



Public Safety

BOL Meeting Minutes - Final

Committee Chair: Colin Smith

800 Michaelan Office Bldg.
148 Martine Avenue, 8th Floor
White Plains, NY 10601
www.westchesterlegislators.com

Monday, July 26, 2021

10:00 AM

Committee Room

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting joint with the Committee on Budget & Appropriation

With a quorum present, Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 11:11 AM.

Legislator Covill joined the meeting remotely but was unable to vote.

Present: Committee Chair Smith, Legislator Barr, Legislator Boykin, Committee Vice-Chair Cunzio, Legislator Johnson, Legislator Shimsky and Legislator Woodson-Samuels

Absent: Legislator Covill

MINUTES APPROVAL

Monday, May 3, 2021 at 3:00 PM Minutes

On motion of Committee Vice-Chair Cunzio, seconded by Legislator Barr, the minutes were approved. The motion carried unanimously.

Monday, July 12, 2021 at 10:00 AM Minutes

On motion of Committee Vice-Chair Cunzio, seconded by Legislator Barr, the minutes were approved. The motion carried unanimously.

I. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

1. [ACT-2021-142](#) IMA-School Resource Officers-Lakeland School District

AN ACT authorizing the County of Westchester to enter into an intermunicipal agreement with the Lakeland Central School District whereby the County will assign three (3) uniformed police officers to act as School Resource Officers for the District at the Walter Panas High School, the Van Cortlandtville Elementary School and the Lincoln-Titus Elementary School.

Submitted by THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Joint with B&A.

Guests: Captain James Greer and Lieutenant James Provenzano-Department of Public Safety

Lieutenant James Provenzano appeared before the Committee to discuss item #2021-427-IMA-School Resource Officers-Lakeland School District. This is an IMA with the Lakeland Central School District to which the County will assign three uniformed police officers to act as School Resource Officers at the following three District's schools: 1.) the Walter Panas High School; 2.) the Van Cortlandtville Elementary School; and 3.) the

Lincoln-Titus Elementary School. The proposed IMA will be for a term of five years, commencing upon the opening day of school in September, 2021 and expiring in the last day of school in June, 2026. Lieutenant Provenzano discussed that the SRO's duties will consist of working with the Schools to maintain a safe campus environment conducive to learning, including, inter alia, investigating allegations of criminal incidents in accordance with Department's policies and procedures; working to prevent juvenile delinquency through close contact and positive relationships with students; working closely with school administrators and developing and implementing classes in crime prevention, drug abuse prevention, and safety; and serving as a good role model for students. In addition, the SRO's will work in collaboration with the Schools to address crime and disorder problems, gangs, and drug activities affecting or occurring in or around the Schools, as well as develop or expand crime prevention efforts for students. The SRO's will not be permitted to conduct extended questioning of a student in the Schools unless the student's parent/guardian has been contacted and provided an opportunity to be present.

Chair Borgia asked about how the financing works for SRO's since they are in the schools and then working County details as well? Lieutenant Provenzano responded that typically during the summer months, the SRO's are reassigned to the Parks patrol or another detail within the County. These officers will then be assigned back to the schools when they reopen. Legislator Borgia asked for a breakdown of who is paying the officer when they are conducting other County functions? Mr. Grande responded that he will put the answer in writing and send it to the Legislators.

Chair Smith asked about the Safe Summers program and what else is offered working with the schools and the community? Lieutenant Provenzano responded that they participate in summer camps. Recently they attended a 4th grade camp where they were able to have a back and forth discussion and answer questions for the kids. They also meet with high school aged kids and discuss the dangers with smoking and vaping and drinking. Recently they did an underage sale program in Cortlandt which was successful, there were no underage alcohol sales observed. This is a program where they invite the community to side on with the County police that it is bad to sell alcohol to underage kids.

Legislator Maher asked if the Department of Public Safety knows why this school district wants SRO's and if they are concerned more with gang violence or a potential active shooter? Lieutenant Provenzano responded that it is more of a community policing initiative to have the police officers interact with the community itself. The community had requested that the County police interact with the community at their camps this summer as well as a continuation of our ongoing interaction. He noted that this is not directly related to the possibility of gang violence or an active shooter, but that there is a larger component to it than just school violence.

Chair Borgia stated that during her time as Town Supervisor in Ossining that there were SRO's in the middle and high schools that proved to be very good relationships. They did a lot of education that was positive.

Legislator Cunzio stated that we have had superintendents at this table who have supported this and the only reason this is coming before us is because they are contracting with the County. Many school districts have their own local police officers in their schools and utilize them in their elementary schools with the idea of community.

Legislator Gashi discussed that he is a graduate of the Lakeland school district and living in that area to this day, the SRO program is extremely popular and that he has not heard of complaints in this area concerning Lakeland.

Legislator Clements stated that in throughout the police reform task force and the continuation

that is currently going on to review the recommendations, one thing keeps coming up and that is that community policing is very important and that interaction is very important in building trust. She added that she believes it builds trust, helps diversify the police department and is a very positive thing for the community.

Chair Boykin discussed that White Plains has had a very successful program with the White Plains Police Department for many years. He stressed how important it is and how powerful an impact bringing together kids and the community with the officers who patrol their community.

Legislator Johnson discussed that different communities experience community policing and SRO's differently. Some may see it as protection whereas others may see it as surveillance. He stated that it is important that we look at how communities feel and see how that will affect our policy decisions going forward.

Legislator Johnson voted Without Prejudice (WOP) for this item.

On motion of Committee Vice-Chair Cunzio, seconded by Legislator Boykin, the above item was signed by committee. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Committee Chair Smith, Legislator Barr, Legislator Boykin, Committee Vice-Chair Cunzio, Legislator Johnson, Legislator Shimsky and Legislator Woodson-Samuels

Absent: Legislator Covill

II. OTHER BUSINESS

III. RECEIVE & FILE

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Committee Vice-Chair Cunzio, seconded by Legislator Boykin, the Committee adjourned at 11:56 AM