

**ALLEGANY COUNTY BOARD OF LEGISLATORS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

June 22, 2022

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Chairman Philip G. Stockin.

LEGISLATORS PRESENT: P. Stockin, A. Cyr, K. Demick, D. Fanton, G. Hanchett, B. Harris, S. Havey, D. Healy, J. Ricci, J. Ricketts-Swales, D. Root, J. Rumfelt (Absent: G. Barnes, J. Burdick, P. Curran)

OTHERS PRESENT: A. Carrow, C. Knapp, B. Riehle, T. Ross,

EMS

Chairman Stockin invited County Administrator Carissa Knapp to update the Board on EMS activity. Administrator Knapp noted a couple of different things are going on with EMS. Some of these things have already gone through Public Safety; however, we have not reached the point where we are ready for a resolution because there is a lot of behind the scenes work that takes place between committee action and the resolution.

A resolution creating an EMS Advisory Board will be prepared and ready to be voted on at our July 13 Legislative Board meeting. For the inaugural class, we've looked around at whom we would want on a board such as this. We've assumed you would want representatives from the following: a Legislator, the Sheriff or Undersheriff who oversees 911, a Medical Director, someone from our EMS Agency, as well as a fair representation of people that engage with EMS that could be anything from Dispatchers to people on your local squads, to people that have some other relationship with EMS Services. It was also noted that they would try to have a fair representation from each quadrant of the County, which is a little bit challenging because you do have some areas in the County where they are very weak, and there are not a lot of volunteers that currently serve on EMS-type squads. A preliminary list of potential members has been created, and we will be contacting each one to see if he/she would be willing to commit to serving on the EMS Advisory Board. The resolution indicates that we can have 5 to 21 members on the EMS Advisory Board. We would be looking for something a little more manageable for this inaugural class, and 11-15 members would probably be ideal. We hope to move a list of names forward at the next Public Safety meeting so that we could then possibly have a resolution on the July 13 to go along with creating the Board.

Legislator Brooke Harris asked if this will be a Chairman or Board appointment, and Administrator Knapp confirmed that it would be a Board appointment. The terms will run for two years with the first one expiring December 31, 2023.

Legislator Jennifer Ricketts-Swales asked if there is a mission of the EMS Advisory Board or something that outlines their direction or goal. Administrator Knapp stated that the EMS Advisory Board is actually described by state statute, and there are powers and duties that are described; however, there are just a couple of things they will have to do, and once we get it up and going, they can create their own by-laws. The County Attorney and County Administrator

plan to work closely with them to create by-laws and make sure they fulfill their statutory mission as well as what we'd like to see out of an EMS Advisory Board.

Medical Director

Another item we discussed at the Public Safety Committee meeting, at the same time as the EMS Advisory Board, is the need for a Medical Director. Administrator Knapp indicated that they have been working with the University of Rochester on that contract, and that is just a matter of going back and forth between our County Attorney and the University of Rochester on the contract language. We are hopeful that you will also have a resolution to approve a contract for the Medical Director on July 13.

County Administrator Knapp noted that she knows we have been very anxious as a Board as well as a community to get those two things going and there has been some delay between committee and Board resolutions so she wanted to give an explanation and let everyone know that we are working on it and hope to have it done soon.

Certificates of Need (CON)

Legislator Harris asked for an update on the Certificates of Need (CON). County Administrator Knapp stated that Legislator Rumpfelt, Ed Major from the NYS Department of Health, several others, and she met last week to go over possibly doing a Countywide CON, noting that they call it a Muni-Con or Municipal CON that will allow the County to be more involved. Administrator Knapp asked Legislator Rumpfelt if we would like to explain how a CON might work. Legislator Rumpfelt explained that a CON would give the County an opportunity to start our own EMS Service, noting that we would contract with other services like MTS or other squads like Hornell. Wyoming County contracts with Monroe and lets them do some of the ALS (Advanced Life Support) so it would give us the opportunity to contract with other agencies if we had to. The CON also gives us a broader opportunity. We would have two years after we get it to prove the need. It would give us more authority and more opportunity than if we wait until something happens or we have to do something. This way, if something happens, we would not be caught trying to do something at the last minute. Legislator Rumpfelt noted that Scott Lanphier from MTS had indicated that they are very overwhelmed and need help. County Administrator Knapp stated that we are sidelined at the moment watching volunteer agencies struggle and not being able to do anything as a County organization to help, but if we were to apply for a Municipal CON, we would have a number of options. We could contract with other agencies, we could have our own ambulance, etc. There are a number of possibilities that would open up. In addition, when we spoke with the NYS Department of Health, they were able to outline some of the ways we could use the Municipal CON to assist the volunteer agencies. We do not want to see them all fold and have no volunteer agencies out there and have very bad response times as that would not be good for our public. Legislator Harris asked if we could contract with other volunteer agencies or just private ones. County Administrator Knapp indicated that the way it was explained to them, we could contract with the volunteer agencies so they would assist each other under our seal. Legislator Healy asked if that would include our own volunteer agencies, and Mrs. Knapp indicated that it would. Legislator Rumpfelt used Alfred and Almond as an example, noting that up until a few years ago, Alfred wasn't able to mutually respond in Almond for ALS, and now they would be able to. If we obtain the CON, we can contract with Alfred so they could help assist Almond when they need ALS services. It was mentioned how beneficial it could be to outlaying

squads like Canaseraga that MTS is far away from. Legislator Rumfelt stated that they are trying to explore all areas and do. Administrator Knapp stated that some places have more staff available during the day than others especially with volunteers. Many people go to work in areas outside their own community, and during the day it can be very difficult for them to respond from where they are working. There would be a lot of ways to be more flexible.

Legislator Dwight Fanton asked if this would be a contract similar to what some towns have with the fire departments for services, or would the County be contracting with the ambulance services? Administrator Knapp stated that would be one option, but there are many different options, and there is a lot more to explore. This is just a very preliminary question about how we would go about getting a Municipal CON and what possibilities are out there. They do range from just supporting your volunteer agencies and contracting with them all the way up to having your own county ambulance service. I don't believe you would want to jump right in with the most expansive things possible. You would want to start out with what is needed now and look at how we can assist those that are already out in the field working on these things. Legislator Fanton remarked that he likes the idea of contracting with the local neighborhoods since that is probably a way we can help with their funding.

Chairman Stockin asked if anyone else had a comment, and Legislator Adam Cyr stated that this has been a long time coming and would like to let the public know that the Public Safety Committee has been and still is working very hard on this, and the Board is committed to resolving this in the best possible way.

Legislator Harris inquired as to what kind of action is required of the Board to move forward with attempting to attain this CON. Administrator Knapp stated that she does not want to be working on things that are not going to be supported by this Board. Just knowing that this Board has general support for looking at a Municipal CON would be helpful so that we know we are on the right track and moving forward with becoming a County that is engaged with EMS Services and willing to take on that role of supporting that. Administrator Knapp indicated that she would like to know if we have the Board's support to keep talking about this or not, and Chairman Stockin suggested a straw poll. Legislator Dwight "Mike" Healy indicated that he did not see any downside to pursuing this CON and did not know why we wouldn't. Administrator Knapp stated that depending on how engaged we want to be, there could be County costs associated with it. These things tend to be costly upfront until you work out how you want it to be rearranged more efficiently and hopefully the costs go down. Legislator Healy asserted that without it we can't do much of anything so this would be the first step, and we can decide what and how much we want to do later, and that's always going to change too if it's not working. Administrator Knapp agreed, noting that without it, we are going to see our volunteer agencies continue to struggle. Administrator Knapp indicated that she is very grateful for the service they provide but knows it is a challenge. She is very grateful that MTS is our private agency but trying to cover the whole County is a challenge for them as well, and if we don't do anything, our public is just going to suffer more. I think it is going to be a detriment for people that look to move into this County if they know response times are bad too. Chairman Stockin called for a straw vote and there was unanimous support to direct the County Administrator to pursue the CON.

Legislator James Rumfelt thanked all those that have been working on this. Mr. Rumfelt stated that this is one of the things he has striven for since he first started. Legislator Rumfelt personally thanked County Administrator Carissa Knapp, County Attorney Allison Carrow, Legislator Adam Cyr, and Legislator Kevin "Fred" Demick, as they were all very helpful in getting things going. Legislator Rumfelt also stated that they have had several meetings where they

discussed issues and researched, and he would like to thank everyone that has been involved in helping. He also thanked Public Safety Committee Chairman Steven Havey for giving them the leeway to do that.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:14 p.m. on a motion by Legislator Havey, seconded by Legislator Rumfelt, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Rigby Riehle, Clerk of the Board, and
Beverly Broach, Account Clerk Typist
Allegany County Board of Legislators