

# The Legislature of Rockland County



**JAY HOOD, JR.**

*Legislator – District 3*

Chair, Public Safety Committee

**Members Present:**

Leg. J. Hood, Jr. Chair  
Leg. T. Earl, Vice Chair  
Leg. P. Soskin  
Leg. N. Low-Hogan  
Leg. A. Paul

**Members Absent:**

Leg. F. Sparaco  
Leg. D. Jobson

**Others Present:**

Leg. L. Hofstein  
Leg. I. Schoenberger  
Leg. A. Wolfe  
S. Powers  
E. Yeger, Esq  
K. Stavisky  
L. Anemone  
S. Levine

Leg. M. Grant  
Leg. A. Wieder  
Leg. J. Murphy  
M. Barbera  
R. Van Cura  
J. Coe  
S. Daly

Leg. H. Cornell  
Leg. C. Carey  
M. Hook  
J. Birnbaum  
M. Barbera  
D. Greenberg  
A. Pinzow

MINUTES  
***PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE***  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2015  
**6:00 PM**

ROLL CALL

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ADOPTION OF MINUTES, MEETING OF FEBRUARY 10, 2015

**MOTION TO ADOPT:  
EARL/LOW-HOGAN**

**UNAN**

1. REF. #5327 - ***DISCUSSION ITEM:*** REVIEW OF THE "OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE POLICE DIVISION OF THE ROCKLAND COUNTY SHERIFF A BLUEPRINT FOR PROGRESS" SUBMITTED BY LOUIS R. ANEMONE, ANEMONE CONSULTING INC. OCTOBER 3, 2014  
**(HON. JAY HOOD, JR., LEGISLATURE)**

Chair Hood introduced the issue of the Anemone report and its impact on the past budget process.

Mr. Anemone introduced himself and his experience. In 1999, he opened a security consulting business, and contracted with several police departments.

Chair Legislator Jay Hood then questioned Mr. Anemone.

Hood: Who first contacted you about conducting this analysis?

Anemone: The County Executive.

Hood: What was the sum and substance of the conversation?

Anemone: I was to do an operational analysis of the Sheriff's Department and find duplication of services.

Hood: What is the nature of your relationship with County Executive Ed Day?

Anemone: We served in the same department with 40,000 other officers.

Hood: Did he call you out of the blue?

Anemone: That's exactly how I could characterize it.

Hood: Did you talk to the Sheriff about the study and what you were doing?

Anemone: The Sheriff was not happy, and was threatening. I explained the process and what I was doing. I spent over 40 hours during the study with the Sheriff or other high-ranking officers in the department.

Hood: From the outset, was your study intended to focus on a particular unit of the Sheriff's Department?

Anemone: It was an operational analysis of the operations of the Police Division.

Hood: In your report, you said that the Sheriff had incorrect arrest figures. Can you explain that?

Anemone: There was an inconsistency with the arrest figures in the DCJS report.

Undersheriff Van Cura: There are different classifications of crimes and arrests, and the department reported the total arrests during the year.

Anemone: They were counting rearrests as new arrests, which could be misleading.

Hood: You proposed selling the helicopter, and you believe that other departments could provide that service?

Anemone: NYC and Port Authority could provide helicopters for no charge.

Hood: Is it true that during a meeting with the County Executive and members of the press you referred to the Sheriff's Mounted Unit as "a glorified petting zoo?"

Anemone: Is this about my comments to the press or the report? I did say it.

Hood: Would you retract that?

Anemone: No I would not. I proposed moving them to patrol to do more community policing, etc.

Hood: What was your reaction to the County Executive proposing the cutting of the Patrol Unit?

Anemone: I was surprised. We all know I did not recommend that.

Hood: If the Patrol Unit was cut, the specialty units would have been affected as well. You had some good experiences with those units. The details of the report, however, are different than what was presented to us with the budget.

Anemone: I did have good experiences with them. I have nothing to do with the budget. Some special units are being underutilized.

Hood: If you were to remove the Patrol Unit officers, wouldn't there be a major impact on public safety?

Anemone: Local police departments would need to fill their vacancies.

Hood: You interviewed four civilians in your report. Who were they?

Anemone: I am not going to give the names of the people I spoke to, because I guaranteed their confidentiality.

Hood: Can you tell me their backgrounds?

Anemone: They are citizens who live in Rockland County.

Hood: Who selected the individuals?

Anemone: The County Executive in one case, and another volunteered.

Hood: Did you get any guidance from the County Executive about where the report should go?

Anemone: No.

Hood: Since I asked you to come to the legislature, have you spoken to the County Executive?

Anemone: Yes.

Hood: What was the conversation about? What to say or not to say?

Anemone: No. I am a professional, sir.

Chairman Alden Wolfe then questioned Mr. Anemone.

Wolfe: In your eyes, who was your client?

Anemone: The Rockland County Executive.

Wolfe: Your contract was not with the County Executive, it was with the County of Rockland. The County paid you, so who is your client?

Anemone: The face of my client was the County Executive.

Wolfe: But the taxpayers paid you, so it was the county.

Anemone: I will grant you that.

Wolfe: The contract says you will report to the County Executive, but the county paid you, so the legislature is also your client. The contract includes a part where you will be making a presentation to a group of people selected by the County Executive, which is problematic.

Anemone: I also spoke with three members of the Sheriff's unions, and answered all their questions.

Wolfe: It is my understanding that the deputies were excluded from the press conference.

Anemone: It was a small room.

Wolfe: You interviewed four civilians. Does the County Executive know who they are?

Anemone: He recommended two or three of them; he may.

Wolfe: I think it is improper to withhold the names from this body, so I will ask that you provide the names again, either in Executive Session or to my office, and I will share that information with legislators only. It is important to know who the County Executive recommended, to dispel a theory in which some believe that there was an agenda with this report.

Anemone: If the County Executive wanted a foregone conclusion, he did not get the results he wanted from the report, as Legislator Hood alluded to. I suggested to the County Executive that I should interview civilians, and he suggested names with phone numbers.

**ACTION: COUNTY EXECUTIVE SHOULD PROVIDE THE NAMES OF THE INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED TO THE LEGISLATURE.**

**ACTION: MR. ANEMONE SHOULD PROVIDE THE NAMES OF THE INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED TO THE LEGISLATURE.**

Wolfe: In your report, you stated that the Patrol Unit cannot be replicated without additional expense by the town and village level. So it would result in an increase in the cost of policing for towns and villages?

Anemone: I would assume so, yes.

Wolfe: You would assume so? These are your words.

Anemone: If I had the actual salaries of the sheriffs and officers in the towns, I could say it would cost more or less.

Wolfe: But your statement about it costing more, is that an accurate statement?

Anemone: Yes.

Legislator Nancy Low-Hogan then questioned Mr. Anemone.

Low-Hogan: You mentioned you had different experiences with departments, and I wonder if the departments you worked with were similar to ours.

How did you come to understand what you were supposed to do?

Anemone: The County Executive asked me to do an operational analysis.

Low-Hogan: Sheriff Falco did not know there was going to be such a study until you met with him, so that would explain why he was concerned.

In terms of the interviews you did, why did you only choose four?

Anemone: It would have been three, and one volunteered. I did not want to do more because I was not doing a survey.

Low-Hogan: Three were recommended by the same person, so it wouldn't be likely that you would get differences of opinion.

Anemone: Not so. If one person recommended an Italian person, and a black person, and a Hispanic person, I would get diversity of opinion.

Legislator Ilan Schoenberger then questioned Mr. Anemone.

Schoenberger: When asked about your relationship with Ed Day, you said there were 40,000 officers in the same department. I would assume from this that you would not know him too well, which doesn't seem right.

Anemone: We didn't work in the same precincts together. All the officers knew me, but that doesn't mean I knew all of them.

Schoenberger: Rockland County government is substantially different than that of New York City. There is only one police department, and the mayor has more power than a County Executive does. The Sheriff is an elected officer and does not report to the County Executive. Were you aware of these distinctions?

Anemone: I don't know if I was consciously aware, but I knew the Sheriff was elected, but didn't think too much of it.

Schoenberger: Do you believe that Rockland County should have a countywide police department?

Anemone: Without doing a study, my inclination would be that you could probably do it and do it at a cost savings.

Schoenberger: Did any of the four civilians come from the town of Ramapo?

Anemone: I honestly don't remember, but I think the volunteer.

Schoenberger: From my town, there are a large number of people who do not drive, and police are needed for crowd control for things such as community functions. I wonder if you had a flavor of the value of the Mounted Unit for people such as those in my town.

Anemone: I spoke with every police chief in the county.

Schoenberger: In Nyack, the Mounted Unit is there when the bars close, and that helps with the many issues that occur there.

Anemone: I had enough experience in New York City to know what they can do in major crowds.

Schoenberger: With this knowledge of its purpose, why would you not think that the Mounted Unit is important in Rockland?

Anemone: NYC is a different animal than Rockland County.

Schoenberger: When you wrote your report, were you familiar with the bumping rights that officers have, which could remove specially trained officers in favor of others?

Anemone: I was not recommending anyone be fired in the report. I recommended people be moved to patrol. I proposed that the Mounted Unit could be removed, and the officers could be moved to patrol where they would be more effective.

Schoenberger: What is Mission Creep?

Anemone: Trying to do too many things. The Sheriff is supposed to have mandated services, but the department does other things, which can sometimes lead to not achieving the best result.

Schoenberger: What you define as mission creep may be considered by others as the Sheriff adapting to changing needs.

Anemone: There is an arson investigator who has excellent credentials to perform many different functions. It is better to hone skills in one field rather than spread oneself thin by doing many things.

Schoenberger: It is my understanding that the helicopter was not paid for with taxpayer dollars. Do you have a different point of view on that?

Anemone: It looked like easy savings, and other law enforcement agencies can provide that service.

Legislator Harriet Cornell: I represent Nyack which utilizes the Mounted Patrol often, and it is necessary. I am glad that you were able to attend and answer questions from the legislature.

Legislator Toney Earl then questioned Mr. Anemone.

Earl: Were any of your four civilians a person of color?

Anemone: No.

Earl: Why wasn't diversity mentioned in your report? You worked in big city departments, so the oversight of diversity was a mistake.

Chair Legislator Jay Hood then resumed questioning Mr. Anemone.

Hood: The problem I have with the County Executive recommending people to talk to, is that you can find people who will say what you would like them to. That is part of the reason why I feel this report was political from the start, to show shortcomings of the Sheriff who is up for re-election.

Are you aware of how many calls the officers go to? Sheriff's officers can be at a scene, but the department of the area gets credit for their work there.

Anemone: I was aware of how much work they do in other towns.

Hood: If you were the Sheriff, and a study was done that resulted in proposing firing 37 of your officers, how would you feel?

Anemone: I was a chief in NYC, and there were constant budgetary pressures.

Hood: So you in no way said the Sheriff's patrol should be cut, and instead you said it should be bolstered. What were the opinions of the chiefs in other departments when you met with them?

Anemone: The chiefs were supportive of the department, because in some instances they were taking advantage of the services that are provided.

Hood: Your report didn't touch on large-scale programs that the Sheriff does. These centralized services are done by the Sheriff and it saves a lot of money.

Did you ever speak to the town supervisors or mayors?

Anemone: No.

Hood: Do you feel that you had enough time during the study to understand the Sheriff's Department?

Anemone: My focus was on the Sheriff's Department. I have a better understanding of the department than I did on Day One.

Chair Hood thanked Mr. Anemone for coming in.

**DISCUSSED**

**MOTION TO ADJOURN: 7:05 PM  
EARL/CAREY**

**UNAN**

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