

**PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN ROOM 318
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512
Members: Chairman Jonke & Legislators Addonizio & Birmingham**

Thursday September 18, 2025

(To Immediately Follow the 5:30pm Personnel Meeting)

The meeting was called to order at 8:20pm by Chairman Jonke and he requested Legislator Birmingham lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislators Addonizio, Birmingham, and Chairman Jonke were present.

Item #3 – Acceptance/ Protective Services Meeting Minutes/ June 10th & July 8, 2025

The minutes were accepted as submitted.

**Item #4 – Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 25A076/ Sheriff's Office- Narcotics/
Reimbursement- Insurance Recoveries Allstate Insurance Company/ Risk
Manager Mat Bruno**

Legislator Jonke stated that although Risk Manager Mat Bruno is not present, the item is self-explanatory; for insurance recoveries in amount of \$13,645.00.

Legislator Jonke made a motion to approve Budgetary Amendment 25A076; Seconded by Legislator Birmingham. All in favor.

**Item #5 – Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 25A078/ Bureau of Emergency Services/ Fire
Training Center/ Concrete/ Commissioner of Bureau of Emergency Services
Robert Lipton**

Legislator Jonke requested that Robert Lipton, Commissioner of the Bureau of Emergency Services provide an overview.

Commissioner Lipton stated that budget money just ran out for more concrete that is needed to continue the upgrades to the Fire Training Center, as DPW (Department of Public Works) needs to get the final concrete beds done before paving takes place next month.

Legislator Jonke made a motion to approve Budgetary Amendment 25A078; Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

**Item #6 – Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 25A084/ Sheriff’s Office – Civil/
Reimbursement Insurance Recoveries State Farm Insurance Company/ Risk
Manager Mat Bruno**

Legislator Jonke stated that this is in the amount of \$977.55 and is reimbursement of insurance monies.

Legislator Jonke made a motion to approve Budgetary Amendment 25A084; Seconded by Legislator Birmingham. All in favor.

**Item #7 – Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 25A085/ To Fund the Receipt of Hazard
Mitigation Plan Update (HMGP 4694-0003) (R#109/2024 Approval of Grant Application)/
Commissioner of Bureau of Emergency Services Robert Lipton**

Legislator Jonke requested that Commissioner Lipton provide details and confirmation of the \$112,500 grant amount.

Commissioner Lipton stated that the grant was approved, and we are setting up the funding lines for the grant of \$112,500 with a 25% match, which is \$37,500 in kind. He stated that he requested management reimbursement costs, which were granted, for another \$7,500, that can be given back on top of the grant, and so the total is approximately \$120,000.

Legislator Jonke questioned why there are consultants listed.

Commissioner Lipton stated that the grant money is being used to pay for a consultant company to update the hazard mitigation plan, and that this is the third update, as it is updated every 5 years.

Legislator Birmingham questioned as this is our third update, have we used consultants in the past and are they the same consultants.

Commissioner Lipton stated that consultants are used each time, and it just so happened that the last consultant won this RFP (Request for Proposal) also.

Legislator Ellman questioned if the consultant is Tetra Tech.

Commissioner Lipton confirmed.

Legislator Montgomery questioned when the process of developing the plan with the consultant and meetings with the municipalities would begin.

Commissioner Lipton stated that kick-off meetings should start as soon as the line is funded, hopefully in October 2025.

Legislator Montgomery asked when the project needs to be completed by.

Commissioner Lipton replied by July 2026.

Legislator Jonke made a motion to approve Budgetary Amendment 25A085; Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

Item #8. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 25A086/ Sheriff's Office/ Reimbursement Funds For Various 2025 Holiday - Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) and DWI Crackdowns - Funds Used to Increase the Overtime and Social Security for the Patrol Division/ Interim Sheriff Brian Hess

Legislator Jonke questioned if this is the grant money that comes in every year for special events.

Interim Sheriff Brian Hess stated yes that this is specific money that we get through the STOP DWI for probation, DRE (Drug Recognition Expert) call outs, Superbowl, St. Patrick's Day, Memorial Day and reimbursements to pay for Deputies.

Legislator Jonke made a motion to approve Budgetary Amendment 25A086; Seconded by Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

Item #9. Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 25A087/ Sheriff's Office/ Reimbursement from NYS Sheriff's Association for Instructor Kevin Radovich at New Paltz College To be used to Increase BCI's Overtime Budget Line/ Interim Sheriff Brian Hess

Legislator Jonke questioned if Instructor Radovich teaches and the County gets reimbursed.

Interim Sheriff Hess stated that is correct; zero fiscal impact as money is just transferred.

Legislator Jonke made a motion to approve Budgetary Amendment 25A087; Seconded by Legislator Birmingham. All in favor.

Item #10. Approval/ Request for the Continuation of the Community Engagement & Police Advisory Board (CEPAB)/ CEPAB Board Members Scott Rhodes and Ronald Reid

Legislator Jonke stated that he didn't see anyone present from CEPAB and thanked their volunteers, who he believes have been a wonderful asset to our community since 2020.

Legislator Addonizio also stated that she would like to thank them for their commitment to Putnam County.

Scott Seamen, resident of Town of Southeast, stated that he would like to thank the Legislators for continuing with CEPAB, and CEPAB for all the wonderful work that they do, especially in schools.

Legislator Jonke made a motion to approve Budgetary Amendment 25A086; Seconded by

Legislator Addonizio. All in favor.

Item #11. Update/ Putnam County Radio Project Update/ Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Robert Lipton, IT Director Thomas Lannon & Interim Sheriff Brian Hess

Legislator Jonke acknowledged Commissioner Lipton, Director of IT Tom Lannon, Interim Sheriff Hess and Bob Cullen, a constituent who requested the update.

Director Lannon stated that the radios are in full operation across the County and all Fire, Police and EMS (Emergency Medical Services) are using them. He stated that he believes the system works great end to end in the County and that calls from the Town of Southeast can now be heard in Cold Spring, and there are only some coverage issues with portables, and none with mobiles. He stated that there are three additional towers in process, and as expected, two should be up quickly and the third at the Airport Park is a longer-term project.

Legislator Jonke requested the location of the other two towers.

Director Lannon stated the Piano Mountain tower is awaiting a permit and that work on the Nelsonville tower in Philipstown just started and should be completed by the end of the year to broadcast by Spring 2026. Director Lannon stated there are 4,470 radios on the system, including some outside agencies, State Police and MTA, and this volume requires a lot of back-end work for system management. He stated that peak usage is only 12%, and as planned, the system has enough capacity so that any municipality in the County, including DPWs (Department of Public Works) and Schools can join.

Legislator Crowley stated that DSS (Department of Social Services) is now on it.

Director Lannon confirmed and stated that he is working with the Commissioner of DSS to address concerns about staff safety in their building and in the field, and that he has trained the DSS staff to use the new radios. He stated that the radios have a red alert button, which opens the microphone, sends out a tone alert to all radios and links immediately to the 911 Center, enabling the appropriate response. He stated that there was a recent emergency at DSS where police were called using the radios, and that they worked as well, as expected.

Commissioner Lipton stated that the 911 Center has added a fourth function to dispatch to Fire, Police, EMS (Emergency Medical Services) and DSS, and with the new radios, first responders contact the 911 Center when responding to a call, which enables the 911 Center to track the time they go and the when they return safely and go back into service.

Director Lannon stated that the radios have great coverage so far in most Putnam County buildings and if a building is entered where the radio is disconnected and not working, an alert beep is heard right away, so that the user will know.

Director Lannon stated the next project being worked on is for DSR (Disaster Services Recovery), a way to recover if there is an anomaly in the system, where duplicate imperative equipment is installed to keep the system running if the first set of equipment is compromised,

and that engineers are scheduled to put this equipment in. He stated that as another failsafe, the system is digital but can revert to analog in the case of a true emergency, where radio to radio communication is still possible.

Director Lannon stated that there is an order for SmartConnect through Motorola, allowing the Sheriffs' patrol car radios to always be connected wherever there is internet, regardless of location, and that this enhances communication and safety in the field and works with portable radios, but not when entering people's homes.

Interim Sheriff Hess stated that he spoke with Director Lannon about his safety concerns for School Resource Officers (SROs) when inside the Mahopac Schools, as there is no radio coverage, and that Director Lannon confirmed that work is being done to add that wi-fi radio connection feature for all County schools to share with their police departments. He then stated his concerns for police officers' safety when inside people's homes and that in his opinion, it is imperative to work on this so that there is 100% coverage.

Director Lannon stated that with SmartConnect, our radios can connect automatically to Verizon for \$19.99 per month, per radio, so if a radio loses the signal, it would automatically revert to Verizon as long as there is coverage in the area, but this still would not provide 100% coverage, as there are still homes without any cell coverage available at all. He stated that initially, there was better coverage in our schools, but when the radios were upgraded to better multi-band radios, coverage decreased and that it was determined that better antennas are needed and the installation of BDAs (bi-directional amplifiers) to support these radios and budget money was already set aside for this. Director Lannon concluded, stating that a new radio system is being put in the jail, which is an analog trunk system, able to work both inside and outside of the facility.

Legislator Jonke questioned what the total system costs.

Director Lannon stated close to \$15 million.

Commissioner Lipton stated that grants helped fund this, which included 2 grants of \$6 million each plus another for \$1 million.

Legislator Jonke stated that it has been a long project for a lot of money, but it is good that the County is safer.

Legislator Gouldman questioned when the Piano Mountain Tower would be up.

Director Lannon stated that it should be up and running by beginning of 2026.

Legislator Gouldman questioned if this will help in Mahopac High School.

Director Lannon stated yes and that the antenna at Airport Park should also help; but he is being conservative, as all the towers are not yet up and running.

Legislator Crowley questioned whether we have received the code plug from Westchester, to establish our interoperability with them.

Director Lannon stated that we are still waiting but working very actively on that.

Legislator Crowley questioned what the fail-soft procedure is for a complete system shut down, where do our communications go, what is the 911 call procedure and is it written.

Director Lannon explained that a fail-soft alert appears on the radios when no longer able to connect to the master control unit, but radios will still work and that this happened recently due to a lightning strike to Ninham Tower, where the system automatically reverted momentarily to fail-soft and came right back on. He stated he contacted Motorola and that they gave him a plan for how to handle and train for fail-soft.

Commissioner Lipton stated that per the plan, there is not much to be done with fail-soft, because the entire system is set up to come back on its own and that notifications are set up to go out.

Legislator Crowley questioned further what the procedure is beyond fail-soft, for 911 Dispatch and all users on the system, should the entire system go down as it did recently in Dutchess County.

Commissioner Lipton stated that if the first core goes down, the second core comes up to cover, but if there is a catastrophic total system failure, fallback kicks in where the analog system is available, departments are notified to man their bases, the phone system still works, 911 Dispatchers still enter calls into CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch), and tracking is visible to all through the CrewForce system. He stated that this was the process previously, which is now updated and has been folded into the radio procedures.

Legislator Crowley asked if the Sheriff's Department is the fallback for communications.

Commissioner Lipton replied yes and that it is tested on a regular basis.

Legislator Crowley questioned whether tests were done in hospitals, schools and basements of other big structures / buildings or whether municipalities were asked to fold requirements into building or zoning codes to assure infrastructure is up to date for this radio project.

Director Lannon answered that most municipalities have that and when a building of a certain size is built, they are required to include this information, and one example is Watchtower in Patterson. He stated that he is unsure of any other big construction projects going on.

Legislator Crowley stated that there is a big project on Pugsley Road for Lesser Evil and that she just wanted to make sure that everything is up to date.

Legislator Crowley questioned if the pager tones have been fixed yet.

Director Lannon confirmed that they are all working.

Commissioner Lipton agreed and stated that sometimes minor adjustments are needed, but the tones are cleaned up and working.

Legislator Sayegh questioned what longevity is on this project and how long the technology will last, as the project has taken eight years.

Director Lannon stated that per Motorola, the radios are good for 20 years and we can refresh in ten years.

Legislator Sayegh questioned if technology will eventually surpass our system, equipment and investment.

Director Lannon stated that the system was designed to be expanded and will keep up with technology.

Legislator Montgomery thanked Director Lannon and Commissioner Lipton for completing this project, which was a long time coming and involved dealing with technology, meetings with municipalities, private land organizations, lawyers, constituents and more.

A member of the public stated that he is a former police officer in Westchester and that reached out to Legislator Crowley to request an update. He stated that radios are the lifeline of law enforcement and was thankful for the update and to hear that the system is coming along.

Item #12. Discussion/Approval/ Bureau of Emergency Services/ Basic Life Support First Response Agency/ Bureau of Emergency Services Commissioner Robert Lipton

Commissioner Lipton stated that as Director Cuomo is not present, he will provide an update with the understanding is that Legislative approval is not needed. He stated that when there is fire training, an ambulance must stand by, but now since there are little volunteers, Emergency Services does not want to put ambulances on standby as they are needed for business. He believes that there is no difference between having a Fire Instructor or EMT Member on staff for this purpose, and so he would like an EMT Member as they would be paid only for the three hours that they stand by at fire training.

Item# 13. Other Business

None.

Item# 14. Adjournment

There being no further business at 9:54PM Chairman Jonke made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Birmingham. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant Mary Dechiaro.