

Summary – Public Safety Committee Meeting

January 30, 2018

Committee Members Present:

Sharon Bulova (Chairman)
Penelope Gross, Mason District (Vice Chairman)
John Cook, Braddock District (Committee Chair)
John Foust, Dranesville District
Pat Herrity, Springfield District
Catherine Hudgins, Hunter Mill District
Jeff McKay, Lee District
Kathy Smith, Sully District
Linda Smyth, Providence District
Daniel Storck, Mount Vernon District

Approved January 9, 2018, Public Safety Committee Meeting Summary, and the January 30, 2018, Meeting Agenda and Meeting Materials:

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/boardofsupervisors/board-public-safety-committee-meeting-jan-30-2018>

Link to the January 30, 2018, Public Safety Committee Meeting video:

http://video.fairfaxcounty.gov/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=9&clip_id=954

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

The minutes from the November 28, 2017, Public Safety Committee meeting were approved.

The first topic on the agenda was the Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Climate Assessment.

- Supervisor Cook prefaced the segment with discussion of the purpose of the consultant's Climate Assessment report, the need for compliance to county policy and zero tolerance of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation, and the need to ensure an environment where people feel comfortable to come forward with concerns or complaints. He also emphasized the need for communication and leadership among the senior leadership team of the Fire and Rescue Department.
- Chairman Bulova commended the Fire & Rescue Department, but noted there are unique challenges and opportunities. The Fire & Rescue Department must have a strong embedded culture of respect for all members and one that protects all bullying and harassment.

- Deputy County Executive Rohrer provided opening remarks for the presentation. He highlighted the opportunity to effect positive change, the deliberative and collaborative process, and the goals to ensure equitable opportunities and an environment that is welcoming, positive, fair, nurturing, and safe for all. Mr. Rohrer provided some background on next steps and review of workgroup recommendations, to include by the Executive Review Committee and the Department of Justice. Recommendations are to be prioritized, and a final report will be produced.
- Chief Richard Bowers provided opening remarks for the three workgroups that presented. He also highlighted the collaboration amongst county agencies.
- Lt Katja Lancing, lead for the Women’s Initiatives Workgroup, provided an overview of the workgroup’s tasks, surveys they conducted, findings and recommendations, to include retention strategies.
- Chairman Bulova inquired about the concept of a “wedge” Lt. Lancing mentioned during her presentation. Lt. Lancing stated that the workgroup is concerned a “wedge” is being created between the women and men in the department by the ongoing focus on issues, training session, some complaints, etc. She stressed that women just wanted to be treated the same as men.
- Supervisor Gross inquired about a timeframe for increasing women represented in Senior Staff and if there is a national standard on medical testing specifically for women. Lt. Lancing explained that that the number of women achieving rank is increasing and if retention strategies are effective, more women will be able to compete and be promoted to the higher senior staff ranks. In the interim the workgroup recommends that several women be allowed to attend senior staff meetings to ensure diverse perspectives are considered. She also explained some of the reasons for enhanced medical testing for career women.
- Captain Tracey Reed and Lt. Marc Davidson, leads for the Leadership and Professional Development workgroup provided an overview of their recommendations with the goal to develop effective leadership at all levels to create and sustain a functional workplace that does not tolerate harassment, discrimination, bullying and retaliation. The focus is to create and sustain a comprehensive and systemic continuum of training that begins as a foundation for recruits and expands at every level up through senior staff.
- Supervisor Cook asked a question relating to the EEO training component outline in the education program, i.e., how many hours, per year and trainings for management and non-management. Lt. Davidson responded by outlining that EEO training will be included in every level of the training continuum so staff will receive appropriate EEO training throughout their career.

- As a follow-up, Supervisor Cook later requested that County EEO training be reviewed and modified, if needed, so that it be meaningful and relevant, but not cause any perceived “wedge.”
- Battalion Chief Tom Arnold and Hope Hohmann, DHR, the leads for the Hiring & Retention workgroup discussed their tasks, review of best practices, and recommendations. The workgroup focused on a full spectrum from initial outreach and recruitment of quality applicants through fair application, selection, and hiring processes to the effective onboarding of new recruits to give them a foundation for success.
- Chief Bowers highlighted several achievements since the inception of the workgroups. One is the expansion of the job share program and the flexible staffing plan, both strategies particularly designed to attract and retain women. He also discussed the aligning department policies with County policy, streamlining the application and promotional processes working with DHR, and a renewed emphasis and investment on behavioral health.
- Chief Bowers stated that the next steps are to prioritize the recommendations by immediate, mid-term, and long-term goals, determine budgetary impacts, review recommendations with the senior staff, County Attorney’s Office and the Department of Justice, and then craft a final summary report. He also plans to create an implementation team.
- Assistant Chief Caussin commented that although the consultant’s report and workgroup process has been challenging, an opportunity now exists for lasting and meaningful change.
- Supervisor Smyth noted concerns with cyberbullying and blogging, and that an environment needs to be created in which personnel are more comfortable in having meaningful and open dialogue in a more structured manner within the department.
- Supervisor McKay asked that any implementation plan or report include a priority list not constrained by budget. He wants the Board to first understand what the highest priorities and needs are, and then to work collaboratively with the FRD on how and when to implement.
- Supervisor Gross recommended that outside training, talent, and mentors, might be beneficial and should be considered. Supervisor Gross also noted that the process should not be dragged out and that any personnel related recommendations should also be shared with the Personnel Committee.

- Supervisor Foust questioned the “achievements” as noted by the Chief. He noted that tasks have been completed, but that there has to be demonstrated change and improvements to be labeled achievements or accomplishments.
- Supervisor Hudgins stated that the Fire & Rescue Department needs more diversity to help the department, to bring different experiences and perspectives, and to help members better understand acceptance. A focus on diversity recruitment presents an opportunity.
- Supervisor Storck encouraged a deeper look into flexibility of staffing and other opportunities to recruit and retain career members, particularly women.
- Supervisor Herrity emphasized the need for leadership and action to move forward, and not just end with a written report. He noted that a lot of challenges remain.
- Chairman Bulova commented that the process should be taken seriously and used to develop a stronger, more respectful department.

The second topic on the agenda was the discussion of Public Safety Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) Operational Usage presented by Roy Shrou, Deputy Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management.

- Deputy County Executive Rohrer introduced the purpose, which is to get a sense from the Board whether public safety could be allowed to use small Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) for operations such as search and rescue, large scale disasters, life safety operations, etc., but not covert police surveillance operations. Mr. Rohrer stated that this is a tool to enhance the current operational resources within the county.
- Roy Shrou introduced other agencies that were interested in a potential UAS program. He then provided an in-depth explanation for the broad range of potential operational mission profiles that a UAS program could support in the County, as they have elsewhere.
- An aspect of a UAV enables incident commanders to oversee a critical incident or event, see how widespread an event may be, and to livestream information to others or to the public.
- The benefits of a UAS/UAV program include enhanced situational awareness, increased safety for all involved, and as a force multiplier for existing operational resources. The tool would not be intended to replace other important tools such as police helicopters.

- Workgroup formed in May 2017 to develop program elements and address privacy protection, data management, transparency, legislation review, and public information opportunities and challenges.
- Upon approval, the next steps would include:
 - Policy development and privacy protections
 - Purchase of equipment
 - Flight training
 - Researching potential grant funding
 - Federal Certificate of Authorization
 - Public/Media Awareness
 - Media event
 - Fairfax Alerts
 - UAS half-day Summit
- Mr. Shrout noted several other jurisdictions or agencies that have a UAS program, including Loudoun County, Stafford County, and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management. VDOT is also looking at a UAS program.
- Supervisor Cook asked for clarification on what was being asked of the Board. He then stated he would prefer an Action Item come back to the Board, with review by the County Attorney's Office and issues such as privacy and private property concerns addressed.
- Chairman Bulova noted support for this technology and its potential benefits. She too noted privacy concerns need to be addressed.
- Supervisor Herrity noted the excellent technology, its benefits, and wants the County to move forward and catch up with other localities. He too noted the privacy concerns need to be addressed.
- Supervisor Smith also noted the potential benefits, but also that the privacy concerns have to be addressed.
- Supervisor Gross asked if the UAV has FLIR (Forward Looking Infrared) capability. Mr. Shrout stated that the model presented does not but that it can be an option on other models.
- Supervisor Gross inquired about the storage of the video, including how long the video must be stored, and if there is a special requirement such as the body worn cameras. Agencies would follow the retention schedule of the Library of Virginia, but the County Attorney's Office will review further.

- Supervisor Gross also asked if a UAS program would require additional staffing. Mr. Shroul stated that it would not. OEM and other agencies would train existing staff, and any use or deployments would be part of their assigned duties and responsibilities.
- Supervisor Cook recommended that OEM and other staff develop a draft policy and first circulate it to the Board for comment and then bring forward an Action Item.

Meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.