Minutes of the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee

April 6, 2016

Delaware State Police Troop 2

100 LaGrange Avenue

Newark, DE 19702

Conference Room

Committee Members Present:

Major John Evans

Amrita Lal-Paterson

Sean Lugg

Lisa Morris

Lisa Schwind

Jessica Smith

Committee Member Excused:

Dr. Don Lehman

The meeting was called to order at 10:06 am by Major Evans. He introduced Sean Lugg as a replacement committee member for Kathleen Jennings. Minutes of the April 24, 2015 meeting were reviewed. Lisa Schwind made a motion to approve the minutes.

Major Evans reviewed the purpose of the Committee and gave a synopsis of our goals going forward. He stated that 7-8 site visits have been made since the Committee last met and he thanked everyone for the time they took out of the office to make the visits. Major Evans also stated that the Committee’s first report was submitted to Secretary Schiliro.

An update on the Commission was given:

Secretary Landgraf is now the Chair and R. L. Hughes is the Vice Chair.

Our Committee report was submitted for the December 2015 meeting.

Major Evans submitted a final draft of the report for the February 2016 meeting.

A critical need was stressed on the feasibility and architectural studies for funding. The next Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 11. Lisa Schwind said about ten people have viewed the building prior to the Committee meeting.

A site assessment has been completed. Approximately six findings were notated. Also, $500,000 in funds was spent to send drugs out to process due to the backlog by DFS. Lisa Schwind asked if new hires are ready to process. New employees will still not be able to clear up the backlog and they still need to hire more people.

Director Wolf shared his report at the February meeting.

Our report will be merged with the annual report. Our items should be moved to the front of the report as that is where the main focus will be for the Governor and the Legislature.

Committee updates:

Building Condition: Jessica sent short surveys out to the Wilmington and Georgetown offices inquiring about building conditions. There was an 83% response rate in Wilmington and 80% for Sussex County. Those that were returned from Wilmington were dissatisfied with the building.

Evidence Destruction: Lisa Schwind gave documents to Major Evans on the evidence destruction statute. He asked Lisa to prepare documents for the Committee in regards to time frames for retention. This should be an automatic process for the entire state. Sean suggested that we don’t do it as a statute but look at it another way to make things uniform throughout the state as each county is doing things differently. Lisa will put together what she feels is feasible and then Sean will look at the chart once it’s drafted. They will develop a workable plan.

The Bar-Coding system: Major Evans thought this process would be done more quickly but there have been hurdles. We are fortunate to have one crime reporting system used throughout the entire state. Lisa Morris suggested using Deljis as a platform. Peggy Bell (from Deljis) is working with DTI to see if something can be developed. Lisa Morris also said DFS is considering a bar-coding system. They have started with entry and exit bar-coding. Currently all testing bar codes are done through FLIMS. Ultimately DTI would need a system to piggy-back the whole state off of what DFS is using. An action plan on scan points will be discussed. Major Evans talked about how the state-wide plan was supposed to work from the crime scene through the lab. Every step of the process would be trackable. New World was the vendor that was chosen but many other agencies are not happy with them. There is a question on the chain of custody on hospital evidence.

Staff Retention and Pay Parity: There is a large turn-over of employees due to pay scale. RL Hughes was not able to complete the salary survey study. Amrita said a questionnaire was sent to her office at some point. Major Evans said we need to look at surrounding areas like Washington DC, Baltimore and Philadelphia. Our system has a lack of career ladder moves and that affects us negatively. A lot of the employees who have left our Delaware labs were seen in other areas during site visits because they are making more money elsewhere. OMB will need to be on-board with our plan. We need to argue the turn-over issue to get employees closer to mid-point. New employees are largely new college graduates. Those that have the experience we would like won’t accept the salary we offer. The Committee feels that now is the time to push this argument forward. We need to go to the Commission with salary findings. Amrita and Jessica will work on putting the data together and writing an action plan.

Codification of relationship with DFS and Dept. of Health : Lisa Morris spoke on an update. On fatal accidents – alcohol limit testing is done but the blood isn’t always tested for drugs. There needs to be an additional vial taken. Sean mentioned that the cost of an outside lab comes into play. All blood should be tested for everything if we consolidate.

Internship with University of Delaware: There are currently 20 students in the pipe-line. Don has been working on this. Jessica has had several interns from UD. She stated that the interns are supposed to have background checks and drug screen done and they don’t touch actual pending cases. It’s a good way to screen for future employees. The intern does get college credit.

Major Evans stated he will make a report to the Commission meeting scheduled on April 11th that the action items have been tasked out. The meeting was adjourned at 11:23.

Respectfully Submitted,

Donna L. Newth-Showell

Recording Secretary