

Public Safety Committee



AGENDA - REGULAR MEETING

OSWEGO COUNTY, NEW YORK

Date/ Time: Monday, January 30, 2023 at 11:00 a.m.

Location: Conference Room E - Legislative Office Building 46 East Bridge Street Oswego, New York

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Marc Greco, Chair	Legislator, 24 th District
Richard Kline, Vice Chair	Legislator, 12 th District
Frank Bombardo	Legislator, 7 th District
Frank Castiglia	Legislator, 25 th District
Mary Ellen Chesbro	Legislator, 10 th District
Laurie Mangano	Legislator, 17 th District
Herbert Yerdon	Legislator, 2 th District
Nathan Emmons	Legislator, 15 th District

CALL TO ORDER:

- Pledge of Allegiance

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- Approval of the Minutes for the Public Safety Committee's regular meeting on November 28, 2022

RESOLUTIONS:

- PS-1** Resolution Authorizing the Creation of One Position and Deletion of One Position
- PS-2** Resolution Authorizing Budget Modification Sheriff's Office -Transfer from Insurance Recovery (Treasurer's Office) to Automotive Supplies and Repair (Road Division)

COMMITTEE REVIEW & DECISIONS

- CSI Update

REPORTING DEPARTMENTS:

- EMS
- EMO
- Probation Report
- Fire Coordinator
- E911

ADJOURNMENT:

Public Safety Committee

DRAFT



MINUTES - REGULAR MEETING

OSWEGO COUNTY, NEW YORK

Date/ Time: Monday, November 28, 2022 at 11:00am

Location: Conference Room E - Legislative Office Building 46 East Bridge Street Oswego, New York

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Marc Greco, Chair	Legislator, 24 th District	Present
Nathan Emmons, Vice Chair	Legislator, 15 th District	Present
Frank Bombardo	Legislator, 7 th District	Excused
Frank Castiglia	Legislator, 25 th District	Present
Mary Ellen Chesbro	Legislator, 10 th District	Present
Richard Kline	Legislator, 12 th District	Present
Laurie Mangano	Legislator, 17 th District	Present
Herbert Yerdon	Legislator, 2 th District	Present

STAFF AND GUESTS:

David Hall	Nate Degear	Shane Laws	Cathleen Palmitesso
Kevin Pooley	Phil Church	John Toomey	Greg Oakes
Sheriff Hilton	James Weatherup	Renee Fox	Bob Wilmott
Brad Trudell	Holly Carpenter		

CALL TO ORDER:

A Regular Meeting of the Public Safety Committee was called to order at 11:01 a.m. by Committee Chairman Marc Greco with the Deputy Clerk of the Legislature Present. The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion to approve the October 31 meeting minutes: Legislator Kline

Second: Legislator Bombardo

Vote: Unanimous, motion carried

The minutes for the Public Safety Committee's Regular Meeting on October 31, 2022 were approved

RESOLUTIONS:

PS-1 Resolution Accepting DCJS Specialized Female Offender Program Grant and Authorizing the Creation of a Temporary Probation Officer Position

Motion to approve: Legislator Kline

Second: Legislator Emmons

Meeting Minutes

Page 1 of 3

Vote: Unanimous, motion carried

- PS-2** Resolution Adopting and Approving a Domestic Terrorism Plan for Oswego County
Motion to amend to add “towns and villages”: Legislator Chesbro
Second: Legislator H. Yerdon
Vote: Unanimous, motion carried
- PS-3** Resolution Authorizing Budget Modification E911 – Overtime
Motion to approve: Legislator Emmons
Second: Legislator Bombardo
Vote: Unanimous, motion carried
- PS-4** Resolution Authorizing Replacement of Twelve Microwave Radio Links
Motion to approve: Legislator Kline
Second: Legislator H. Yerdon
Vote: Unanimous, motion carried

COMMITTEE REVIEW & DECISIONS:

Committee Chair Greco provides update on the county’s Community Safety Initiative, which will meet again Jan. 12

Donna Calverase was recognized for 25 years of service to the county

REPORTING DEPARTMENTS:

EMO/EMS

Nate Dreger EMS Coordinator provided a report included in the packet and a verbal EMS update.
Cathleen Palmitesso provided a report included in the packet and a verbal update.

Probation

Director David Hall of Probation submitted a report that’s included in the packet and gave a verbal overview of the report.

Fire Coordinator

Fire Coordinator Shane Laws submitted a report that’s included in the packet and gave a verbal overview of the report.

E-911

Director Kevin Pooley of E-911 submitted a report that’s included in the packet.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Legislator Emmons motions to enter executive session to discuss the financial credit history of a particular person or corporation. Legislator Kline seconds. Motion carries at 11:46 a.m.

Legislator Emmons motions to exit executive session. Legislator Mangano seconds. Motion carries at 12:03 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

Legislator Emmons motions to adjourn, seconded by Legislator Mangano. Meeting adjourned at 12:04 p.m.

DRAFT

Matthew Reitz
Deputy Clerk of the Legislature

RESOLUTION NO.

February 9, 2022

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CREATION OF ONE POSITION AND
DELETION OF ONE POSITION**

By Legislator Marc Greco:

WHEREAS, due to the demands of operating a 24/7 Correctional Facility with the provision of mandated medical services to all inmates housed within the Facility on a timely basis in compliance with the directives of the NYS Commission of Corrections, and

and WHEREAS, position #315039301 (Chief Correction Administrator) is to be deleted,

WHEREAS, the department has identified an increased need for a Correction Officer-SGT in an Administrative duty to directly supervise the training and daily activities within the Correctional Facility.

NOW, upon recommendation of the Public Safety Committee with approval of the Finance and Personnel Committee of this body, be it

RESOLVED, that position #315039301, Chief Correction Administrator, SG 60 Step 19, in the Management, be deleted and Correction Officer-SGT, Grade 6 in the Silver Star Union be created, and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution delivered to the County Treasurer, Budget Officer, and Director of Human Resources shall be their authority to make such changes.

RESOLUTION PASSED/FAILED, WITH A VOICE/ROLL CALL VOTE

YES:

NO:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:



ADMINISTRATION
(315) 349-3307
FAX (315) 349-3483

ROAD PATROL
(315) 349-3411
FAX (315) 349-3303

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION
(315) 349-3318
FAX (315) 349-3317

OSWEGO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

DONALD R. HILTON
SHERIFF



JOHN F. TOOMEY
UNDERSHERIFF
MICHAEL R. BENJAMIN
JAIL ADMINISTRATOR



CIVIL DIVISION
(315) 349-3302
FAX (315) 349-3373
1-800-582-7583

JAIL DIVISION
(315) 349-3300
FAX (315) 349-3349

39 Churchill Road, Oswego, New York 13126-6613

INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM

Date: January 17, 2023

Subject: Restructuring of positions within the Oswego County Jail to more efficiently and safely supervise personnel involved in the training of new personnel.

Purpose: To have a Full-time Correction Officer- Sgt. in an Administrative position that directly oversees the training of new personnel and daily operations.

Summary: The Sheriff's Office requests the addition of a Correction Officer-Sgt. Eliminating a Chief of Corrections Administrator position will allow for the creation of this position within the current budget.

Fiscal Impact The cost of this proposal will be absorbed within the current Sheriff's Office budget. The salary of a Chief of Corrections Administrator being \$95,396 and the addition of a Correction Officer-Sgt. costing \$55,598, leaves a surplus of \$39,798. The surplus will fund requested salary increases for the two current Correction Supervisor positions, Position #315029102 will increase to \$91,889 (SG 50, Step 25) and Position #315029101 will increase to \$90,531(SG 50, Step 24). The Supervisory changes will result in an overall savings of \$7,698 to the County.

Recommended Action The Oswego County Sheriff respectively requests approval by the Finance and Personnel Committee and the Oswego County Legislature to authorize the creation of one Correction Officer-SGT position and the deletion of one Chief of Corrections Administrator position along with the setting of the Correction Supervisor's salaries.

POSITION REQUEST/DELETE BUDGET FORM

DEPARTMENT: Sheriff's	DIVISION/UNIT (NUMBER): 3150
A. NEW POSITION REQUEST	
1. Position Title Requested: Correction Officer-Sgt.	
2. Bargaining Unit: <input type="checkbox"/> CO-OP <input type="checkbox"/> Highway <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Silver Star <input type="checkbox"/> Deputies <input type="checkbox"/> OCPA <input type="checkbox"/> Mgmt.	
3. a. Bargaining Unit – Hourly Rate from Grade plan: 26.73	Grade: 6
b. Management or OCPA – Salary Requested: _____	Grade: _____
4. Percent of Federal and or State Reimbursement: _____ Fringe Reimbursed: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
5. Justification of Need (Use additional sheets as necessary): <i>This position will be an Administrative Sergeant that oversees training and daily supervision of the day to day operations.</i>	
6. Complete New Position Duties Statement (p. 3 & 4).	
B. RECLASSIFICATION REQUEST	
1. Present Title: _____	2. Position #: _____
3. Present Salary/Hourly Rate: _____	Grade: _____
4. Requested Title: _____	
5. Requested Salary: _____	
a. Bargaining Unit: _____	Hourly Rate: _____ Grade: _____
b. Management or OCPA – Salary Requested: _____	Grade: _____
6. Percent of Federal and/or State Reimbursement: _____ Fringe Reimbursed: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
7. Justification of Need (use additional sheets as necessary):	
8. Complete New Position Duties Statement (p. 3 & 4).	

C. POSITION DELETION

1. Title to be Deleted: Chief of Correction

2. Position # 315039301

3. Salary Savings: 95396.00

4. Reason for Deletion:

Re-organization in the Corrections Division following the retirement of Chief of Correction Administrator Benjamin.

Civil Service Law: Section 22. Certification for positions. Before any new positions in the service of a civil division shall be created or any existing position in such service shall be reclassified, the proposal therefore, including a statement of the duties of the position, shall be referred to the municipal commission having jurisdiction and such commission shall furnish a certificate stating the appropriate civil service title for the proposed position or the position to be reclassified. Any such new position shall be created or any such position reclassified only with the title approved and certified by the commission.

**OSWEGO COUNTY HUMAN RESOURCES
DEPARTMENT**

NEW POSITION DUTIES STATEMENT

Department head or other authority requesting the creation of a new position, prepare a separate description for each new position to be created except that one description may cover two or more identical positions in the same organizational unit. Forward two typed copies to this office.

**1. DEPARTMENTS/SCHOOL
DISTRICT/TOWN OR VILLAGE**
Sheriff's

DIVISION, UNIT, OR WORK SECTION
Corrections

LOCATION OF POSITION
Correctional Facility

2. DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES: Describe the work in sufficient detail to give a clear word picture of the job. Use a separate Paragraph for each kind of work and describe the more important or time-consuming duties first. In the left column, estimate how the total working time is divided.

Title requested: *Correction Officer-Sgt.*

**PERCENT OF
WORK TIME**

10	<i>Conducts briefings, provides assignments, verbal directions and written orders.</i>
10	<i>May assign staff to facility activities and assures that adequate numbers are available to staff the jail.</i>
10	<i>Speaks with off-going staff to ascertain the condition of the jail and communicates that information to supervisors</i>
10	<i>Addresses requests or grievances from staff, inmates and the public</i>
10	<i>Provides orientation to new staff and reviews trainee progress</i>
10	<i>Uses counseling, coaching and crisis intervention techniques in communicating</i>
10	<i>Supervises Correction Officers in the course of their duties</i>
10	<i>Maintains shift-security of the facility by making periodic inspections, searching for contraband, checking operation of equipment, investigating disruptive incidents and taking remedial action.</i>
10	<i>Reports any unusual incidents that occur</i>
10	<i>May perform the task of Correction Officer.</i>

(Attach additional sheets if more space is needed)

3. Names and titles of person supervising (general, direct, administrative, etc.).

NAME	TITLE	TYPE OF SUPERVISION
John Toomey	Undersheriff	Indirect
Geoff Beresford	Correction Officer-LT	Direct

4. Names and titles of persons supervised by employee in this position.

NAME	TITLE	TYPE OF SUPERVISION
Joshua Altoran	Correction Officer	Direct
Glynn Meggison	Correction Officer	Direct
Travis Balcom	Correction Officer	Direct

5. Names and titles of persons doing substantially the same kind and level of work as will be done by the incumbent of this new position.

NAME	TITLE	LOCATION OF POSITION
Brent Counterman	Correction Officer-Sgt	Jail
Barbara Russo	Correction Officer-Sgt	Jail
James Loomis	Correction Officer-Sgt	Jail

6. What minimum qualifications do you think should be required for this position?

Education: ☒ High School _____ years
☐ College _____ years, with specialization in _____
☐ Other _____ years, with specialization in _____

Experience (list amount and type): *Three years paid experience in corrections involving the direct supervision of inmates.*

Essential knowledge, skills and abilities: *Knowledge of laws, rules regulations, policies and procedures governing the treatment of inmates, safety and security of the facility and employees. Ability to plan and supervise the work of Correction Officers engaged in inmate supervision; effectively communicate and enforce rules and regulations of the facility.*

Type of license or certificate required: Certification and all mandated training as a Correction Officer in the State of New York.

7. The above statements are accurate and complete.

Date: 1/17/23

Title: Sheriff

Signature: *Donald R. Hilton*

CERTIFICATE OF OSWEGO COUNTY PERSONNEL OFFICER

8. In accordance with the provisions of Civil Service Law (Section 22), the Oswego County Personnel Officer certifies that the appropriate civil service title for the position described is:

POSITION CLASS TITLE:

JURISDICTIONAL CLASS:

Date:

Signature:

POSITION CLASS TITLE: CORRECTION OFFICER - SERGEANT

JURISDICTIONAL CLASS: Competitive

CIVIL DIVISION: County

AUTHORIZATION: Oswego County Personnel Officer
November 1991, 1/04

POSITION CLASS DEFINITION:

Essential nature of work, degree of difficulty and responsibility.

Assists the administration in supervising operations at the Oswego County Jail on an assigned shift; performs related work as required. This position serves as relief for the Corrections Supervisor and may manage a shift.

This is a position involving responsibility for the supervision of assigned personnel, the proper guarding of inmates and maintaining order and security in the facility. Supervision is exercised over Correction Officers through inspections and the assignment of duties in accordance with general instructions received from officers of higher rank.

PRIMARY WORK ACTIVITIES:

Typical activities characteristic of the class.

- Conducts briefings, provides assignments, verbal directions and written orders;
- Observes employee performance, monitors activities, audits department records and logs to insure that staff comply with department policy and professional standards;
- Commends staff for exemplary performance and reports deficient performance;
- May assign staff to facility activities and assures that adequate numbers are available to staff the jail;
- May perform the tasks of Correction Officers;
- Speaks with off-going staff to ascertain the condition of the jail and communicates that information to supervisors and on-coming personnel.
- Uses radios, intercoms, alarm transmitters, teletypes and telephones to report routine events and emergencies;
- Addresses requests or grievances from staff, inmates and the public;
- Uses counseling, coaching and crisis intervention techniques in communicating;
- Interviews inmates and employers concerning performance in work release or similar programs;
- Reads and applies department policy, court orders, case law, statutes and standards of the New York Commission on Corrections;
- Communicates jail rules, schedules and authorized information to other staff, the public, and other agencies;
- Provides orientation to new staff and reviews trainee progress;
- Completes a variety of reports, forms and official documents such as inter-departmental memos, inmate rosters, court lists, work lists, property and financial logs, incident, disciplinary and crime reports;
- Supervises and controls inmates in their custody, in all areas of the facility, and verifies periodic counts of prisoners;
- Visits every area of the facility inspecting the physical plant for housekeeping, security or maintenance problems;

CORRECTION OFFICER - SERGEANT (0259)

PRIMARY WORK ACTIVITIES (CONT.):

- Supervises Correction Officers in the course of their duties;
- Maintains shift security of the facility by making periodic inspections, searching for contraband, checking operation of equipment, investigating disruptive incidents and taking remedial action;
- Reports any unusual incidents that occur;
- Supervises the visiting of inmates;
- May maintain financial records for inmates, accept monies for bail and issue receipts;
- Supervises and participates in the booking of new inmates.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

Summary of full performance level characteristics.

GOOD KNOWLEDGE OF: laws, rules, regulations, policies and procedures governing the treatment of inmates, safety and security of the facility and employees; techniques used in training and rehabilitating inmates; advanced security and custody methods; individual behavior under stress; control center, fire, security and communications equipment.

ABILITY TO: plan and supervise the work of Correction Officers engaged in inmate supervision; effectively communicate and enforce rules and regulations of the facility ; maintain records and prepare reports; obtain information through interview and observation; make sound judgments regarding security and personal safety in emergency situations; function in a stressful environment; detect potential behavior problems and symptoms of health problems; physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

Education, specialized background, training and experience.

Graduation from high school or possession of an equivalency diploma and three years paid experience in corrections involving the direct supervision of inmates.

REQUIRED CERTIFICATION/LICENSE: Certification and all mandated training as a Correction Officer in the State of New York.

RESOLUTION NO.

February 9, 2022

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING BUDGET MODIFICATION SHERIFF'S OFFICE –
TRANSFER FROM INSURANCE RECOVERY (TREASURER'S OFFICE) TO
AUTOMOTIVE SUPPLIES AND REPAIR (ROAD DIVISION)**

By Legislator Marc Greco:

Upon recommendation of the Public Safety and Emergency Services Committee of this body, with the approval of the Finance and Personnel Committee, be it

RESOLVED, that the County Treasurer be, and he hereby is, authorized to transfer the funds from and to the accounts as shown on the attached budget modification request, and be it further

RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this resolution delivered to the County Treasurer shall be his authority to affect such transfer and make such adjustments.

RESOLUTION PASSED/FAILED, WITH A VOICE/ROLL CALL VOTE

YES:

NO:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:



ADMINISTRATION
(315) 349-3307
FAX (315) 349-3483

ROAD PATROL
(315) 349-3411
FAX (315) 349-3303

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION
(315) 349-3318
FAX (315) 349-3317

OSWEGO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

DONALD R. HILTON
SHERIFF



39 Churchill Road, Oswego, New York 13126-6613

JOHN F. TOOMEY
UNDERSHERIFF
MICHAEL R. BENJAMIN
JAIL ADMINISTRATOR



CIVIL DIVISION
(315) 349-3302
FAX (315) 349-3373
1-800-582-7583

JAIL DIVISION
(315) 349-3300
FAX (315) 349-3349

INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 24, 2023

SUBJECT: Vehicle Repair from the Insurance Recovery Fund

SUMMARY: A request is being made to transfer funds from the Insurance Recovery Fund (A1325.426800) in the amount of \$921.11 into Automotive Supplies and Repair (A3110.544100) to repair one 2017 Ford Utility Police Interceptor that collided with a deer. Attached is a copy of the claim check sent from New York Municipal Insurance Reciprocal.

RECOMMENDED

ACTION: The Sheriff's Office respectfully requests your review and approval of this request.

NEW YORK MUNICIPAL INSURANCE RECIPROCAL

DATE ISSUED 1/05/23

CHECK NO. 0000127412

Description	Check Amount
Claim No: OSWEG-2022-040-001, Commercial Automobile Comprehensive/Glass, Invoice No: Claimant: Oswego County DOL: 10/6/2022, SUPPLEMENT 17 FORD VIN#5085	\$921.11
CHECK TOTAL	\$921.11

THIS CHECK IS VOID WITHOUT A BLUE & GREEN BACKGROUND AND A WATERMARK PATTERN ON THE BACK - HOLD AT ANGLE TO VIEW

NEW YORK MUNICIPAL INSURANCE RECIPROCAL

119 WASHINGTON AVENUE
ALBANY, NY 12210

KEY BANK OF NEW YORK
99 WASHINGTON AVENUE, ALBANY, NY 12210
TWIN TOWERS OFFICE

CHECK NO: 0000127412

29-7
213

DATE

1/05/23

PAY: Nine hundred twenty one and 11/100 Dollars

TO THE
THE ORDER
OF OSWEGO COUNTY

CHECK AMOUNT

\$*****921.11

MAIL TO OSWEGO COUNTY
46 EAST BRIDGE STREET
OSWEGO, NY 13126

Robert A. B...
Check to the order of Oswego County

SIGNATURE HAS A COLORED BACKGROUND

⑈0000127412⑈ ⑈021300077⑈ 325680004174⑈

Date: January 24, 2023

TO

TOTAL AMOUNT

COUNTY TREASURER

DATE _____

DATE _____

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

DATE _____



Oswego County EMS

200 North Second St., Fulton, NY 13069

(315) 591-9150 (office) (315) 591-9176 (fax)

Cathleen Palmitesso - Director of Emergency Management

Nate Degear, EMT - EMS Field Coordinator

Jordan Holiday, M.D. - Medical Director



Public Safety Committee Meeting- January 30th, 2023

EMS Coordinator Report

December 2022/January 2023 Activities

1. EMS Education

- a. All 2022 Fall Classes are complete. Amongst the 3 classes, we had 17 students pass.
- b. Preparing for some Spring classes, including another EMT class and an Advanced EMT class.

2. Response

- a. Area hospitals continue to struggle with caseloads, however, are spending less time on DOH diversion than recent times.
- b. Psych/substance abuse cases are still high.
- c. Continued to monitor ambulance resources/coverage in the county
- d. MCI cache equipment has been deployed to strategic locations throughout the county.

3. Meetings

- a. Oswego Health/ Partner agency COVID calls
- b. CSI
- c. Bureau of EMS Agency Leadership calls
- d. Bureau of EMS Course Sponsor calls
- e. Bureau of EMS Child Advisory Committee
- f. EMS Advisory Council meeting
- g. County EMS Continuous Quality Improvement
- h. Regional EMS Council
- i. County Fire Battalions



Public Safety Committee Report

EMO – January 2023

Planning/Grants:

1. Continue to manage and administer various grants with our stakeholders.
2. Planning meetings are underway with consultant for our update to the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP).
3. Continue the planning efforts to implement WebEOC in the county as our incident management system. Looking at securing a vendor to help bring additional training and expertise to the platform to enhance our usage and capabilities.
4. Planning meetings are underway with the consultant for the Mass Fatality Plan Seminar and Exercise.
5. Met with EMO staff to discuss actions/goals for the department in 2023.

Meetings/Webinars/Conferences:

1. Attend the monthly National Weather Service (NWS) update and winter weather outlook conference calls.
2. Participated in the quarterly Region IV NYS OEM Conference Call.
3. Participated in the bi-annual meeting with our National Grid Representative.
4. Participated in a year end wrap up meeting at OPD regarding the drone program.
5. Hosted the quarterly Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) meeting at EMO.

Radiological Preparedness:

1. Successfully completed FEMA evaluated interviews with both the Mexico & Oswego School Districts regarding their roles and responsibilities as it relates to a radiological emergency.
2. Provided Post Plume Training with our partners to review and prepare for the TTX exercise.
3. Successfully participated in the FEMA Evaluated Post Plume TTX with our partners.
4. Radiological Emergency Preparedness emergency worker training sessions are ongoing with our partners.
5. Participated in an initial planning meeting with NYS OEM, Constellation and FEMA for our two radiological exercises that will be conducted in 2023.
6. Constellation provided the required annual training on Emergency Action Levels (EALs) and Emergency Classification Level (ECL) for EMO staff.

Response:

1. As supply permits, we continue to provide at home COVID tests to agencies, municipalities and departments as requested. We have seen a continued demand at the Adult Care Facilities, OFA, DSS and municipalities for their town offices.

UAS (Unmanned Aircraft Systems) Activities:

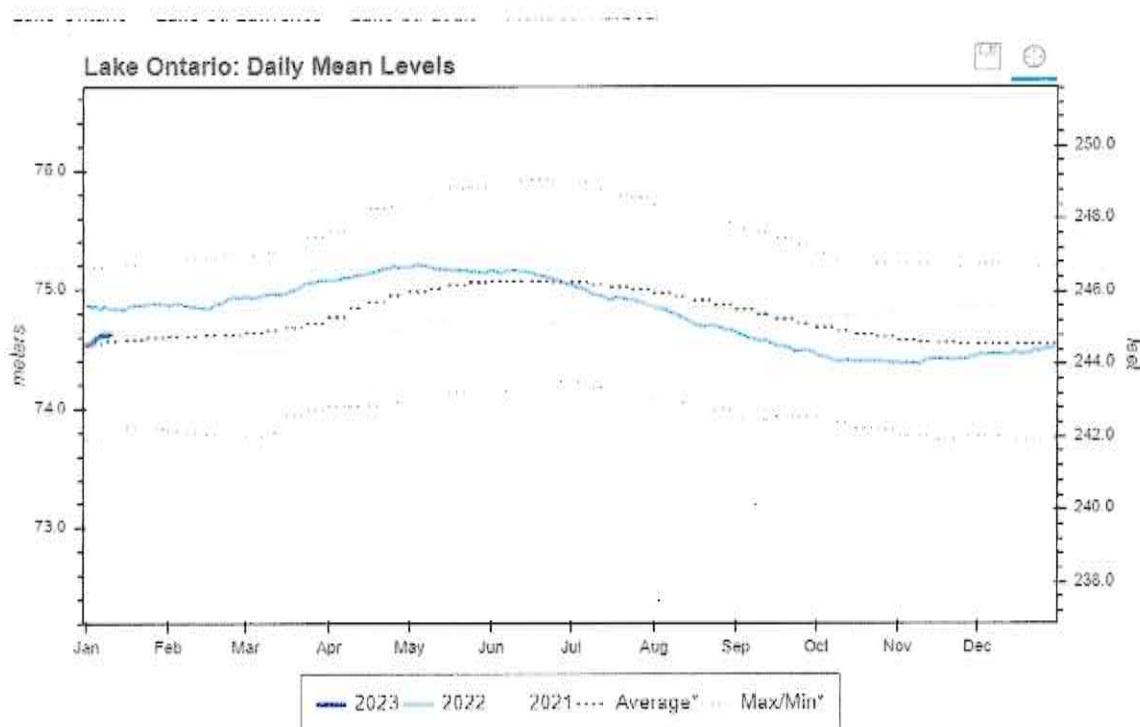
1. Total flights in 2022 – 609 (City of Oswego 353, County 237, Novelis 19 missions)
2. The tactical drone was utilized several times in the month of December
3. Ongoing testing with remote flight w/OPD and OFD and have will begin testing at 911 Center in the month of January.
4. Drone Demonstration conducted for the E911 Open House.
5. Submitted an RFP to purchase a Matric 300 drone for the Sheriff's Office that will have drop capabilities.
6. FAA has announced Drone Safety Day is 4/29/23. Coordinator looking to plan an event in Oswego County to demonstrate capabilities and answer questions. More information to follow.
7. Drone images provided to County Tourism Department of the Health Department Bunner Street Facility.

Forecast & Winter Weather Outlook

1. From Jan. 18-24th above normal precipitation and temperatures are favored.

Great Lake Level Conditions and Forecast

1. Current Water Level as of January 11 (IJC) 244.88 ft.
2. Average Water Level for January 9-15 (IJC) 244.65 ft.
3. Forecast Water Level Range for February 10 (IJC) 244.65-245.51 ft.



**OSWEGO COUNTY
PROBATION DEPARTMENT**

Public Safety Center
39 Churchill Road
Oswego, New York 13126
Phone: (315) 349-3477

DIRECTOR
David L. Hall

SUPERVISORS
Margaret A. Fitzgibbons
Shannon M. Perkins
Karen J. Smith
Chrystal L. Thompson

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE REPORT

PROBATION

January 30, 2023

Supervision

- As of 1/11/23, the department had 641 individuals under some level of supervision/monitoring (Criminal Court, Family Court and Juvenile Intake).

Investigations

- 96 investigations were assigned in December 2022 (Presentence, Pre-Plea, Predisposition and Pre-Transfer).

Electronic Monitoring

- As of 1/11/23, the department had 33 individuals under electronic monitoring. This number, which varies month to month, includes individuals under Pre-Trial Release, Probation Supervision and Predisposition (Family Court).

Pre-Trial Release

- As of 1/11/23, the department was monitoring 82 individuals on Pre-Trial Release.

Grant Funding

- The department was awarded a grant from DCJS to continue operating the CBI program in the jail in 2023. This program involves probation officers providing the Interactive Journaling curriculum to incarcerated individuals.
- The department was also approved to receive another grant through DCJS for 2023 to add a probation officer position to supervise a women's specific caseload and run an employment readiness program.

Restitution/DWI Fees

- In December 2022, the department collected \$11,021.19 in restitution (\$559.53 in surcharge).
- In December 2022, the department collected \$2,736.10 in DWI supervision fees.

Special Services

- The department currently has 9 officers who are qualified to carry a firearm full time. Special Services Officers execute Violation of Probation warrants and conduct unannounced home visits with probationers.
- As of 11/14/22, the department had 48 active VOP warrants.

Staffing

- The department presently has a Director, 4 Supervisors, 7 Senior Probation Officers, 16 Probation Officers, 3 Probation Assistants, an Administrative Secretary, a Principal Account Clerk, an Account Clerk, 2 Typists and 2 Sr. Typists.
- The department has 2 Probation Officers that need to complete Fundamentals of Probation Practice training and the Basic Course for Peace Officer training. There are 3 Probation Officers in need of Special Services training. Two of them will be attending the Academy scheduled to begin on 1/30/23.

Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI)

- The department receives State funding for the Enhanced Pre-Trial Release program. As such, DCJS requires that a local planning group meet on a regular basis to review the ATI plan and delivery of ATI services. This board met on 12/14/22 and is scheduled to meet next on Wednesday, 3/15/23.

Supervision and Treatment Services for Juveniles Program (STSJP)

- Probation is the county's lead agency for STSJP. The 2022-2023 plan was approved and provides state funding for probation supervision/intake services and a school program operated by the Youth Bureau.

Victim Impact Panel (VIP)

- The department works in conjunction with STOP DWI to provide the Victim Impact Panel. The next panel is scheduled to be held on Wednesday, 2/15/23.



OSWEGO COUNTY FIRE COORDINATORS OFFICE

720 East Seneca Street, Oswego, NY 13126

Shane P. Laws
Fire Coordinator

Office: 315.349.8800
Fax: 315-349-8810

Fire Coordinators Report January 2023

Coordinator Activity: (1/1/22-12/31/2022)

Coordinator Activations: 282
Structure Fires: 96
Haz Mat Team: 19
Fire Investigation Team: 44
Dive Team: 4
Rope Rescue Team: 1
No Response Required: 87
Other: 31

FIRE TRAINING:

- Fire Officer 2 – 12/3,4,9,10,11. ERTC (Full) Students Completed -- *Students Completed -- 19*
- Fire Officer 1 – 10/17-1/11/23. ERTC Students Completed -- *Students Completed -- 13*
- Pump Ops – 12/1,7,13,15,17,18 (Night Class) – Central Square FD *Students Completed -- 13*
- Pump Ops – 12/15,16 & 18 – (Days) *Novelis Students Completed -- 14*
- Firefighter Survival & Self Rescue – 12/10,13 & 17—ERTC *Students Completed -- 13*
- Safety Officer – 1/16,23,18,24,26,30 – ERTC
- BEFO/IFO – 1/23/23-5/24/23 – ERTC
- Sprinkler Systems for the Fire Service – 2/13 & 2/15/23 – ERTC
- Hazmat Module 1 2/17,18,19 – ERTC
- Hazmat Module 2 3/10,11 -- ERTC
- Hazmat Module 3 3/12 -- ERTC
- Hazmat Module 4 Tentative 5/5,6,7 – ERTC
- Hazmat Module 5 Tentative 6/3,4 – ERTC
- Alarm Systems for the Fire Service – 3/13 & 3/15/23 – ERTC
- Firefighter 2 – 6/5,7,12,14,19,21,26,28,7/5,10,12,17 -- ERTC

Capital Projects:

- Mini Splits installed in lower classroom completed.

ERTC Staffing:

- 2 -4 Instructor position open. If interested send the Fire Coordinator a resume & letter of intent.

Other:

- Responded to the Buffalo Snowstorm for 3 days with 2 Fire Departments Granby Center & Orwell. We assisted Buffalo FD & AMR Ambulance.
- Attended Battalion Meetings in December.
- Attended Oneida Lake Winter meeting
- New York State Recruitment & Retention Report released
- Planning Hazmat Drills with both City of Oswego & Novelis for the spring
- A meeting has been planned with Department Heads or their representative for January 31st to discuss and review building safety plans.
- Upgrading sprinkler lab to include new valves and rewiring of alarm panel.



OFFICE OF THE OSWEGO COUNTY FIRE COORDINATOR

720 East Seneca Street, Oswego, New York 13126

Shane P. Laws
Fire Coordinator

Office: 315.349.8800
Fax: 315.349.8810

To: Department Heads
From: Shane Laws, Fire Coordinator
Date: January 11, 2023

Re: Building Evacuation & Emergency Plans

The Fire Coordinator's Office will be hosting a meeting to discuss "Building Evacuation and Emergency Plans" on **January 31st from 10:00AM – 12:00PM. Meeting will be held in the upper classroom at ERTC, 720 East Seneca Street. I am requesting, 1 to 2 representatives from each department be assigned to oversee the plan for your department/area of the building.**

As we enter the New Year a large goal for The Fire Coordinator's Office is to take more initiative in ensuring each County Building is to code per NYS Building Code, with this initiative it includes "Building Evacuation and Emergency Plans".

The goal of this meeting is to discuss the process to update/revise your plans. Together, we will review plans and have templates available to assist with the updates. Each department/building has the responsibility to develop and maintain such plans to ensure the safety of the building's occupants. The Fire Coordinator's Office has Building Code Inspectors that will be available to assist with this process.

Once, the plans are completed and reviewed; we will provide training to all personnel. During that training we will conduct evacuation drills according to department/buildings updated plan. Our goal is to complete the plan updates during the first quarter of 2023 and conduct drills during the second and third quarters.

Please RSVP with your department's representatives to our Code Enforcement Officer, Donald Forbes at Donald.forbes@oswegocounty.com by **Monday, January 23rd**.

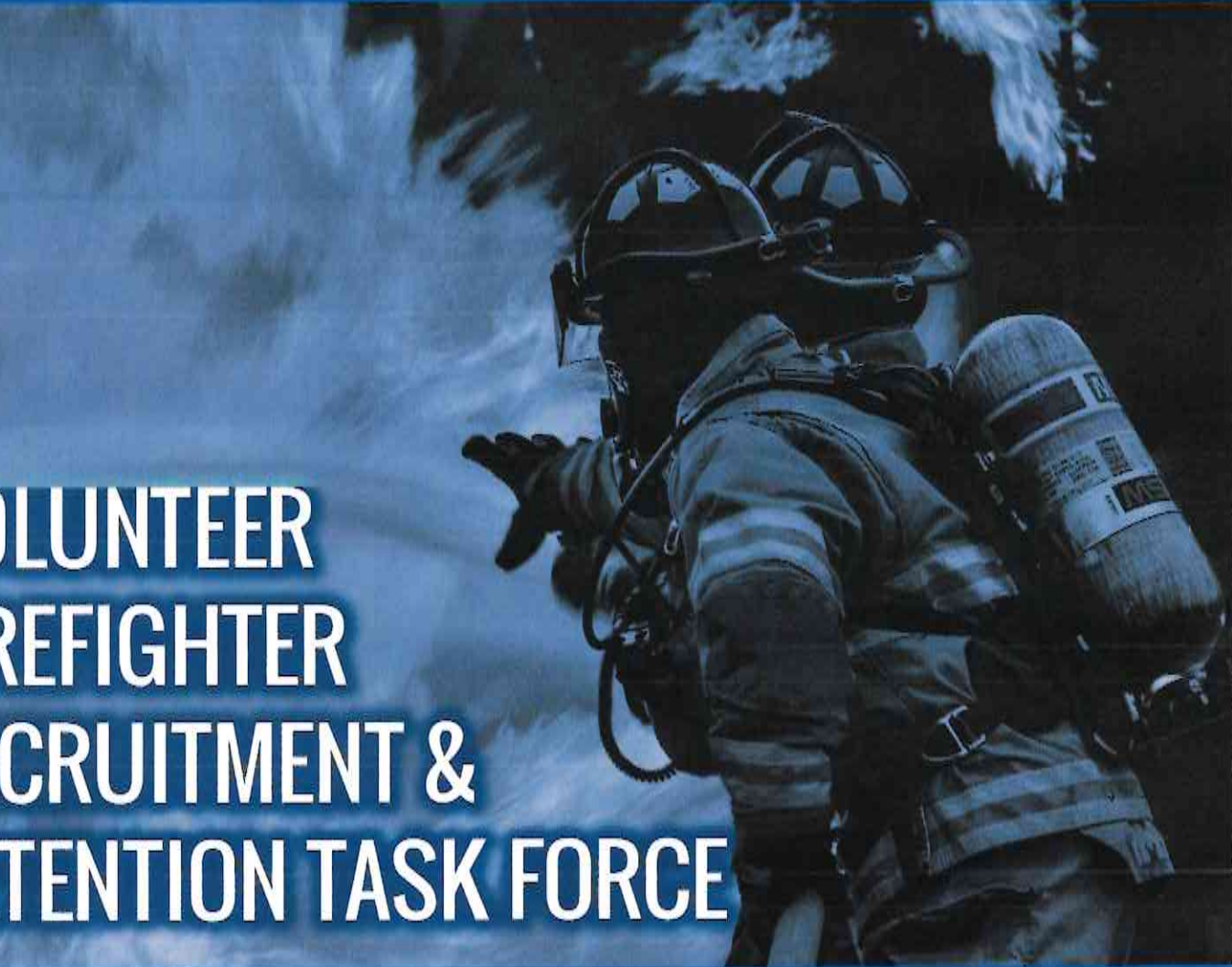
If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Fire Coordinator's Office at 315-349-8800 or email Don.

Thank you for your assistance,

Shane Laws
County Fire Coordinator



Homeland Security
and Emergency Services

A photograph of a firefighter in full protective gear, including a helmet and oxygen tank, fighting a fire. The firefighter is seen from the side, reaching out with one hand. The background is filled with thick white smoke and bright orange flames.

VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER RECRUITMENT & RETENTION TASK FORCE

REPORT • DECEMBER 2022

The Volunteer Firefighter Recruitment and Retention Task Force (Task Force) was created by Chapter 258 of the Laws of 2020 and amended by Chapter 7 of the Laws of 2021 and Chapter 335 of the Laws of 2022, for the purpose of making recommendations to improve volunteer firefighter recruitment and retention. The Task Force was charged with evaluating factors affecting the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters and developing a comprehensive set of recommendations to improve recruitment and retention.

The Task Force is comprised of ex-officio members, members appointed by the Governor, and members appointed by Legislature to include the following members:

Elisha Tomko, Chair / Governor
Karren Bee-Donohoe/David Ferrari / Ex-officio, State University of New York
James Cable / Ex-officio, State Fire Administrator
Donald Corkery / Ex-officio, Association of Fire Districts
John Farrell, Jr. / Ex-officio, Firefighters Association of New York
Donald Forbes / Assembly Minority
Felipe Hernandez, Jr. / Governor
Arthur Hunsinger / Senate Minority
Brittany Kitterman / Ex-officio, State Education Department
Kevin Klein / Senate Majority
Steven Klein / Assembly Majority
Robert Kloepper, Jr / Ex-officio, Association of Fire Chiefs
Gerald Knapp / Governor
Luci Labriola-Cuffe / Governor
Robert McConville / Assembly Majority
Mary Alice Molgard / Governor
Kelly Murphy / Senate Majority
Scott Palladino / Mark Massaroni / Ex-officio, Department of Taxation and Finance
John Stephens / Governor
Bill Streicher / Ex-officio, County Fire Coordinators Association
Vini Tankasali / Governor
Stephanie Tubbs / Ex-officio, Department of Labor
Jay Wilson / Governor
Dean Yauger / Governor

Executive Summary

The foundation of New York State's fire service is volunteerism – neighbors helping neighbors. The importance of the volunteer firefighters that serve our communities cannot be overstated - from tax savings to community involvement and representation. There has been a steady decline in volunteerism nationwide, which has acutely affected the volunteer fire service. This has created a crisis wherein the lack of capacity is affecting emergency response capabilities. This Task Force recognizes the need to stabilize the fire service and create the conditions under which the provision of fire and emergency response can be successful and sustainable.

Twenty years ago in New York State, there were 20,000 more volunteer firefighters statewide, and wait lists to join the local fire department were common. Today, volunteer fire departments are struggling to recruit new members and retain existing ones, a challenge further compounded by increased operational responsibilities beyond fire protection to include vehicle accidents, medical emergencies, hazardous material spills, and weather-related rescue operations. The training necessary to safely and effectively perform these responsibilities has increased as has the time commitments expected of a volunteer.

While the number of volunteer firefighters across New York State has significantly decreased, the call volume has doubled over the past 30 years, from 750,000 to 1,400,000 (as reported through the National Incident Fire Reporting System).

The decline in volunteerism is not unique to the fire service, however the lack of available volunteer firefighters across the state has real public safety impacts - jeopardizing the protection of people and property in our local communities. Many fire departments across New York State are struggling to maintain minimum staffing levels and are routinely relying upon mutual aid assistance to respond to emergencies safely and effectively.

The Task Force was created to examine volunteerism within the fire service, identify ways to encourage individuals to volunteer for their local fire departments and implement strategies to retain existing members.

The Task Force is responsible for making recommendations on the following:

- (1) Delivery methods to enhance and streamline State firefighter training to include distance learning;
- (2) Utilization of community colleges, BOCES and state accredited high schools to train firefighters, to include creating pilot programs;
- (3) Feasibility and necessity of creating a unit within the Office of Fire Prevention and Control (OFPC) dedicated to volunteer firefighter recruitment and retention;
- (4) New and existing volunteer firefighter recruitment and retention benefits, incentives and programs;
- (5) Recruitment and retention programs utilized by other states; and
- (6) Recruitment of volunteer firefighters from under-represented and at-risk populations.

The Task Force met five times since its first meeting in December 2021 and the five sub-committees, established to focus on specific subject areas, met on a monthly or bi-monthly basis.

Delivery methods to enhance and streamline State firefighter training to include distance learning

OFPC delivers high quality, state of the art, and comprehensive training for career and volunteer fire departments to assure new and existing firefighters can perform their job efficiently, effectively, and safely. OFPC's State Fire Training program is the primary source of formal training for many volunteer firefighters.

OFPC primarily provides in-person training and education using in classroom and training ground settings. While certain training is offered at the Academy of Fire Science in Montour Falls and at the State Preparedness Training Center in Oriskany, the majority of OFPC's training courses are delivered statewide at the local and county level and are offered at no cost.

Career firefighters, appointed pursuant to the Civil Service Law, are required to meet minimum training requirements (minimum 229 hours) developed and administered by OFPC. Conversely, training requirements for volunteer firefighters are established through regulations administered by the Department of Labor, Public Employee Safety and Health Bureau (PESH). Volunteer firefighters must also meet training requirements established by the local fire department.

Surveys and anecdotal information identified existing training requirements as an impediment to recruitment and retention.

OFPC has sought to mitigate the challenges imposed by training requirements by evaluating its training to ensure it is appropriate, available, and meets the needs of the department and their trainees. Increasingly, this has included the evaluation and adoption of virtual and blended learning delivery methods. Not all training content can be appropriately delivered in a virtual format or as a combination of in-person and online learning. Firefighter training, by its nature and objectives, requires significant hands-on practical skill components which can only be addressed through in-person direct delivery.

To complement traditional in-person direct delivery methods OFPC continues to offer a blended learning version of Firefighter I, utilizing an online application within the commercial curriculum package used for that content. Since 2018, this blended program has been delivered 187 times with 1,923 student completions.

OFPC is working on expanding delivery of other training content in virtual and online formats where appropriate, such as the Fire Investigation for the Line Officer (FILO) course and the Vehicle Arson Awareness program. Online, virtual offerings have also been utilized to increase the reach of and access to workshops within the Fire and Emergency Services Training

Conference and fire inspection and code enforcement in-service and professional development training. These efforts have proven effective and efficient by reducing or removing the need for students to travel to the Academy of Fire Science to attend the training and allowing for increased participation above and beyond any limitations imposed by classroom capacity.

In addition to making more online/hybrid training available when appropriate, OFPC has modified training content and delivery methods to reduce redundancy, align training with roles and responsibilities commonly utilized New York State's fire service, and maximize the ability of students to access and complete this training.

Where feasible OFPC has re-structured single courses into separate modules, with Firefighter I, Fire Officer I, and Hazardous Materials Technician level training content providing the main examples. This provides better alignment of training with the common roles and responsibilities of firefighters as well as provide increased flexibility for student attendance and completion.

OFPC continues to increase the availability of certain training courses at the local and regional levels which were previously limited to residential offerings at the Academy of Fire Science. These include Fire Officer I and II and Fire and Emergency Services Instructor I and II courses.

The Best Practices for Firefighter Training, developed by OFPC in conjunction with input from the various statewide fire service association stakeholders, details training paths aligned with common functional roles in the volunteer fire service including exterior firefighter, interior firefighter, apparatus operator, incident commander and instructor, to assist fire departments with focusing the investment of time available for training on the content and objectives appropriate for their members assigned responsibilities.

To improve firefighter's awareness of training opportunities and access to training, the latest version of OFPC's Learning Management System allows individual firefighters to log in to view and register for upcoming training courses online, as well as view and print their individual training transcript and certificates of completion.

Recommendation: OFPC to continue to ensure courses within the State Fire Training Programs remain current, available, meaningful and are efficiently provided to facilitate the ability of volunteer firefighters to achieve core training objectives.

Recommendation: OFPC to continue to work with fire service partners to provide flexibility in training offerings and scheduling and support local basic training skills and resources.

Recommendation: OFPC to continue to evaluate whether additional courses can be made available in hybrid or virtual format.

Utilization of community colleges, BOCES and state accredited high schools to train firefighters, to include creating pilot programs

The Task Force recognized the potential benefits of engaging high school students, as the next generation of firefighters, by providing fire service training in the high school or BOCES, and where possible, provide both educational and fire service training credit.

Promoting and incentivizing fire training at the high school level provides an effective way to maximize individuals' time by fulfilling educational requirements and accomplishing firefighter training in the same hours.

The Task Force also recognized the recruitment and retention value of engagement through college equivalency programs. OFPC currently offers credit for firefighter training completed outside the State Fire Training program through equivalency, whereby training is recognized upon a content review or through the National Certification process. Promoting awareness of training equivalency as well as creating college programs which meet or exceed state requirements would eliminate duplication of mandatory training requirements and may result in cost saving for students in fire-related college programs. While several local community colleges currently offer fire science courses, development of a practical interior firefighter training program would allow the student to get college credit while completing training required to be a firefighter.

Recommendation: OFPC and the NYS Education Department (NYSED) work together to promote delivery of firefighter training, through the State Fire Training Program or High School or BOCES programs with equivalency.

Recommendation: Promote and support High School level Fire Science courses to increase awareness of the volunteer service and career opportunities in the fire service.

Recommendation: Provide and maintain a mechanism for students to receive college credit for completion of certain State Fire Training Program courses and, conversely, a means for college students to receive college and State Fire Training credit. This may require engagement with National College Credit Recommendation Service (NCCRS), American Council on Education (ACE), or other credit recommendation organizations.

Recommendation: OFPC and the State University of New York (SUNY) to collaborate on establishing State Fire Training equivalency programs.

Feasibility and necessity of creating a unit within OFPC dedicated to volunteer firefighter recruitment and retention

As the State's lead fire agency, OFPC is uniquely positioned to promote and support effective recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters through training and education. Providing training, education, and support to the fire service of New York State are core functions of OFPC.

OFPC is currently working with the fire service to highlight and share state and local best practices and lessons learned as well as partnering with stakeholders to ensure coordinated and mutually supportive initiatives.

Efforts such as these can be addressed through OFPC's existing structure and is consistent with its core mission. While OFPC and the fire service associations can support and supplement recruitment and retention efforts statewide, local fire departments are best positioned to have the greatest impact upon the success of recruitment and retention of its membership.

Recommendation: OFPC to identify a point of contact to serve as liaison and coordinator for the fire service in the promotion and support of recruitment and retention effort.

Recommendation: OFPC to work with fire service partners to develop best practices for recruitment and retention to include effective administrative practices, such as onboarding practices of new members and mentoring programs, to assist fire departments with integrating and retaining new members within their existing membership and supporting successful local recruitment and retention incentive programs.

New and existing volunteer firefighter recruitment and retention benefits, incentives, and programs

In addition to identifying and analyzing the efficacy of existing firefighter incentives, to include continuation and/or expansion of existing incentives, there was a greater focus on identifying new ways to incentivize and assist with the recruitment of new members as well as the retention of existing members.

Currently available incentives include: real estate property tax exemption, personal income tax credit, tuition assistance, access to the state health insurance program, and length of service benefits. Local fire departments may also offer incentive and service benefit programs to their members.

The personal income tax credit is currently limited to \$200 (\$400 for married filing joint taxpayers where both spouses are eligible). For Tax Year 2020, approximately 70,000 volunteer firefighters filed claims, totaling approximately \$15.2 million. More information on volunteer firefighter income tax credit can be found at:

<https://www.tax.ny.gov/pit/credits/volunteerfirefighters.htm>.

The Real Property Tax Law was recently amended to expand local government authorization to provide a real property tax exemption of up to ten percent of assessed value for volunteer firefighters that serve at least two years. (Chapter 670 of the Laws of 2022)

The Task Force identified new incentive program for consideration at the State and local level through professional knowledge and experience, awareness of successful local programs, and

research into programs offered in other states. These incentives include: allowing compensation of volunteers, paid or unpaid leave for training, similar to paid family leave or military training; mortgage assistance, stipends for training, state and local retirement credit and health insurance subsidies.

Recommendation: Authorize paid on call or allowing compensation for volunteer firefighters; authorize stipends; requires consideration to ensure continuity of volunteer benefits. This was identified by the Task Force as the priority recommendation.

Recommendation: Increase the amount of personal income tax credit and allow volunteer firefighters to take advantage of the income tax and real property tax exemption.

Recommendation: Expand tuition assistance programs; consider loan forgiveness program at state or local level.

Recommendation: Subsidize health care or insurance related benefits including dental and vision coverage.

Recommendation: Provide one year of State and local retirement credit for every 5 years of service as an active volunteer firefighter, up to a maximum of 3 years credit for 15 years of active service.

Recruitment and retention programs utilized by other states

The Task Force looked into successful recruitment and retention programs in other states, including to help inform recruitment and retention efforts in New York. Research showed that there were common approaches, but incentives were reflective and focused on the emergency response expectations, goals and needs of the local community.

Connecticut and Pennsylvania have successful High School, Technical School, BOCES or Community College level programs, and Florida has a public service academy, which serve as a gateway from school to fire service through offering cross credit in educational and fire training record applications.

Numerous states offer financial incentives, similar to those being recommended by this Task Force to include tax incentives, fuel cards/stipends, free/reduced cost health care, mortgage assistance, training stipends, and tuition reimbursement.

Connecticut produced an effective Public Service Announcement (PSA) communicating the diversity of skills needed within a fire department. Similarly, Pennsylvania has a high-impact website, with a recruitment video, providing information about the need for volunteer firefighters, savings to governments and taxpayers, how to become a volunteer firefighter, benefits of volunteering, and motivational incentives to join the volunteer fire service.

Recommendation: New York State should develop and maintain a high-quality, readily accessible recruitment website to provide an immediate result of searches to volunteer fire departments. The website should link to the National Volunteer Fire Council's recruitment and retention resources, such as "Make Me A Firefighter" program, social media use in recruitment, recruitment PSA's).

Recommendation: OFPC to work with the fire service partners to include other state practices in evaluating and recommending best practices.

Recruitment of volunteer firefighters from under-represented and at-risk populations.

Populations under-represented in the fire service when compared to the percentage of a community's population they protect provide an underutilized source for firefighter recruitment, particularly minorities and women. Fire departments need to know and understand the community they serve to allow for meaningful engagement to improve community participation and representation within the fire service.

The U. S. Census Bureau reported in 2020 that women make up 50.5% of the population. Sources indicated women volunteer at a rate of 64% while men only 36%. Notwithstanding, in 2020 the National Volunteer Fire Council reported that only 11% of volunteer firefighters are women.

Many volunteer fire departments rules, regulations, and by-laws were written decades ago when most families were single income households, many women did not work outside the home, and children were not involved in as many activities. Fire department membership, outside of a "Ladies Auxiliary", was exclusively male. Times have significantly changed. Households now commonly include double and triple income earners and children are involved with many activities after-school and on weekends. These trends have further limited the time available for individuals to volunteer. If fire department membership requirements and by-laws do not evolve and keep pace with these trends, they may serve to disincentivize or create barriers to serving as a volunteer. Additionally, the fire service itself has changed, with increases in the volume, type, and complexity of emergency responses.

Fire departments should review and revise their by-laws, rules, and regulations, which may be outdated and potentially exclusionary, to ensure they accurately reflect the needs of the department and eliminate attendance or other membership requirements determined to pose unnecessary barriers to service. Fire departments should ensure that all the required meetings, drills, events, and fundraising activities that members are mandated to attend to maintain active membership are truly necessary for a member's role and responsibility within the department. Fire departments should allow as much flexibility as possible for their members to complete the minimum required activities. Effective and efficient use of the time a volunteer has to serve is

an important factor in successfully recruiting and retaining members. Membership requirements must therefore be carefully considered and purposeful.

Consideration of providing membership options for non-operational roles to allow individuals interested in serving and capable of performing administrative and support duties can benefit a department and free others to focus their time and effort on training and emergency responses. Efforts such as these will also allow departments to assure membership requirements are inclusive, appropriate, and appealing to under-represented populations.

Military veterans represent another population potentially under-represented in the fire service. Veterans are often inherently driven to serve their communities and their Country. Through their military service, these individuals may have basic firefighting experience, leadership skills, a respect for procedures, loyalty to a common mission, and a strong sense of responsibility and accountability. The military has a very similar community structure with chains of command and many units working together to ensure the overall mission is successfully supported. It is a natural transfer of skills to recruit and connect veterans with their local volunteer fire departments.

More broadly, engaging with community organizations to increase understanding and familiarity with the fire service can serve as an important foundation for recruitment efforts.

Recommendation: Utilize the 2020 Census data to assist with identifying a community's current population and predicting future trends.

Recommendation: Fire departments should attend local diverse community events, heritage days, LGTBQ organizational meetings, and other non-traditional places and events. Fire departments should partner with already established groups and organizations composed of or serving these under-represented populations. Most volunteer fire departments have space within their buildings to hold meetings and events. Fire departments should reach out to the established minority organizations and other volunteer organizations within their communities to offer their space for meetings or events in return for some time to educate the organization about their volunteer fire service.

Recommendation: Fire departments need to review and revise by-laws to ensure they are current and provide flexibility to better suit the environment of today's volunteer. Departments should consider waiving or reducing requirements of new members to attend meetings or drills until their initial, basic training (Firefighter I program) is complete. This allows new members time to concentrate on training and studies while balancing fire department requirements and family/home life.

Recommendation: Fire departments should partner with realtors and assessors to engage new homeowners and renters regarding the way fire protection is provided in the community and the needs and opportunities of volunteering in the fire service.

Recommendation: Fire department should engage veteran organizations.

Recommendation: Fire departments should provide childcare at the firehouse during training, structured duty shifts, and appropriate response events. This would provide needed childcare for parents to be available for training and responses.

Other Issues for Consideration

In addition to the various recommendations associated with the areas outlined above, the Task Force has highlighted other issues to advance volunteer firefighter recruitment and retention efforts.

Shared Services/Consolidation

Increasingly, volunteer fire departments are finding it harder to provide the same level of service with fewer volunteers. Fire departments must balance the increased cost and need to maintain an appropriate level service with the public's expectation of service and cost.

Many fire departments are facing a crossroad and should take a systematic approach to determining what is best for the public. Exploration of consolidation and shared services may prove beneficial to identifying efficiencies while assuring the delivery of quality service. Consolidation and shared services offer opportunities to increase cost-effectiveness, by eliminating unnecessary and costly duplication of resources, maximize use of limited personnel, and improve response times while maintaining the efficient and effective delivery of services.

Recommendation: OFPC, in partnership with the Department of State, should promote opportunities for technical support and grants in support of shared services and consolidation initiatives.

Leadership

The Task Force identified the need to promote and sustain effective leadership by expanding or building upon existing Fire Officer, Instructor, and other leadership courses. Leadership was identified by the Task Force as a key factor impacting recruitment of new members and, more profoundly, the retention of existing members. The National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) reported that 60% of people leaving volunteer fire departments cited poor leadership as the primary reason.

OFPC has increased the availability of leadership and instructor training courses. Traditionally, except for an entry level fire officer course, the majority of content required to meet NFPA fire officer and instructor training requirements was limited to residential offerings at the NYS

Academy of Fire Science. OFPC's Fire Officer 1 and 2 courses are now available locally or regionally statewide, as are the Fire and Emergency Services Instructor 1 and 2 courses.

Recommendation: OFPC to establish a Leadership Best Practices prescribing competencies and education needed by fire department leaders and officers to effectively perform job functions and strengthen member satisfaction, engagement, and retention.

Recommendation: Develop a leadership forum for aspiring, current line and civil officers. Organize regional leadership training opportunities with presenters from local experts, business leaders, military, fire, and police leadership, associations, and other quality sources inside and outside of the fire service. Quarterly delivery of standard, high-quality content to the fire service statewide should be the goal with the First-Line Supervisor Training Program for career fire officers serving as a potential model.

Recommendation: Expand OFPC's Fire Officer training beyond the minimum job performance requirements (JPRs) of NFPA 1021 - Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications – specific to leadership content, such as human resource management, interpersonal communications, and conflict resolution.

Recommendation: Establish mentorship programs within fire departments to support the entry into the fire department and increase membership retention.

Conclusion

The Task Force believes more can and must be done to promote the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters in New York State. For many communities the volunteer model may remain the only affordable, practical means of providing fire protection. Analysis of the level of service that is needed and an evaluation of the best options available to provide that service can clarify the amount and type of staffing required and assure available personnel are being utilized efficiently and effectively.

Fire departments are relied upon for more than fire protection and suppression to include specialized services such as water rescue, hazardous materials response, inspection duties, terrorist incidents, and emergency medical services. As fire departments assumed these responsibilities, demands for training, response hours, and stresses on the volunteer fire service substantially increased. Appropriate and adequate resourcing to address those needs should be sought and supported.

Through the work of the Task Force, it became evident that there is no single, "one size fits all" solution that will work for all communities. Community demographics such as employment types and availability, population age and makeup, population density, tax base, and other local factors define what particular incentives may elicit and sustain increased numbers of volunteers from a given community.

Many of the measures recommended within this report require or would benefit from increased state and local investment and therefore will be subject to available budget appropriations. Others may be addressed by re-aligning the investment or dedication of time and resources currently available to best provide for effective and improved recruitment and retention in a given community or partnering with stakeholders to develop cooperative partnerships to do so. Regardless of the mechanism or means, in order to continue to safely and effectively protect the communities it serves, the volunteer fire service of New York State must continue to evolve to address its staffing challenges.

The Task Force members remain committed to working with State and local leaders to ensure the success and sustainability of New York State's fire service.