

**PUBLIC SAFETY AND LEGAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**  
**WILBER, FARWELL, FRAZIER, STAMMEL, MICKLE**  
**May 12, 2021**  
**2:30 p.m.**

Under the current COVID-19 emergency/Executive orders, this committee meeting was not physically open to the public at the County Office Building. The meeting was streamed via facebookLIVE.

Members: Representative Wilber – present, via Zoom  
Representative Farwell - present, via Zoom  
Representative Frazier – absent  
Representative Stammel – present, via Zoom  
Representative Mickle – present, via Zoom

Also present via Zoom: Art Klingler, Coordinator Emergency Services; Victor Jones, Assistant Coordinator Emergency Services; Rob O'Brien, E-911 Director; Penney Gentile, Personnel Officer; Allen Ruffles, County Treasurer; Representative Marietta; Jim Empie, Worcester Fire Chief and David LeClair

Representative Wilber mentioned this was a special meeting to discuss potential EMS services throughout the county and to also move forward with some sort of support for a fly car, ambulance and paid medical staff to back up and support town and village ambulance services. The discussion included but not limited to the following:

- Allen Ruffles discussed potential funding and mentioned that this would meet the requirements of the American Rescue Act money but had funding fears of ongoing/annual operating costs.
- Penney Gentile mentioned two positions that would need to be created: a Basic Life Support Technician and an Advanced Life Support Technician, both to provide more services than an EMT and a grade slightly lower than a Licensed Practical Nurse. Ms. Gentile mentioned these positions could be proposed at the June PSLA Meeting.
- Rob O'Brien asked about clarification on how to officially move this forward and what is the process of formalizing the department; by a Local Law.
- Victor Jones mentioned regarding the Municipal Certificate of Need, when it's ready to be filed, we will need to be on the road within 30 days of the application.

- Rob O'Brien mentioned he has discussed with Onondaga the procedure for obtaining a secondhand ambulance, will have to go to bid based on specifications and turn around in about 30 days or the RFP for ambulance billing that would take about 60 days.
- Jim Empie asked if the county considered to start with two fly cars instead of an ambulance and a fly car. It was determined by Emergency Services and E-911 that there are areas in the county where an ambulance would be more appropriate than a fly car as where they cannot secure a fireman driver and get a volunteer ambulance to respond. Chief Empie mentioned that Schoharie County is using some of their Covid relief funds to update three new fly cars. Chief Empie suggested that foundations might be a source to provide for this benefit.
- Representative Marietta feels it will be a challenge asking foundations to give money to the county. The county could have much more control over a separate corporation or a non-profit organization. And, structurally there may be more flexibility through a non-profit.
- David LeClair mentioned getting and maintaining personnel will be difficult. Long-term plans need to be considered such as maintaining equipment, a back-up and a plan, and a plan to keep it going. Mr. LeClair mentioned there are grants available to purchase equipment and the ambulance itself. Mr. LeClair said that EMS people move around quite often and go where the money is; need to offer good benefits and hire proper staff. And, becoming a paramedic is an expensive process to not get much benefit in return.
- Representative Wilber asked if it's possible to have people trained as a Dispatcher and people trained as EMS, they could be flexible, depending on need to either sit on the 911 Center or be in the back of an ambulance. More information is needed on the pay scale.
- Victor Jones mentioned if the county becomes their own EMS agency, they are subject to reimbursement for their EMS providers to renew certifications through the State of New York and training reimbursement through the CME (Continuing Medical Education) Program: EMT \$300 and Paramedic \$500, recertification is every 3 years to maintain their certification.

There being no further business to discuss, Representative Farwell moved to adjourn. Seconded, Mickle. Total: 2,486. Ayes: 2,047; Absent: 439- Frazier. Motion carried.