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Warwick continually works to ensure safety of residents and businesses - by Frank Picozzi

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Frank Picozzi

A municipality's ability to provide its police, fire, and emergency management departments with the training, equipment, and other necessary resources is vitally important to ensuring the continued safety and well-being of all who live, work, and travel in that community. Thanks to a recent federal grant of \$530,437 secured through congressman Magaziner's office, the city will soon be able to relocate its 70-year-old emergency operations center (EOC) to Warwick's newest fire station in the Potowomut neighborhood.

As the "Ocean State" located in the heart of New England, Rhode Island is subjected annually to any number of weather-related events, including Nor'easters, hurricanes, and blizzards – meaning public safety personnel must be at the ready to respond quickly and efficiently. Warwick's first responders are also frequently called to respond to maritime-related incidents, structural fires, and medical emergencies. As one of our state's largest departments, Warwick is additionally relied upon heavily by surrounding municipalities to provide mutual aid. And, as home to Rhode Island T.F. Green International Airport, Warwick also assists its public safety personnel as necessary. Further, not only does the fire department coordinate emergency management and medical support from the EOC, it also communicates, as necessary, with the municipal and state emergency operations center.

Given the challenges the existing facility faces – including a leaking roof, obsolete equipment, inadequate restroom facilities, a poorly-operating emergency generator, and a need for HVAC repairs and technological upgrades – the ability to relocate to a new facility is a welcome one, particularly since investing in short-term, temporary "fixes" costs taxpayers more in the long run.

Potowomut's Station 10 was a perfect choice, since it was designed with an eye to serve as the EOC and to serve as the backup municipal emergency operations center if the current location were to be disabled for some reason. The federal grant will help to pay for new emergency reporting signal receiving equipment, three radio communication consoles, the 911 telephone system, a communication recording device, antennas, consoles, computer server, and project management. The city's annual capital budget will make up the balance of the approximately total project cost of \$707,250.

The city continually works to ensure that our municipal infrastructure, facilities, and equipment work as efficiently and as effectively as possible in order to provide our residents and business community with top-notch services and programs. Visit movetowarwickri.com or call the economic development department at (401) 738-2014 to learn more about our community and why it's a great choice for your company – or your next commercial or residential development – to call home.

Frank Picozzi is the mayor of the city of Warwick, R.I.

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