



STEBEN COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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Timothy D. Marshall, Director of Public Safety
Kenneth J. Forenz, Deputy Director

FIRE ADVISORY BOARD

3/22/23

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. Everyone recited the Pledge of Allegiance and the minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

COORDINATOR'S REPORT:

Tim reported on Radio Communications. We did receive a new grant of \$5.8 million that will upgrade our system and we will be partnering with Schuyler, Chemung and Allegany counties, who also received grants. The plan is to build a single core in Steuben County with a redundant core in Allegany County, with Chemung and Schuyler coming into the system with us. It will build the redundancy by using fiber optic at our towers and microwave to be able to connect all four counties together. It will allow us to eventually go to Phase II trunking if that's the direction we decide to go to in the future. This is a very big project with a lot of work ahead of us, but we are very excited for the region. We tried to bring Livingston and Yates counties into this, but they did not get funded.

Tim reported that all of the construction work is done at the Pinnacle site, and we are just waiting on the building, generator, and then the tower erection. This should be happening within the next week or so. Then we will be getting the fiber connected and equipment moved and in place.

Tim also stated they are planning to change out the antenna at the Higman Tower site, and they have also changed from a directional antenna to an omni antenna at the Prattsburgh site. Tim said their goal is to change to omni at Mt. Washington and Perkinsville sites also. This will give a broader signal in a circumference rather than a directional pattern.

The last thing they are working on is upgrading some of the DC power plants at some of the tower sites. The system has to be converted from AC to DC because when we have a power failure it has to work off of a DC system to hold the system until the generator kicks on. These systems have been there for 30+ years. We are waiting on pricing from Motorola.

Don Fredericy asked about the command channel. Tim is going to get the policies and procedures in place, but is looking at leaving that channel for the Deputy Fire Coordinator's to initiate the use of it when they get a large scale incident.

Tim stated IAMRESPONDING has done some major updates to their program. They held a webinar last week, showing different features and options they have now. Tina explained some of the changes they have made for tracking, etc. They are doing an interface with Rapid SOS that helps provide a more accurate location for cell phone calls and will be getting more information on this before we roll it out. Tim also added that anyone that wants two-tone dispatching for their department, please contact Ken Forenz. Tim said they already have several departments doing this, but if you are having problems with pager coverage in your area, this is another option for you to reach your members. He just wanted everyone to remember that this is a third-party application and may not always work the way it is supposed to, especially when cell coverage is sketchy, or if messages get backed up during an event, etc.

Tim reported that the Risk Manager's office is again providing cancer coverage, so hopefully everyone has been in contact with them. Please contact Robyn at the Risk Manager's office, and she will be more than happy to help you.

Tim stated that regarding EMS, we are working with the attorney on the municipal CON process. They are looking to create a vacancy to fill an EMS Coordinator position that will give us a full time person to focus just on EMS. That request went to committee last week, and it will be voted on by the Legislature at the next board meeting. Once that's done, they will figure out salary, advertise, interview, and hire. They will be under Tim's direction and office.

The other thing Tim reported they are working on is a draft RFP to hopefully put out next month looking for any agency that would like to provide supplemental ambulance services for the county. Most likely it will be 2 fully staffed rigs, 24/7 to supplement what they are doing now. Tim is not sure how it will all lay out yet, but once they get the bids back, the Legislature will have to make a decision on which way to go. They are still shooting for June/July timeframe to get something up and running, but there are a lot of things that have to happen between now and then.

Tim also stated they tried to run two EMS courses last Fall – one in Corning, one in Hornell – and neither of them ran, so they scheduled a course in January in Bath. That class didn't run either. Tim did some research, and got an instructor from Schuyler County to come in and work up a very aggressive schedule to get people into the course starting in March, and finishing up by mid-July. The class started with 11 people and is currently at 9. Hammondsport is also advertising an EMT Refresher course that starts tonight, and Springway is doing an online program, with lectures available in both the afternoon and evening, with hands-on at Springway Amb.

Ed Fitzpatrick reported they are halfway through the Fire Officer I series in Campbell. The Fire Police course will be starting April 5th at the Sheriff's Office, and BEFO will be starting at the Training Center on April 24th. The EVOC in N. Hornell was cancelled due to lack of students, so they will try holding another one in Gang Mills starting April 4th. The Tactical Fireground Simulations course will be at the Training Center on Friday and Saturday, April 21st, and 22nd. There will be Firefighter Self-Rescue course at Corning City in June, and Wayne is doing a Farm Rescue course at the end of April. He will send out more information on that when he gets it.

Tim talked about the Lithium Ion battery issues and possibly getting some training on them. The State is piloting a program in Albany on this right now, and Tim will let everyone know if it becomes available in our area. They also talked about possibly bringing someone in to teach a course. Evan Brown went to Tioga County for a course on this and talked to the instructor, who would be willing to come teach a

course here in Steuben. Tim wanted to talk to the Chief's Association about covering the cost of him teaching, and possibly being able to open it up to a larger audience.

Someone asked about charging stations, and Tim stated there are about 10 stations in the municipal parking lot in downtown Bath, and he thought he heard a proposal to put more up near the west end of town. He knows there are in-home charging stations around the area too.

Tim reminded everything that departments need to get their resolutions sent to him for the County Mobile Mutual Aid plan. There are two separate resolutions in the plan – Appendix E and Appendix F. Appendix E is for independent corporation fire departments that are contracting with a municipality, and Appendix F is for fire districts or municipal entity. So if you are a village fire department or a fire district, you would do the F resolution. If you are an independent, you will do the E resolution. Tim would like to get this done as soon as possible, so please get them sent to us.

Tim reported that the Legislature passed the new property tax incentive. The State passed it at the State level. They made some changes when they passed the new legislation, which now includes if a firefighter dies in a fire, spouses are allowed to continue receiving the incentive for a certain amount of time. That change has also been made on the County side. This will be only for a primary residence, not property rentals.

Tim reported they have had a number of people calling in accidents over the radio, and he would like to remind them to call on their cell phones into 911. This is so much easier on the 911 staff, and the call taker is set up to ask certain questions regarding the call.

911:

Tina reported the two Senior Typists that they hired are in place now, and they are doing well. They have one dispatcher that is being released from their final position in the next week or so, and one training on Fire and EMS. They have one person transferring from another County in April, and they are excited to have him. There are currently two full-time positions open right now, and they gave a Dispatchers exam in February. Five people signed up to take it, and only three showed up. Personnel canvassed the three that took the test, and two people expressed interest. Tina will be contacting them for interviews.

Tina also stated they will be bringing a recommendation for the CAD system to the Legislature in April, and are hoping to get the process started.

They are still participating in tracking the OD calls, and Public Health is now reporting those numbers monthly. There is free Narcan training online, and once you complete it, they will send you a form to fill out to receive the Narcan to administer in an emergency. This is not for First Responders, etc., this is for citizens.

The National Telecommunicator's Appreciation Week is coming up April 9th - 15th and we will be honoring our dispatchers throughout that week. Bill Fries asked if we could send something out to the departments, in case they would like to do something to honor them with lunch, snacks, dessert, etc.

OLD BUSINESS:

Don Fredericy asked how we were making out getting our training container from Canada. Tim stated that will not be an option, and they are still looking into a solution with another vendor. This will probably have to be carried into next year, as prices have risen quite a bit.

Tim stated Ken LeCrone from Troupsburg is interested in joining the Fire Advisory Board so we have sent his name to the Legislature for approval.

NEW BUSINESS:

Tim reported that Recruit NY 2023 will be April 22nd and 23rd. You can log onto RecruitNY.org and there are all kinds of posters, information and recommendations for your recruit campaign.

Tim stated there is a report that came out from the Recruitment and Retention Task Force that outlines the recommendations from the State on the recruitment and retention and some of those items have made it into the Governor's proposed budget, including stipends for firefighters to take training, and additional tax incentives. They want to increase the current \$200 income tax incentive to \$800. Tim will make sure he sends that report out if he hasn't already done so.

Another thing that's being pushed right now is from the State Chiefs in regards to the Fire Act Grant. That funding supposedly runs out in September, and they are recommending everyone call their Congressman's office and encourage them to support the continuation of the Fire Act and Safer Act grants and funding. Tim has heard the grants will be refunded, but the State Chiefs Association feels that there might be some opposition in refunding.

Tim reminded everyone to get their 2022 fire reporting finished if they have not already done so.

Tim reported that the State Chiefs Convention in Syracuse will be held June 14th – 17th. Exhibits will start the 15th at the OnCenter. He sent information out a couple of weeks ago about the hands on hot training for any members interested in taking that.

Hilda Lando wanted to let everyone know that the Opioid Committee in conjunction with DSS and Public Health Nursing have now given out around 25-30 Narcan wall mount boxes, which hold four (4) boxes of Narcan. They are free of charge, and they are targeting places from the OD mapping that most likely to see OD's. They have also handed some out at different businesses and areas they think will be helpful and CCC has taken some and ordered some of their own. Kelly Fitzpatrick added that she thinks it's necessary to start tracking the number of doses coming into the County and where they are going, as her biggest concern with those boxes is what if someone goes in to get one, and it's empty. She wonders who will be refilling them and if it is possible to put a camera on the boxes to see who is taking them. Hilda replied that they aren't concerned with who is taking them, and the more that are taken the better, as it may save a life. If a business has a box, they can call us and we will replenish it.

Don Fredericy asked that the Fire Advisory Board minutes go out to the Fire Departments also as some of them don't get the information that is discussed in the meeting.

The next meeting will be held on May 24th, at the Emergency Services office at 7 PM.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lauri Robords". The signature is written in a cursive style with a loop at the end of the last name.

Lauri Robords