

1 **FIRE, RESCUE, EMERGENCY SERVICES and PREPAREDNESS**

2
3 **COMMITTEE MEETING**

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6 A meeting of the Fire, Rescue, & Emergency Services and
7 Preparedness Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature was held
8 in the Maxine S. Postal Legislative Auditorium at the Evans K.
9 Griffing Building, 300 Center Drive, Riverhead, New York, on
10 February 28, 2023 at 11:30 a.m.

11
12 **Members Present:**

13 Legislator Dominick S. Thorne, Chairman
14 Legislator Tom Donnelly
15 Legislator Samuel Gonzalez
16 Legislator Leslie Kennedy

17
18 **Members Not Present:**

19 Legislator Manuel Esteban, Vice Chair

20
21 **Also in Attendance:**

22 Legislator Al Krupski, 1st Legislative District
23 Frank Tassone, Clerk/Suffolk County Legislature
24 Hope Clark, Clerk's Office
25 Ali Nazir, Aide to Presiding Officer McCaffrey
26 Chris DeLuca, Aide to Presiding Officer McCaffrey
27 Patrick Beckley, Commissioner of Fire Rescue and Emergency Services
28 All Other Interested Parties

29
30 **Taken By:**

31 Lucia Braaten - Court Stenographer
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(**The Meeting was Called to Order at 12:13 p.m.**)

CHAIRMAN THORNE:

All right. Welcome to the Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, Preparedness meeting. We'll start with the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Legislator Donnelly.

(**Pledge of Allegiance**)

Please remain standing for all our -- certainly, our military, and our Fire and EMS workers that every day run to whatever everybody else runs away from.

(**Moment of Silence**)

Okay, be seated. Thank you. Mr. Clerk, roll call.

(**Roll Call by Frank Tassone, Clerk of the Legislature**)

CHAIRMAN THORNE:

Present.

LEG. ESTEBAN:

(*Absent*)

CHAIRMAN THORNE:

Legislator Esteban has an excused absence.

LEG. GONZALEZ:

Here.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Here.

LEG. DONNELLY:

Here.

CLERK TASSONE:

Four. (Absent: Leg. Esteban)

CHAIRMAN THORNE:

Thank you so much. Correspondence, Mr. Clerk?

CLERK TASSONE:

All correspondence has been distributed accordingly, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN THORNE:

Any public speakers today?

MR. DELUCA:

There are no speakers, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN THORNE:

Outstanding. Closing the public portion. There are no appointment resolutions. We do have a presentation from Commissioner Beckley of FRES, which is -- should be a end-of-year overall report.

1 Incidentally, Commissioner, thank you for waiting. We ran a little
2 late, my apologies to you.

3
4 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

5 No worries. Very good. So I appreciate the opportunity to present
6 here today, give you an overview of the good work that we've done
7 at FRES over the last -- last year. So I'm going to start off with
8 our Administrative and Finance Unit, and some of the things they
9 do. This comes right off of the budget that we submit every year.

12:15PM 10

11 So this year, our Administration Unit oversaw various grants,
12 including Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response.
13 That's the SAFER grant to help in retention, and here's some of the
14 programs that they helped to support. They supported Suffolk
15 County P.D. and the D.A. with rollout of the Rave Guardian app, as
16 well as Suffolk County EMS, with the e-Bridge Telemedicine and
17 LanguageLine, and we supported Suffolk County EMS and New York
18 State with regional EPCR DataBridge.

12:16PM 20

21 Moving into our Fire Marshal's Office, our Fire Marshal is
22 responsible for building inspections, K-9 Program, fire
23 investigation, some of these other items here, Urban Search and
24 Rescue, evacuation plans. So their primary function is to inspect
25 all of the County facilities, making sure they're safe for
26 employees, as well as visitors to our buildings, and they inspected
27 over 750 buildings last year.

12:17PM 30

28 This is Chuck, he's our newest arson dog. Ryan Fischer went down
29 and completed ATF School at the end of 2022. He and Chuck both
30 completed that program, and they're -- they've been up here and
31 being put to work right away. He's had -- he's been out 12 times
32 so far. Right now, we're taking him around to the various Chiefs'
33 organizations, so they're aware of him and what his capabilities are.

12:17PM 40

34
35 Urban Search and Rescue, here's some of the activations we had last
36 year. In March, we did a tabletop exercise in preparation for our
37 Mobilization Joint Exercise with FDNY on Fire Island, which was
38 actually -- it was a very good full scale exercise. Allowed us to
39 jointly operate not only with the Fire Island First Responders, but
40 also Fire Department of New York. And then every year what we do
41 is we -- we have to maintain equipment for USAR in our skill sets,
42 so we schedule that for the weekend of the Joey D Conference, and
43 we make sure that we are assisting them, as well as getting
44 training in for our USAR staff, so that was a great success.

12:18PM 50

45
46 Incident Management Team, created in 2005, and here are some of the
47 agencies that are involved with it. Team trains and various
48 planning logistics and safety, it's overseen by the Chief Fire
49 Marshal. I've directed him to reinvigorate that team, similar to
50 what we've been doing with the USAR Team. So we're looking forward
51 to doing that in this upcoming here.

52
53 Chief Fire Marshal and his staff also oversee the Decon Strike
54 Team. It currently has 60 members, and we have a large multi-unit
55 shower trailer that they maintain and deploy. As far as responses
56 this year, we went to an oil tanker overturn in C.I., chemical

1 spill with off-gassing in Holbrook, and another chemical problem in
2 Brentwood. And then we also calibrate meters for the various
3 HAZMAT teams, and we've done 75 -- we did 75 of those last year.

4
5 Evacuation Plans: We were able to go over and update 20 evacuation
6 plans, and this was -- specifically, we brought in a couple of
7 different -- we were able to add Fire Marshals last year, as well
8 as another part-time individual, and Chief Reilly is one of -- is
9 the gentleman that's been working on this program very vigorously.
10 And then we also issued 16 permits, 10 permits last year. And then
11 we had 10 Priority 1 callouts, which are fatal fires. So that's it
12 for the Fire Marshal's Office.

13
14 We're going to transition now to the Fire Service Academy. And one
15 of the things that has been at the forefront this year has been
16 cancer prevention initiatives. The State is rolling out a program
17 that we've been helping to support. However, I'm proud to say that
18 Suffolk County has been leading in that area prior to the State's
19 initiative. So we've hosted five workshops, focused on educating
20 District Chiefs, as well as individual firefighters with specific
21 modules designed, really, on decontamination procedures and best
22 practices. Forty-four Suffolk County Fire Departments participated
23 and over 300 firefighters attended those workshops. Those
24 workshops focused on basic protocols, really to limit a
25 firefighter's exposure to the harmful chemicals, perform on-scene
26 contamination, as well as post -- while on scene, use post fire
27 wipes. Here's -- and the different protocols as far as washing
28 with certain tools and equipment and the apparatus. And mainly to
29 transport gear in nonporous containers, such as clear bags.

30
31 The next topic, as I'm sure you are aware of, is lithium batteries.
32 So we have offered six trainings to date on this, training over 500
33 firefighters in lithium batteries. We're currently adding more
34 training in this field to our Heavy Rescue Vehicle Extrication
35 course, as well as online classes. And here's some of the numbers.
36 For Firefighter I, last year we trained over 12,443 individuals.
37 And overall, year end review, the Fire Academy stats, we trained
38 48,283 First Responders.

39
40 Moving to our Emergency Communications Division. Here are the
41 calls that we took in last year. So 400 -- 405,249, that is just
42 the total 911 calls we received. You see the number of 238,274,
43 that's for the Fire and EMS alarms that we received. They could
44 come in through CAD, they don't all come in through the phone line.
45 Twenty-six thousand of the calls we received we had to turn over to
46 the Police Department, so we created an incident in CAD, turned
47 that over.

48
49 Utility responses are when we had to call PSE&G or National Grid to
50 secure on the scene for a Fire Department.

51
52 Fire Coordinator Responses, 837. That's our Deputy Fire
53 Coordinator Program. And then after hours for 311, if you don't
54 know, 311 gets rolled over to our Communications Department after
55 hours, so they've handled 2,676 calls last year.

1 The Drone Team, I put this under Communications, because
2 Chief Miniutti is our lead. But reality is, is right now our team
3 consists of mostly members from OEM and our Communications Team,
4 and we expect to expand that to our Fire Marshals Division at some
5 point. Right now we have seven members. We have -- last year we
6 did 23 shark watch missions, supporting Suffolk County Parks and
7 local agencies. We did four post weather event fly-overs,
8 including verification of a tornado in Mattituck. And that was
9 actually -- we went out for NWS, and we were able to provide them
10 with data where they could see and confirm that we did have those
11 five tornadoes on that one instance.

12:24PM

12 We did 22 demonstrations to Fire Departments and at our open house.
13 We -- nine emergency responses in support of Fire/EMS agencies.
14 And our current capabilities is observation. We could do an
15 over-watch, thermal and infrared imaging, as well as payload
16 deployment. And we're going to see how we can -- we're going to
17 talk about tactics, as far as including these drones, in our
18 wildfire approach.

12:25PM

19 Communications Unit: Staff assisted in the New York State
20 communications exercise at SPTC in Oriskany, along with supplying
21 our Mobile Command Unit. So we actually took our MC1 up there.
22 The State called us at the last minute. Their vehicle wasn't able
23 to make it, it was in the shop, so they asked if we could bring up
24 MC1 to Oriskany, which we did. And we were able to show off the
25 good work that the Communications staff and the people at FRES have
26 done to get that vehicle where it is supposed to be.

12:25PM

27 Last year, we had two Communications staff certified as COML's,
28 which are Communication Unit Leaders. We had one trained as a
29 Train the Trainer, and we had three radio officers certified. And
30 we deployed with New York State COM Unit to -- for the NASCAR event
31 in Watkins Glen. So Chief Miniutti went up for this one to assist
32 and maintain his qualifications as a COML. We work closely with
33 the State Office of Interoperability Communications. I worked with
34 them for many years, and there's a great, great knowledge there
35 that we could pull in. And Chief Miniutti and his team work very
36 closely with them and they work well. We also work with them at
37 the Jones Beach Air Show behind the scenes. We fill in for certain
38 gaps that they may have.

12:26PM

39 Overall, our Mobile Command Posts have deployed 24 sometimes last
40 year in support of Fire and EMS agencies. We had one extended
41 operation at Heckscher State Park for the COVID test site that
42 we -- that we stood up last year, and then we had another extended
43 operation after the cyber incident at Building 50. We had staff
44 working out of that command post for a couple of months.

12:27PM

45 This is something that's -- I'm very proud of. Erie County reached
46 out to us because of the size of our county, the size of our
47 911 call center, but also because of our dispatchers and their
48 qualifications as EMDs, and we handled 294 calls for Erie County
49 during that snowstorm. They were backed up with so many calls,
50 they couldn't get to all of them, so they asked for our assistance.
51 So we, along with the P.D., threw together a team on the 26th of
52

1 December, and we made contact, I think, with all these callers
2 within the span of two hours. And I've heard a lot of great things
3 from the callers, very appreciative that we followed up with them.

4
5 And we're going to move into Emergency Management, our Emergency
6 Management Office, which we activated our EOC today for the
7 snowstorm. So in 2022, our OEM staff distributed 10 million pieces
8 of PPE during COVID. Over 400,000 test kits were distributed. We
9 maintain our emergency preparedness stockpile at our warehouse.
10 And, you know, one thing we didn't put in here is we had to move
11 our warehouse. So they actually moved warehouses last year as
12 well, and we stood up a new warehouse. And then they helped
13 maintain the County Health Preparedness PPE at our -- at our new
14 warehouse.

15
16 So Accreditation: One of the things that I was asked to do when I
17 came over to the County as Deputy Commissioner was to put us on the
18 path of accreditation. I was qualified with the State as a -- to
19 be on the accreditation staff, and I felt like this was something
20 we really need to do as a county, as the largest county in New York
21 State. We had to get evaluated in over 20 different areas of
22 emergency management. Particularly, one of the things they look at
23 is a whole community involvement with all the stakeholders, and we
24 do that really well. And we're working with the Towns on some
25 other initiatives that we want to put together to kind of increase
26 that whole community aspect.

27
28 As far as some other items, we went to WebEOC, and we did that in
29 August of last year, and we put it to the test during the cyber
30 incident. And, you know, when we evaluated this program and had to
31 make a decision on what to go with, when we were evaluating the
32 different programs, this was the program that the staff liked the
33 best. This was the one that they really gravitated towards, and so
34 this is the one that we went with, because if they like it, they're
35 going to use it. But, also, FEMA uses it, and Nassau County is in
36 the process of implementing it, as well as -- as well as Northwell.
37 So we did -- we went to the WebEOC. Here are some of the
38 activations we did in 2022. You see the cyber incident, coastal
39 storm, and various winter weather events. We also -- last year OEM
40 helped manage COVID, monkey pox, vaccine distribution, as well as cyber.

41
42 So we're in the process of going through our Emergency Operations
43 Center upgrade. Like I said, we did activate it today. We do have
44 our -- most of our computers in place, the phones are up. We have
45 a situation room that's a really good benefit for us. We've been
46 using it, similar to the way New York City OEM will use their
47 situation room. So like today's event may not have been a full EOC
48 activation, but it was -- it rose to the level that we had to bring
49 in some people to kind of monitor the storm at a lower level, and
50 we're able to do that much more easily right now with this
51 Emergency Operations Center. We're hoping to add some more
52 technology to it. Some of it's been set back because of the COVID
53 supply chain issues, but we're hoping to have it in place in the --
54 in the months ahead.

55
56 Some of the issues we're working on with our State elected

1 officials is Vets to Vollies, which we started in Suffolk County
2 last year. You know, this is an initiative to kind of -- as we see
3 our veterans coming back from war, and maybe trying to reintegrate
4 into their home life, as well as into society, you know, why not
5 connect them with our Fire Service, who can use individuals who
6 have the capability of being trained, who are usually physically
7 fit. I just felt like it was a good fit, and we've been trying to
8 promote this wherever we can, and we're looking to hopefully take
9 it statewide this year.

12:33PM 10

11 We continue to support mental health initiative through
12 presentations provided to fire departments. We're hopping to kick
13 that off in late March or April. We're working on that with the
14 Association for Mental Health and Wellness. And we're going to try
15 to increase recruitment of our Emergency Service Dispatchers, so we
16 have a more diverse background.

17

18 One of -- we're one of -- we have one of 50 municipalities chosen
19 to work with FEMA in the Integrated Public Alert and Warning
20 System, IPAWS, on refining the geocoding of wireless emergency
21 events. So kind of honored to be part of this, this process, and
22 allow us to kind of, I would say, increase our knowledge on this,
23 as well as being part of that process.

12:33PM 24

25 So some of the objectives for 2023, my personal objectives, I would
26 like to at some point do an EOC ribbon cutting event with the
27 County Executive, invite Commissioner Bray down from Homeland
28 Security. The FRES Commissioner, of course, would be invited to
29 that, as well as the FRES Committee. Looking to do a
30 groundbreaking ceremony in late June or July for the new Garden
31 Apartment trainer that all of you have supported, and I appreciate
32 that, and we'll be trying to do a groundbreaking ceremony for that.

12:34PM 33

34 Personal Resiliency Pack Initiative falls into that mental health
35 piece I was talking about for First Responders. But it also
36 carries over to the public, because as we saw with Hurricane Ian,
37 which devastated Florida, I think it was the first time I ever
38 heard about the news reporting that individuals had taken their
39 lives because of the disaster. So, you know, the basis of this
40 program is if you have anxiety or you have certain issues, put a
41 plan in place now, so that when disaster strikes, it's a little bit
42 easier to deal with. So we'll be working on that.

12:35PM 43

44 Of course, we'll have our Holiday Safety Messages and press events
45 for Memorial Day, and usually that focuses on barbecue safety.
46 Fourth of July preparedness, Fourth of July and then Preparedness
47 Month in September, and then Thanksgiving and Christmas.

48

49 We will be doing a Drone Rodeo in June. So the intent of that is
50 twofold. Number one, we're going to -- one day will be for County
51 agencies, State agencies and Towns to come in and get an update
52 from the State on where our drone programs are going from a State
53 perspective, as well as we'll be putting them through some skill,
54 skill sets, as far as with their drones. But it also allows us to
55 see who has what equipment. And we'll be doing the same thing on
56 Saturday for the Fire Departments to learn who has what drones,

12:35PM

1 what teams are capable of assisting us, if needed, because we may
2 not be able to get our drone team there fast enough. So who could
3 we call to deploy their drone until we can get there with our team.
4 So we're looking to do that in June.

5
6 And then we're looking to do a Women in the Fire Service for the
7 month of October, which is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and we
8 want to celebrate women that are in the fire service. And I want
9 to use this as a recruitment and a retention tool. So guest
10 speakers are not just going to include leaders, female leaders in
11 the fire service, but I want female CEOs, because, you know, these
12 are volunteers and they all have jobs outside the Fire Department.
13 And maybe if they learn something from our CEOs, it makes their
14 jobs a little bit easier, which allows them to dedicate more time
15 to the fire service and EMS service. So it's going to be a well
16 rounded balance that we're going to be looking to do in October.
17 And that's it.

18
19 **CHAIRMAN THORNE:**

20 Thank you for an amazing round-about. And we both know we could be
21 here for hours talking about everything going on with our FRES,
22 Fire Rescue and EMS staff. We did have a question or two. I think
23 Leslie had a question. Legislator Kennedy.

24
25 **LEG. KENNEDY:**

26 Thank you, Commissioner, for a great presentation. I just have a
27 question. You said you did lithium battery training?

28
29 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

30 Yes.

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32 **LEG. KENNEDY:**

33 I read in a couple of papers recently about a fire, and I think it
34 was in East Moriches, where the battery in one of the cars just
35 kept burning or --

36
37 **LEG. KRUPSKI:**

38 East Marion.

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40 **LEG. KENNEDY:**

41 What?

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43 **LEG. KRUPSKI:**

44 East Marion.

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46 **LEG. KENNEDY:**

47 East Marion.

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49 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

50 East Marion, yeah.

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52 **LEG. KENNEDY:**

53 And what did I say, East Moriches? Sorry.

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55 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

56 That what the fatal, the bad fatal out there.

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12:38PM

12:38PM

12:39PM

12:39PM

LEG. KENNEDY:
Did anyone out in the East End get trained on lithium battery fires?

COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:
I'd have to look, because I don't have the numbers in front of me, but I could find out for you.

LEG. KENNEDY:
Okay. That's it.

COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:
It is -- and Legislator Donnelly knows, it's a hot topic. There's a lot of -- it's still a very new subject, and we're all trying to work together on finding the best way to kind of come up with a solution.

LEG. KENNEDY:
The specific car that was involved in the accident has a big lithium battery, not like other ones, this one was is huge.

COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:
I believe it was Tesla.

LEG. KENNEDY:
Yeah. All right.

COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:
I'll find out for you.

LEG. KENNEDY:
Thank you.

CHAIRMAN THORNE:
Before I ask my questions, any other, Al?

LEG. KRUPSKI:
Thank you, Mr. Chair. And thank you for that great presentation. It's amazing the amount of work that goes on behind the scenes that most people, you know, don't know about, and it's good for us to know what -- what's going on.

The question I have is, you know, the County had a cyber attack and it was a disruption for many County services. How are you moving forward to prevent the really critical emergency services that you're -- you're in charge with from being affected if there's another incident?

COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:
Well, we're working -- obviously, we're working with Commissioner Mastellon and his team. Every day we're on a call with them, and Chief Miniutti is working with them to make sure that our systems are secure. We were very fortunate in -- during this incident, where we were really unaffected as far as our 911 center is concerned. I talked about the new WebEOC program we went to, which

1 was a blessing, because that is a cloud-based system, had nothing
2 to do -- wasn't even on our network. So we're seeing that a lot of
3 what we're doing now is going cloud-based, where it was seen as a
4 negative, I think, because we like to have everything in our hands,
5 but in this case it proved to be a positive. So best real world
6 solution. What we want to do with some of our systems is have a
7 hybrid. We want to be on the cloud, but we also want to have
8 something locally. So if we lose the cloud, we can go revert to
9 our on-scene software. So whenever we -- whenever we can, we're
10 going to build in redundancies like that.

12:40PM

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12 **LEG. KRUPSKI:**

13 Thank you. And then do you do any work with the ferries? Because,
14 you know, the coastal flooding, not just -- and you had up there
15 one coastal event last year that you -- that you were concerned
16 about. But just the normal now sunny day, the moon's right,
17 flooding on different streets, you know, locally street -- local
18 streets. Do you coordinate with like local officials on what
19 happens when there's a foot of water in the street on a sunny day?

12:41PM

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21 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

22 Yeah, we -- so yesterday we sent out messaging. We -- I very much
23 lean forward to let people know that there could be a potential, so
24 they're not caught off guard. Because, like you said, I remember
25 when I was still at the State, it was a beautiful day and Mastic
26 was flooded, and the sun was out, nobody -- there wasn't a cloud in
27 the sky, and, yet, people are walking in a foot deep of water. So
28 whenever we can, we try to communicate as much as possible to the
29 Towns through our Rave Alert System, where we could push out
30 information. A lot of times, you know, their staffing is not as
31 good as our staffing. So like in today's EOC activation or
32 monitoring, we'll open up a virtual line, which allows them to
33 check in and get updates from us. And WebEOC, they now will have
34 the ability to log in from their phones to see what's going on, and
35 we'll push it out that way, too.

12:41PM

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37 **LEG. KRUPSKI:**

38 Thank you. Thank you very much. There's a lot of work going on
39 there, and thank you for keeping it organized and going.

12:42PM

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41 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

42 Thank you.

43
44 **LEG. KRUPSKI:**

45 Thank you, Dominick.

46
47 **CHAIRMAN THORNE:**

48 My pleasure, Legislator. Legislator Donnelly, did you have any
49 questions before I ask mine?

12:42PM

50
51 **LEG. DONNELLY:**

52 No.

53
54 **CHAIRMAN THORNE:**

55 Okay. So how are we at staffing with ESDs? Are you short? Are
56 you on keel? Where are we at with our Emergency Service

1 Dispatchers?

2

3 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

4 So we are -- right now, I think we have seven vacancies right
5 now --

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7 **CHAIRMAN THORNE:**

8 Seven?

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12:42PM

10 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

11 -- we're trying to fill. We are working with the State on a new
12 program, I think it's a HELP Program, that allows us to hire
13 provisionally. So we're looking at that, we're looking to do --
14 hire provisionally to get people in. And it's the first time it's
15 ever going to be -- will ever have been done. You know, the one
16 thing why we have a particularly hard time, you have to be an EMT
17 to be -- to work as a dispatcher at FRES, because we have to --
18 like I had mentioned, the Emergency Medical Dispatchers --

19

20 **CHAIRMAN THORNE:**

21 Right.

22

23 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

24 -- they have to be EMTs for the certification.

25

26 **CHAIRMAN THORNE:**

27 It seems to me when I took my Emergency Medical Dispatcher test
28 that wasn't a requirement. Is that something relatively new?
29 Because an ESD is still an ESD.

12:43PM

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31 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

32 All of our ESDs have to be EMTs, and it's been that way since --

33

34 **CHAIRMAN THORNE:**

35 All right.

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37 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

38 -- I could remember.

39

12:43PM

40 **CHAIRMAN THORNE:**

41 Something we need to look at and maybe change the regulation,
42 but --

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44 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

45 I don't -- I don't know if we can, because it's a certification
46 that requires it.

47

48 **CHAIRMAN THORNE:**

49 We'll -- you're probably right. We'll double-check on it. Our
12:43PM 50 Fire Marshals in our County have no authority to summons, or have
51 no bite to their inspection. Now I understand they are currently
52 only doing countywide buildings, which is good, because I don't
53 want them to write a ticket to our own buildings. Going to run out
54 of paper in some of these buildings. But if we were to call on
55 them to start, I don't know, checking the shelters, or anything
56 like that, they have no ability to write a summons, or have no

1 authority to act, really, I mean, short of going there.

2

3 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

4 It's in the Charter.

5

6 **CHAIRMAN THORNE:**

7 Huh?

8

9 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

12:44PM 10 It's in the Charter, so the Charter would have to be amended.

11

12 **CHAIRMAN THORNE:**

13 It wasn't always like that, though.

14

15 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

16 It's in the Charter. Last year I asked the Chief Fire Marshal to
17 look at that with my Assistant at the time, Pete Guaraldi.

18

19 **CHAIRMAN THORNE:**

20 Right.

21

22 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

23 I'll have to check back with them to see where he's at.

24

25 **CHAIRMAN THORNE:**

26 All right. Two more quick questions, and I appreciate the levity,
27 and I apologize that I'm keeping you here so long. You talk about
28 mental health in several locations. There was at one point, and I
29 believe still is, Critical Incident Stress Debriefing put out by
12:44PM 30 EMS workers. Is that still intact and working well?

31

32 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

33 Yeah. And, you know, that -- I'm glad you brought that up, because
34 one of the things I have instituted is -- for the first time, we
35 have two Chaplain Deputy Fire Coordinators, because not everything
36 rises to that level. And so we've had a lot of firefighters burn
37 this year, and, you know, I send the Chaplains to the burn unit and
38 the family, and they're very appreciative, because I don't want
39 anyone falling through the cracks.

12:45PM 40

41 **CHAIRMAN THORNE:**

42 Right.

43

44 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

45 You know, we cannot force a Fire Department to accept our services,
46 but we could let them know it's there.

47

48 **CHAIRMAN THORNE:**

49 We all know. It's like the earned dirt, you know.

50

51 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

52 Yeah.

53

54 **CHAIRMAN THORNE:**

55 They want to keep their gear dirty because they earned it, instead
56 of --

1
2 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

3 Right. But, you know what, this year we're doing -- we're doing an
4 active Chiefs training in May, as well as Deputy Fire Coordinator
5 training in April and May. The Chaplains will be there briefing
6 it. And we are going to do a piece on mental health, because we
7 want to start now, put the wheels in motion for the new Chiefs.
8

9 **CHAIRMAN THORNE:**

10 Outstanding. And firefighter rehab, still active, still working?
11 We're checking these guys before they go home?
12

13 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

14 Again, that's all --
15

16 **CHAIRMAN THORNE:**

17 Again, if you can get the guy to the rehab center, I get it.
18

19 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

20 We bring them the MERV.
21

22 **CHAIRMAN THORNE:**

23 A guy or girl.
24

25 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

26 Yeah. We'll bring them the MERV whenever it's asked for.
27

28 **CHAIRMAN THORNE:**

29 Okay. Because that also should be handled by the EMS units, I
30 would think, right? And the last thing. County Mutual Aid Plan,
31 we have been running, we're up to date with it?
32

33 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

34 Yes. We wouldn't have been able to get our accreditation.
35

36 **CHAIRMAN THORNE:**

37 All right. I -- you know, we have other questions, but at the end
38 of the day, I want to -- and I think I just lost the quorum anyway.
39 So, at the end of the day, thank you for your reports. Thanks for
40 coming in. We appreciate the end-of-year report. And as you have
41 needs, I can't think of anything more important than our Police and
42 our Fire Rescue as the most important aspect of what we do here.
43 Our first constitutional job is to provide safety to our residents,
44 and that is covered in the two entities. So if you need additional
45 services, or you find yourself, and I dare say this, needing more
46 funding for recruitment efforts, either with your paid Emergency
47 Services Dispatchers, or with your volunteers, please reach out to
48 us, and let's work together to make sure you have the resources you
49 need to complete your job.
50

51 **COMMISSIONER BECKLEY:**

52 All right, I appreciate that. Thank you, sir.
53

54 **CHAIRMAN THORNE:**

55 All right, thank you. Seeing no other business in front of this
56 committee, no Tabled Resolutions, no Introductory Resolutions, no

1 Procedural Motions, no Home Rule, no Executive Session, no Tabled
2 Resolutions, I see no other business, the meeting is adjourned.

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4 *(*The Meeting was Adjourned at 12:46 p.m. *)*
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