertained to the Fire Prevention and Building Code Enforcement Department. He advised when Mrs. Putney was appointed to the position of Administrator of the Department the salary was set by resolution; however, the salary did not include her longevities and it should have. Mr. VanNess stated a resolution was needed to add the longevities to the salary.

Motion was made by Mr. Geraghty, seconded by Mr. Girard and carried unanimously to include longevities in Mrs. Putney's salary and to refer the same to the Personnel Committee. A copy of a resolution request form is on file with the minutes. *(Note: The salary was set by Resolution No. 512 of 2007 which would be amended to include the longevities.)*

Mrs. Putney thanked the Committee members and she left the meeting at 10:48 a.m.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Marvin Lemery, Director of the Office of Emergency Services, who distributed copies of his Agenda and an attachment for the meeting. Copies of the items are on file with the minutes.

Messrs. Stec and Mason entered the meeting at 10:49 a.m.

Mr. Lemery commenced with review of Agenda Item No. 2 A - C. *(Note: Agenda Item No. 1 concerned the aforementioned items for the Building Code Enforcement Department.)*

Mr. Lemery stated Item No. 2 A was a referral from the DPW Committee which he did not recall had been referred before. He noted he had received the item from the Clerk of the Board's Office and it was that Brian LaFlure, (County) Systems Maintenance Coordinator, and he would make a final attempt to inventory areas of the County that lacked (emergency) radio service. Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, advised the item was on the DPW Committee's Agenda last year at the time there were some problems with the emergency radio system. Mr. Lemery stated he thought the situation had been resolved. Mr. Belden stated he was the Chairman of the DPW Committee, and the problem was that the request was not referred to the appropriate Department.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden to refer the request from the DPW Committee to the Fire Prevention & Control Committee. He stated the radio system should be handled by the Office of

Emergency Services. Mr. Geraghty seconded the motion.

Mr. VanNess advised he thought the DPW Committee had wanted the communications aspect of the radio system handled by the appropriate Department. Although, he stated, at this time there was not an issue with the radio system any future issues with it would come to this Committee. Mr. Belden concurred.

Mr. VanNess called the question and the motion was carried unanimously.

Mr. Lemery stated the second Pending Item was that Mr. VanNess would discuss the danger of solar panels with local fire departments. He noted according to the aforementioned Pending Items List, that particular issue was mentioned at the September 7, 2007 Board of Supervisors' meeting by George Weinschenk of Lake George. Mr. VanNess noted that Mr. Weinschenk had also raised the issue of the cable that runs through electric cars. He commented he thought Mr. Weinschenk's point was that the County should provide more training for emergency services workers. Mr. VanNess reported there was a training session scheduled through the West Glens Falls Fire Department in the near future and that training relative to electric cars was provided continuously.

Mr. Lemery explained there were two issues relative to solar panels and the first was that there were some types that would still generate electricity when the power was off. The second problem, he said, was that occasionally people fell through the standard panels. Mr. Lemery commented he would guess that Mr. Weinschenk was concerned about the panels that would remain energized; and Mr. Stec confirmed that was correct.

Mr. Belden noted many homeowners now owned emergency generators and that in cases of fires on private properties, the firemen might not know that the generators were there, their locations and if they were turned on which could also cause problems for firemen. Mr. VanNess queried if perhaps the County could set up a way to notify fire departments about generators on private properties and if they were in use. He suggested perhaps informational placards could be placed in a home's window with the necessary information. Mr. Lemery advised the issues of generators and solar power were not addressed in the Uniform Building Code. He stated a local law would have to be developed that would require County residents to inform the County's Communications Center that their homes were equipped with generators or solar power. Mr. Lemery suggested if that were done, the Communications Center could include the information on the 911 System screens. Mr. Geraghty suggested that the Fire Coordinator's Office send out a safety letter to all the fire departments in the County on the matter. Mr. Stec commented in favor of the information being put into the 911 System.

Mr. VanNess advised that Trish Nenninger, Second Assistant County Attorney, who was present at the meeting, would look into what the County could do regarding a notification process by property owners.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Brian LaFlure, (County) Systems Maintenance Coordinator, who noted that any information provided to the Communications Center would have to be continuously updated. He suggested that either through a local law or a safety presentation any vendors who sold generators or property owners that had them should be required to place a sign or sticker on their electric meter that the building had an alternate power source. He stated utility repairmen, as well as firemen, should know about generator usage. Mr. LaFlure noted perhaps the County Printshop could print the stickers or electric supply businesses could be approached to donate them for electricians to place on the meters when they installed the generators. Mr. Sokol suggested a newspaper article might be helpful; and Mr. Lemery responded that he would contact *The Post-Star* to arrange that. Mr. VanNess reiterated the County Attorney's Office would pursue the possibility of drafting a local law and would report back to the Committee at the next meeting.

Mr. Lemery stated Agenda Item No. 2 B was a presentation on the status of the Regional Emergency Services Training Center (RESTC) by representatives of the Warren-Washington Counties RESTC Committee. He noted Mr. LaFlure, the Deputy Fire Coordinator, was a member of that Committee. Mr. Lemery introduced Charles Mellon, Jr., Chief of the Bay Ridge Fire Department, as well as Warren County's representative and Chairman of the RESTC Committee, and James Clarke, who represented the Laberge Group (site evaluation firm).

Mr. Lemery reminded the Committee members that at a recent Committee meeting the development of the Site Evaluation Matrix for the Training Center project was discussed. He advised that two weeks ago the RESTC Committee representatives made the same presentation that would be shown today to the Washington County Board of Supervisors' Public Safety Committee. He stated Mr. VanNess represented this Committee at that meeting. Mr. Lemery advised after the presentation they had asked the Public Safety Committee to pass a resolution of support for the work that had been done to date on the project and to authorize them to continue on to the next step with the Laberge Group. However, he noted, he was not sure whether the Board of Supervisors had received a copy of Washington County's resolution yet.

Mr. VanNess stated the presentation of the Site Evaluation Matrix would show the final four properties that the RESTC Committee had determined should be considered as the possible location for the Training Center. He explained the intent of today's presentation was to seek the Committee's permission to authorize the Laberge Group to proceed with a final study of the four properties. Mr. VanNess emphasized that a decision would not be made today on what the final site would be.

Regarding Washington County's resolution, Mr. VanNess stated pursuant to the aforementioned meeting with the Public Safety Committee he was sure they would receive something in writing very soon.

Mr. LaFlure proceeded with a power point presentation entitled, "Warren-Washington County Regional Emergency Training Center Site Evaluation Matrix". Copies of the power point

presentation and copies of an enlargement of the list of the possible sites that were considered were distributed to the Committee members. The properties under final consideration for the site were highlighted in blue on the enlarged list. Copies of the handouts are on file with the minutes.

Discussion ensued as Mr. LaFlure responded to the Committee members' questions on various aspects of the Site Evaluation Matrix. Mr. Stec suggested that the two separate properties at ACC be considered as Nos. 1 a and b instead of two separate pieces in order to allow another site to be included in the total number to be evaluated.

Mr. Haskell entered the meeting at 11:09 a.m.

Relative to Site No. 8, River Street Ciba-Geigy Plant, Mr. Belden stated he thought the Counties would have to check with the (State) Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) before that property could be used as a site. Mr. VanNess referred the question to James Clarke, of the Laberge Group.

Mr. VanNess stated that contrary to a comment at a recent meeting concerning the Training Center that the Laberge Group had been paid was incorrect. He apprised that to date the firm had not been paid anything because the contract stipulated they would only be paid to evaluate the final sites the RESTC Committee had selected. Mr. VanNess advised the RESTC Committee had prepared the Site Evaluation Matrix.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Mr. Clarke. Mr. VanNess stated in the RESTC Committee's early discussions on the Ciba-Geigy property the question was raised about whether or not the ground there could be dug up; and he asked Mr. Clarke if the firm had been able to look at the property. Mr. Clarke replied they had not been able to do an engineering study or any research on the property for a study. Mr. VanNess stated he had advised Paul Dusek, the County Attorney, that in his discussion with the former County DPW Superintendent the ground at the Ciba-Geigy property had been sealed so it would not be a favorable site for the Training Center.

Mr. Stec remarked the Town of Queensbury would be impacted the most by the location of the Training Center. He noted although there had been public resistance to some of the potential sites he felt that most people agreed the Center was needed and that it had to be located where there was infrastructure, etc. Mr. Stec stated the town residents who would be the closest to the facility would need to understand that it would be permitted and that it would not pollute the air or ground water and that other issues such as traffic and in particular the height of the building would be addressed relative to the final site.

Mr. Gabriels entered the meeting at 11:14 a.m.

Mr. VanNess stated those issues could not be resolved until the Laberge Group was authorized to evaluate the recommended sites and provide their findings to the two Counties. Mr. Clarke stated most of the major points had been covered in the Matrix process and it was now time to

move ahead with a feasibility study. He advised that part of the final process would involve a series of public awareness workshops.

Mr. Lemery advised there were some time constraints relative to the term of the Shared Municipal Services Grant for the Training Center project. He stated they would like to apply for more grant funds for the project. Mr. Lemery apprised that currently between the two Counties there was about \$620,000 in the Capital Project and \$400,000 for the grant award. However, he said, he did not think the grant agreement had been executed yet. Mr. Lemery referred the question to Trish Nenninger, Second Assistant County Attorney.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Ms. Nenninger, and she stated the grant application had cited ACC as the location for the Training Center and the initial term of the grant was from 2006 through May 2008. She advised they did have the grant agreement and it had not been executed. Ms. Nenninger explained she had spoken with the Department of State and they were aware of the status of the project and they anticipated that the agreement would need to be extended to allow for the project to be completed. She advised the State also concurred that the project would still be done through the Shared Municipal Services Grant. Ms. Nenninger stated after the site selection process was completed, if the two Counties agreed on a site, the agreement would be executed. They would keep the State informed on the status of the project, she added.

Mr. VanNess stated he had spoken with Assemblywoman Teresa Sayward and Mr. Lemery had also spoken with some of the Legislators relative to the issue that ACC was named in the agreement as the site for the Training Center. He advised that pursuant to those discussions they understood from the Legislators that the agreement could be annexed to name a different site if that should become necessary. Mr. Lemery noted they needed to complete this process and perhaps they would apply for a second grant.

At Mr. VanNess' request, Mr. Lemery reviewed the properties to be considered which were as follows: 1) ACC East and ACC West; 2) the Ciba-Geigy Plant on River Street; 3) the County's Earlton property on Dix Avenue; and 4) Phase II Airport Industrial Park property. Dialogue ensued between Mr. VanNess and Mr. Clarke on the properties the Laberge Group was under contract to evaluate. Mr. Clarke responded the contract was for three properties. Mr. VanNess queried if based on the discussion earlier in the meeting, the ACC properties could be considered as Nos. 1 a and b instead of two separate pieces. Mr. Clarke replied in the agreement the three properties were not named in terms of specifics. He advised that at a previous meeting the firm had agreed that part of their responsibilities were to link ACC's two properties together. Then, he said, technically on the aforementioned Site Evaluation Matrix list there would be four sites which would be considered under the firm's basic services.

Mr. VanNess concluded the three properties the Committee had agreed to have evaluated would be ACC East and ACC West as one piece, Warren County - Earlton from the Dix Avenue side and the Ciba-Geigy Plant site. Mr. Lemery concurred.

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Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, and seconded by Mr. Belden to approve that the aforementioned properties would be evaluated by the Laberge Group. Ms. Nenninger advised those were the same properties that the Washington County Board of Supervisors had approved. Mr. VanNess called the question and the motion was carried unanimously.

There being no further business to come before the Committee on motion by Mr. Belden and seconded by Mr. Girard, Mr. VanNess adjourned the meeting at 11:23 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Katy Goodman, Secretary to the Clerk