

## Sleeter named to FBI Advisory Policy Board

### ★ Sleeter first chief named to national policy board

By Chris Mertes  
Managing Editor

**S**un Prairie Police Chief Frank Sleeter has become the first local police chief to assume the chairmanship of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Advisory Policy Board.

Sleeter -- the first local police chief in the 30 year history of the Advisory Policy Board -- announced his appointment as chair last week during an interview with *The Star*.

Sleeter said he met with FBI Director Robert S. Mueller, III and Attorney General nominee Al Gonzales during the first week in December to outline priorities for the Advisory Policy Board.

The board chairmanship requires a time commitment of six meetings per year, according to Sleeter, but also the opportunity to influence federal law enforcement policy to aid local law enforcement efforts.

Among the priorities for the Advisory Policy Board -- which directly advises Mueller -- are the access to federal law enforcement records and a back-up system for federal law enforcement records, Sleeter said.

"Information sharing means going both ways," said Sleeter in reference to the access to federal records. Previously,

federal government law enforcement officials were tentative about sharing any information with local law enforcement -- a climate that has now changed thanks to the events of Sept. 11, 2001.

Today, Sleeter said, homeland security will begin on the front lines of local law enforcement. "We are the tools (to provide homeland security) and we can't be kept in the dark," Sleeter said.

The National Data Index, or NDEX, for short, allows local law enforcement information sharing in both directions.

Sun Prairie is already sharing its local records with Middleton and Fitchburg, but the final piece of the shared communities' software system will allow access to NDEX, according to Sleeter.

Pushing by the Advisory Policy Board will allow buy-in to NDEX and hopefully nationwide local law enforcement record access for federal, state and local law enforcement agencies.

A back-up is needed for federal law enforcement records headquartered in Clarksburg, Va., where the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), the FBI Fingerprint File known as IAFIS and the National Incident Check System (NICS) for gun registration checks are located.

Of those three, only NCIC is currently backed up off-site, the chief said.

Should anything happen to those federal databases, local law enforcement would be impacted the most by not being able to conduct criminal background checks or locate criminal histories.

That's why the Advisory Policy Board is advocating a back-up system elsewhere in the country, according to Sleeter.

Although Sleeter's two-year term officially began Dec. 5, Mueller has already done his homework.

"He's very committed to keeping local law enforcement in the forefront of decisionmaking," Sleeter said, although Sun Prairie probably won't see any direct federal money to local law enforcement as a result of that commitment.

The Advisory Policy Board is important in helping to set FBI policy. One example Sleeter gave of federally-set policy was fingerprinting standards. Instead of many different sets of standards for fingerprint evaluation,

the board set one standard for all vendors.

"I don't like to get involved in stuff that's window-dressing," Sleeter said.

The policy board provides meaningful input, then formulates policy for the FBI with its staff for implementation.

Referring to the tasks set forth, Sleeter said, "We've had bigger hurdles and done it."

Now, federal law enforcement is coming to local law enforcement officials in an effort to work together in many areas to avoid duplication and promote efficiency, according to the chief.

"It's worth the effort," Sleeter added, "because it actually works."

The chief said he's especially pleased that Mayor Dave Hanneman, the Sun Prairie City Council and City Administrator Pat Cannon are allowing him to participate on the board, particularly when Sun Prairie has broken new ground by participating on the board.

All of his expenses, other than his personal time, are covered by the federal government.

"All the players in the country are there," Sleeter said.

The board's first vice chair is the head of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, with others areas of the country being allowed to vote in two members to represent the law enforcement community.

Sleeter represents the Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association on the board.

"The movers and shakers are in this group," Sleeter said, "that's why it works."



Frank Sleeter