

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

Members: Chairwoman Nacerino & Legislators Sayegh, Sullivan

Wednesday

March 9, 2022

(Immediately Followed the Rules Comm Mtg.)

The meeting was called to order at 7:50PM by Chairwoman Nacerino who requested Legislator Sullivan lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislators Sayegh, Sullivan and Chairwoman Nacerino were present.

Item #3 - Approval/ Protective Services Meeting Minutes/ February 10, 2022

Chairwoman Nacerino stated the minutes were accepted as submitted.

Item #4 - Update/ Community Engagement & Police Advisory Board (CEPAB)/ CEPAB Member Jenie Fu

Chairwoman Nacerino welcomed Scott Rhodes and Ronald Reid, members of the CEPAB.

CEPAB Chairman Scott Rhodes stated he would be providing an update on the work the CEPAB has been doing during the last quarter. He stated they held a roundtable with community stakeholders in January of 2022. He stated data was collected from the roundtable issues concerning public interaction with law enforcement. He explained from the discussion the following were identified: staff diversity, cultural understanding, communication with residents and non-enforcement engagement with the public are all important to the residents of Putnam County. He stated the CEPAB has had discussions with Sheriff McConville and his Captains: Junjulas, Knox, and Greenough. He stated the Sheriff and his Captains updated the CEPAB on their implementations and improvements to their team and the actions their teams are undertaking in their departments. He stated they discussed the key recommendations that came from the 2021 Police Policy Review Panel. He stated Sheriff McConville has offered to provide a demonstration of the use of Body Cameras to the members of the CEPAB and of the community in the future. He stated the CEPAB plans to continue to have ongoing discussions with members of the public and law enforcement on a regular basis. He stated they have found such meetings to be very productive. He stated they look forward to working with Sheriff McConville and appreciate his openness to work and partner with the members of the CEPAB.

CEPAB Member Ronald Reid reported during last month's Black History Month, there was a four (4) series event which culminated on February 26th on the steps of the Historic Courthouse. He stated that he and Scott Rhodes were presented with a Commendation Award, by State Senator Peter Harckham for their leadership and commitment to bettering the community. He stated Putnam County Historian Jennifer Cassidy did an awesome job with the information she compiled in honor of Black History Month. He stated he was not aware of the depth of Black History that was in Putnam County. He continued to speak to their February 26th event. He stated they are currently working and planning on the 2nd Annual Cultural Festival. He stated the

Putnam Cultural Festival is an important event for the CEPAB mission of community engagement. He stated the event will bring together visitors, local businesses, artists, musicians and meet community officials. He stated the event will be held again at the Tilly Foster Farm on Sunday, May 29, 2022.

CEPAB Chairman Scott Rhodes stated he would like to publicly recognize Ronald Reid for all of the work that he did to pull together the 1st Annual Cultural Festival, in a very short period of time, approximately three (3) weeks. He stated there were approximately 500 plus community members there. He stated this year they project to have over 2,000. He stated the goal of this event is to bring the whole community together, all walks of life, all races, all colors, all creeds so we can have better dialogue and communication amongst everyone.

CEPAB Member Ronald Reid stated that at the May 29th event there will be food trucks, musical acts and performers and more children's activities. He stated our main goal is to do good. He stated he spoke with Sheriff McConville regarding having a "Putnam Sleighride" program during the 2022 Christmas Season. He explained the main goal will be to supply toys to needy families in the area. He stated they have many details to still workout on that, but he wanted to let the Legislators know that is something CEPAB is working on.

Chairman Nacerino expressed how impressed she is with the progress CEPAB has made in moving their mission forward and in such a short time. She stated the members of CEPAB are certainly fostering a wonderful relationship with law enforcement, which is part of their objective, while raising community awareness. She stated that is being done through all of the programs CEPAB have run. She stated she plans to be at and is looking forward to the May 29th 2nd Annual Cultural Festival at Tilly Foster. She stated her congratulations on their work being recognized by Senator Harkham and being given the Commendation Award. She quoted sections from the newspaper article.

Sheriff McConville stated a few days ago there was a meeting held at the Sheriff's Department with members of CEPAB. He stated the meeting was scheduled for an hour and it went about two (2) hours. He stated we all enjoyed the honest and respectful exchange of information and plans of how to bring the community and law enforcement together. He stated they are excited and look forward to working with the representatives of this group.

Legislator Sullivan stated his appreciation to Scott Rhodes and Ronald Reid for tonight's update and for their work and efforts to moving the group so far along. He stated he remembers the early discussions and questions related to the formation of the group and what its mission will be. He stated he believes the CEPAB Members have broadened it so much more than what was originally spoken of. He expressed his appreciation and support.

CEPAB Member Ronald Reid stated for the record he would like to recognize that they have given some of the CEPAB members positions: Secretary Tony Salas, Treasurer Denis Cohan, Chairman Scott Rhodes, Co-Chairs Ronald Reid and Jenie Fu.

Legislator Sayegh stated during the discussions of the Police Advisory Board, which this group formed from, it was always about community engagement, dialogue with law enforcement, and

diversity. She stated you have certainly brought all of that here to us in your update tonight. She stated her appreciation for all that they have done. She stated she was at the 2021 Cultural Festival, and she is looking forward to this years. She stated the 2021 Cultural Festival was very vibrant and cannot imagine how that event was pulled together in three (3) weeks that is amazing. She stated she agrees with the phenomenal job Putnam County Historian Jennifer Cassidy did for Black History Month. She stated she looks forward to working with the CEPAB.

Legislator Albano stated he totally agrees with what Ronald Reid said to sum up the work they are doing, "it is to do good". He expressed his support and appreciation.

Legislator Jonke stated we always like to thank our volunteers. He stated the CEPAB organization was formed during COVID, when we could not get together. He stated it could have been very easy to let this thing fade away. He stated he gives them all the credit in the world and his thanks that they were able to bring it all together, it is growing, and he hopes for nothing but the best in the future. He stated his thanks.

Legislator Castellano stated he thoroughly enjoyed a zoom meeting he participated on with CEPAB and the County Historian. He stated there was such rich history shared, which he was unaware of. He stated he too, looks forward to more events like that.

Legislator Addonizio stated her appreciation for the fine work they are doing.

CEPAB Chairman Scott Rhodes stated Jenie Fu sends her regards. He explained unfortunately she had a conflict in her work schedule and was unable to be present this evening.

Item#5 - Discussion/ Proposal- Formation of Advance Life Support (ALS) Oversight Committee/ Members of the P.C. Fire Advisory Board Chris Tobin & Justyn Lewis (tabled from February Meeting)

Chairwoman Nacerino welcomed Assistant Chief North Highlands Fire Department & FAB Member Chris Tobin to speak to this matter. She stated she first wanted to state that the Fire Advisory Board (FAB) does not require Legislative approval to form an Advance Life Support Oversight Committee (ALS).

Assistant Chief North Highlands Fire Department & FAB Member Chris Tobin stated as the representative of the FAB they want to know the best way to go about forming the proposed ALS Oversight Committee for it to have an impact. He provided scenarios of different situations when the FAB has requested answers to questions and they have not gotten the answers. He stated there was a Task Force formed that they were a part of. He stated they made their recommendations related to the newly approved ALS Contract. He stated the recommendations they made are not reflected in the new contract. He stated the opinion of the FAB members is that the Commissioner and some of his administration at the Putnam County Bureau of Emergency Services (BES) have moved forward with their own agenda. He stated after the approval of the recent ALS contract with Ambulnz, with no regard to their input, the questions are being asked by the FAB members, why bother to even form the ALS Oversight Committee if we will be ignored. He stated he wished BES Commissioner Clair and a representative from Ambulnz were present, since he has reached out to both of them and have not received a

response. He continued to speak to some of the other problems he is hearing about amongst the County's first responders. He stated he is receiving reports of long response times etc. He stated they are facing challenges in getting the necessary information to bill their calls. He stated if he needs to communicate through the BES Commissioner and that individual does not respond or take his calls what is his recourse. He stated that is how the proposal of the ALS Oversight Committee came about.

Chairwoman Nacerino requested that Assistant Chief North Highlands Fire Department & FAB Member Chris Tobin explain how the proposed committee would alleviate and take care of these issues.

Assistant Chief North Highlands Fire Department & FAB Member Chris Tobin explained the proposed committee would provide a place to the members to go and work through the obstacles they are facing. He stated many of the members are reluctant to speak openly about these matters in an open forum for fear of backlash.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated she has been the Legislative Representative to the FAB for over a year. She stated she has seen the level of frustration, from a lot of the members, that is being spoken about this evening. She stated she is still not clear how the proposed ALS Oversight Committee will assist.

Assistant Chief North Highlands Fire Department & FAB Member Chris Tobin stated that is what they are not clear about in terms of how they can legally form the proposed committee so that it has authority. He stated the lack of information coming from the County's BES, he stated for clarity, is not unique to this current BES staff as it has been going on for years.

Chairwoman Nacerino facilitated further discussion.

Chairwoman Nacerino questioned Legislative Counsel Robert Firriolo if the FAB could have the proposed committee report to the Legislature.

Legislative Counsel Robert Firriolo stated the FAB already has that authority. He stated the FAB is created in New York State County Law and it has specific advisory roles to the Legislature as well as a specific advisory role to the EMS Commissioner. He stated they are also considered County Officers. He stated they have an official role they are not an ad hoc group. He stated their role is an advisory board, so they can contact directly the Legislature, the Administration or they can bring their problems to the Protective Services Committee. He questioned for clarity that when Assistant Chief North Highlands Fire Department & FAB Member Tobin states he is not getting an answer; is that as individuals or in the role of the FAB as an entity.

Assistant Chief North Highlands Fire Department & FAB Member Chris Tobin stated both.

Legislative Counsel Robert Firriolo stated the proposed Committee would be in the same position as the FAB, because their authority would be no greater than the FAB.

Chairwoman Nacerino she stated she sees the lack of communication as being at the core, and she is not pointing her finger at any one person or organization. She suggested creating the proposed ALS Oversight subcommittee, and she made the recommendation that she be a member of it or, as the liaison from the Legislature to the FAB, be designated to bring any concerns back to the Protective Services Committee. She stated that way the matters would be discussed and addressed in a public meeting. She stated that would continue an open and transparent dialogue between the BES and the FAB. She stated she believes that is a component that is severely lacking currently.

Legislator Jonke questioned what happens if the representatives needed to discuss a matter do not come to the meeting.

Chairwoman Nacerino she stated this would allow the FAB members to bring their matters to the Legislature and have them discussed, if needed, in a public meeting.

Legislator Jonke stated the BES Commissioner does not report to the Legislature. He stated on February 18, 2022, he wrote a memo to the County Executive and copied the BES Commissioner, and he has not received a response. He stated he had a follow up emailed to the BES Commissioner, and he still has not received a response back. He stated his concern for the lack of response. He stated we know there is a problem, and we are not getting answers. He stated with all due respect, setting up a committee is not going to get us answers.

Legislator Sullivan stated the Legislature is not aware of the problems Assistant Chief North Highlands Fire Department & FAB Member Chris Tobin is speaking of. He stated a subcommittee would be great, but as Legislative Counsel Robert Firriolo stated, the FAB should be coming to the Legislature currently with issues that they have and make a report to the Legislature. He stated if the FAB has a president position, that person should come to the Protective Services Committee and make a formal report regarding the issues that are going on. He stated right now it is all very hypothetical. He stated it sounds like the mechanism is already in place, its not being fully utilized, so the Legislature can act and assist.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated she does believe the proposal of the subcommittee is a good one. She explained for whatever reason many of the members are hesitant to speak up at the FAB meetings. She stated she believes a smaller subcommittee that they can speak to, and then she as the Liaison of the Committee and Chair of Protective Services can bring the issues to the forefront and would be productive. She stated collectively she sees this could raise awareness and communication. She suggested Assistant Chief North Highlands Fire Department & FAB Member Chris Tobin bring that back to the FAB and select the members to be on the subcommittee. She stated she would be receptive to that.

Legislative Counsel Robert Firriolo recommended in order to streamline communication he believes the ALS Oversight Committee should appoint a Chair of said Committee. He stated the Chair would be the one who would communicate on behalf of the Committee to whoever it is they need to communicate with. He stated forming the Committee and selecting the Chair can all be done by the FAB. He stated he believes that would facilitate getting the issues that need to be addressed out and addressed.

Assistant Chief North Highlands Fire Department & FAB Member Chris Tobin spoke to a scenario in which their requests were expressed and ignored, he questioned how that can be prevented.

Legislative Counsel Robert Firriolo stated a matter would need to come to the Legislature and it would be dealt with, as they do with any issue that involves Legislative oversight. He stated the fact remains, an advisory board only has advisory capacity. He stated an advisory board cannot be empowered to be a policy making group.

Assistant Chief North Highlands Fire Department & FAB Member Chris Tobin requested the consideration to alleviate the FAB subcommittee board and make a committee through the Legislature, so the newly formed committee would have decision making power. He continued to speak to the current level of frustration with the lack of communication and leadership.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated she suggests that the proposed ALS Oversight Committee be created, and that communication from the Chair of the newly formed committee report to the Protective Services Committee on a steady basis. She stated she believes once the awareness is raised and the discussions are conducted in public, it may have a positive effect on the current challenges in communication. She stated this can be addressed at the April FAB meeting and the formation of the subcommittee can be done.

Legislator Sullivan stated he believes it is important that we have specifics. He stated a date, time, where, and what action occurred. He stated then the Legislature can move forward with information and work to get answers. He stated to speak in generalities, it is hard to move forward with that.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated there have been many things that have occurred, and that is why Assistant Chief North Highlands Fire Department & FAB Member Chris Tobin is here.

Assistant Chief North Highlands Fire Department & FAB Member Chris Tobin stated he and many other first responders were here at the Protective Services Meeting on December 15, 2021. He stated there were many concerns raised at that meeting.

Legislator Jonke stated Legislator Sullivan asked for specifics, he stated the memo he wrote to the BES Commissioner was about a specific event. He stated my colleagues on the Legislature were all sent a copy of his February 18, 2022, memo. He stated he wants a response to his memo. He stated he wants to know why it took 30 minutes to respond to his constituent's call to the County's 911 Call Center. He stated if it had been a heart related issue there could have been a very different outcome. He stated this is a specific incident that he wrote about. He stated he does not believe a person in that position of responsibility should be allowed to go three (3) weeks without responding.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated she believes it needs to be discussed in Committee. She stated we are talking about lives that are at stake here. She stated if that is being jeopardized due to lack of communication or accountability, that is a serious problem.

Assistant Chief North Highlands Fire Department & FAB Member Chris Tobin stated he hopes this is not going to be a mere paper trail.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated the subcommittee will write to the Legislature, and the matters will be discussed at a public meeting. She stated the matters will not be swept under the rug or ignored. She stated this is critical to the responsibility that we have to the people we represent.

Legislator Sullivan questioned who Legislator Jonke wrote his memo to.

Legislator Jonke stated he wrote to the County Executive and copied BES Commissioner Clair and had an email sent, on March 2, 2022, to follow up with Commissioner Clair. He stated that he received confirmation that Commissioner Clair did receive the February 18th memo, however no response has been sent.

Legislator Addonizio stated an advantage of bringing the matters to the Legislature's Committee meetings, is that the meetings are open to the public and often there are reporters who cover the meetings, so the discussions will truly be open and transparent to everyone.

Chairwoman Nacerino stated the intent is to foster responsiveness and accountability. She stated the members of the FAB believe the formation of the ALS Oversight Committee will accomplish that, she believes they should move forward with a pilot program.

Assistant Chief North Highlands Fire Department & FAB Member Chris Tobin stated his agreement.

Item#6 - Approval/ Budgetary Amendment (21A015)/ Reimbursement Received from Geico General Insurance Co. Offset the Cost of Repairing Sheriff's Vehicle/ Sheriff Kevin McConville / (Note after this meeting 3/14/22, a corrected BA # was issued: 22A015 to reflect year 2022)

Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to approve and move to the Audit & Administration Meeting Budgetary Amendment (21A015)/ Reimbursement Received from Geico General Insurance Co. Offset the Cost of Repairing Sheriff's Vehicle; Seconded by Legislator Sullivan. All in favor.

Item #7 - FYI/ Budgetary Transfer (22T025)/ Place Approved Funding in the Correct Budget Line to pay Griffeye for Licensing Software/ Sheriff Kevin McConville

Chairwoman Nacerino stated Sheriff McConville was present to speak to this.

Sheriff Kevin McConville stated the previous administration had this listed in the budget as "Software Accessories", which is not accurate. He stated it is a licensing of the software that is required to be utilized. He stated this budgetary transfer will move the funds into the correct budget line, in the Sheriff's Department budget.

Item #8 - Other Business - None

Item #14 - Adjournment

There being no further business at 8:40 PM Chairwoman Nacerino made a motion to adjourn;
Seconded by Legislator Sullivan. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Deputy Clerk Diane Trabulsy.