

Public Safety Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 1, 2010 3:30 PM
Scott Heyman Conference Room

Approved 3-1-10

Present: N. Shinagawa, B. Robison, J. Dennis, P. Stein (arrived at 3:40 p.m.), L. McBean-Clairborne (arrived at 3:47 p.m.)

Legislators: M. Robertson

Staff: L. Shurtleff, Department of Emergency Response; P. Buechel, Department of Probation and Community Justice; G. Wilkinson, District Attorney; G. Potter, Information Technology Services; N. Jayne, County Administration; S. Cook, Criminal Justice Advisory/Alternatives-to-Incarceration Board; M. Pottorff, Legislature Office

Guests: K. Damm, Advisory Board on Indigent Representation; W. McDermott, Assigned Counsel Program; D. Wright, Ithaca Police Department

Call to Order

Mr. Shinagawa called the meeting to order at 3:36 p.m.

Changes to the Agenda

It was MOVED by Mr. Dennis, seconded by Mr. Robison, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to add the resolution to the agenda entitled "Appropriation from Contingent Fund – Terminal Pay-Reimbursement – Department of Probation and Community Justice."

Chair's Report

Mr. Shinagawa said he spent all day today meeting with Public Safety department heads and believes the meetings were very informative and productive. He has a good understanding of the functions of the departments and some of the issues they will be facing during the year. Mr. Shinagawa said he has asked department heads to introduce themselves and provide a brief overview of their department at this meeting for the purpose of acclimating new Legislators to each of the public safety departments. He also said he would like begin talking about the CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) system in March.

Mr. Stein arrived at 3:40 p.m.

Criminal Justice Advisory/Alternatives-to-Incarceration Board (CJA/ATI)

Ms. Cook, Chair, said the CJA/ATI Board serves in an advisory manner to the Public Safety Committee and also reports to the State through the annual Service Plan to receive funding. Some of the things they try to accomplish throughout the year include: analyzing how various agencies and entities and actions within the County impact the public safety system and the Jail population. The small amount of funding that is received from the State is being used this year to fund part of a position in DSS to do substance abuse evaluations in the Jail. This has helped move people into in-or out-patient programs faster, whereby moving people out of the Jail faster. The next meeting will be February 22nd.

Report from the Sheriff

Sheriff Meskill said he will provide members with a copy of the 2008 Annual Report as he believes the information will be a valuable tool for Legislators to educate themselves on the work of the Office and Jail. He said there are three main functions of the Sheriff's Office: Civil, Law Enforcement, and the Jail. The Civil collects between \$1.3-\$1.5 million each year in judgment money that is used to pay back judgment creditors. The Department receives a small percentage of those funds as revenue (approximately \$140,000) to pay for the operation and they also serve summons for civil matters. In the Civil unit there are four clerical staff and one Sergeant.

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In the Law Enforcement unit there are 26 Deputies, 7 Sargeants, 1 each of Captain, Senior Investigator, Undersheriff, and Sheriff. In the Jail there are 41 positions that include Corrections Officers, and there are also positions of Lieutenant, a nurse, and the Chief. The total number of positions in the Department is 88 or 89.

Mr. Meskill said it is the Sheriff's responsibility to secure and care for individuals until no longer required to do so by the court system. In the past year the office has responded to 12,000 calls for service. Mr. Dennis suggested new Committee members tour the Sheriff's Office and Jail.

Mr. Shinagawa asked the Sheriff to update the Committee on the status of the variance extension request. Mr. Meskill said the variance has been extended to the first part of July and he will be scheduling a meeting with the Commission of Corrections to see what options exist for the variance to be extended beyond that.

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne arrived at 3:47 p.m.

Mr. Stein asked what benefits are provided by the variance. Mr. Meskill said it keeps attorney and other service provider costs lower because they don't have to travel a great distance; it keeps the boardout numbers lower which saves money, and it is easier for family members to visit. He also explained that cell sizes are based on requirements set by the State. He clarified that the purpose of a variance is to assist a county on a temporary basis until a permanent solution is found.

Department of Emergency Response

Mr. Shurtleff, Director, said through the County Charter the Department is charged with coordination of fire, emergency medical services, and emergency management activities for Tompkins County and its municipalities. The largest activity is coordination of the Countywide communications system that oversees all of the public safety responders together. There are roughly 20 agencies that provide fire and emergency medical response in Tompkins County. The Department provides response to seven police agencies, the three local colleges, and other agencies, such as the Park Police, the DEC (Department of Environmental Conservation), and other affiliated responders.

Mr. Shurtleff said planning is a large part of what the Department works on these days and he spoke of how the events of 2001 have changed the focus of the work. The federal government has instituted a lot more requirements, regulations, and planning mandates on local governments to address areas of terrorism, bio-terrorism, and other hazards. He said in addition to working with all of the local governments, the Department works with close to 30 other different agencies from public works, health care, and human services areas to create a comprehensive emergency plan and structure for Tompkins County.

The Dispatch Center handles the largest amount of activity in the Department with an increase of 14,000 to 18,000 in calls over the last five-year period. He noted this is not due to there being more accidents, but from an increase in the number of calls originating from a wireless device. In 2000 there were slightly over 4,000 calls from wireless devices and well over 40,000 today. He said because more people carry cell phones there is a large increase in the volume of calls to the Center.

Mr. Shurtleff said the Department has 27.5 FTE positions, of which 22 are dedicated to dispatch operations. This number is down from 29 FTE's a few years ago.

Assigned Counsel Program

Mr. Wesley McDermott, Interim Supervising Attorney for the Assigned Counsel Program, said he has only been in the position for a short time but is learning quickly. He said the Department has two FTE positions and one part-time Supervising Attorney.

Mr. Robison said he read the Task Force Report and Recommendations and inquired about the possible recoupment of costs through parents of students. Mr. Dennis said the Advisory Board on Indigent Representation is continuing to look at this. Ms. Damm spoke of the State's maintenance of effort requirement and said NYSAC (New York State Association of Counties) is working with the State on eliminating this requirement that was initially created to ensure counties were not underpaying the attorney's.

LETSS Update

Mr. Potter, Director of Information Technology Services, and Sgt. Doug Wright of the Ithaca Police Department provided an update on the LETSS (Law Enforcement Technology Shared Services) program. Mr. Potter briefly reviewed the history of the group and said the concept behind the effort was a collaborative data management services across public safety services. AFTER a few years of success the group produced and presented a draft governance structure and bylaws for the organization and approved by the Legislature. The project has been managed by the County's ITS Department and which hosts the records for all of the police agencies in Tompkins County. They also help in the coordination of efforts on the IT side for anything that has to do with New York State that is in the vehicle or connectivity to the State through a County connection.

Mr. Potter said the bylaws require the LETSS group to provide the Public Safety Committee with a report on projects for an upcoming year. He said for 2010 they will continue with the "status quo", a budget approved by Tompkins County in the amount of \$50,000. They will be supporting the villages and towns with the existing systems and will be collaborating with the City IT Department as well. He said no additional future plans are being developed until the County makes a decision on what will happen with the CAD project. Mr. Potter spoke of the need to have integrated public safety systems and said they have been trying to connect all of the systems, from the Dispatch Center to the District Attorney's Office.

Mr. Potter explained there are three dedicated servers that are outside of the County's network where all of the incident and arrest information for all of the police agencies is maintained. The agencies have access to the server but each manages their own records on that system. In addition, coordination and support for all of the mobile computers that are in all of the vehicles is provided (40). Prior to this, all of the tickets and incidents was managed in a handwritten format and maintained on different servers.

District Attorney

Ms. Wilkinson, District Attorney, said the office has 7 FTE Assistant District Attorneys, 1 FTE District Attorney, 3.5 FTE administrative positions, and 1.5 FTE STOP-DWI position, for a total FTE equivalent of 13. The Department is mandated to prosecute all violations of New York State Law, presenting cases to the Grand Jury in the cases of felonies, presenting cases to the 12 justice courts, writing the briefs and arguing the appeals of case, and administers the STOP-DWI program. The STOP-DWI program is funded entirely by fine revenue. With these funds the Department also tries to enhance prosecutions, educates the community, conducts prevention programs including school services, and provides oversight to the Victim Impact Panel. The Department also participates in the Felony Treatment Court, Misdemeanor Treatment Court, Sex Offense Treatment Court, and Integrated Domestic Violence Court. Since she took Office in 2006 there have been a steadily increasing number of

indictments, with 201 felony cases last year. This number is up from 143 over a four-year period. There have been some differences in some of the types of crimes that committed but she noted the increase in DWI-related offenses. Ms. Wilkinson said she is looking to expand the work of the STOP-DWI program to include additional outreach and intervention in 2010 and will also be seeking harsher penalties.

Mr. Stein asked how many positions were in the Office when Ms. Wilkinson when she took office in 2006. She responded there were 12.5 FTE's, and said at the present time they are able to handle the workload. She spoke of efficiencies that have been created in the flow of paperwork that has helped alleviate the increased caseloads.

Department of Probation and Community Justice

Ms. Buechel, Director, said there are 37.5 FTE's in the Department. The Department provides mandated services of intake, supervision, investigation services, and administers a PINS program. There are presently 710 adult supervision cases (1/3 are DWI cases), 108 adjudicated youth, 100 PINS cases, and investigates between 500-600 cases per year for the courts. The Department is very active in school districts and works to try to divert youth from being officially referred to the program or to the Jail. She spoke of the caseloads of Probation Officers and said the average is 60, which is up from an average of 50. She is anticipating more increases as a result in changes to the Rockefeller Drug Laws. The Department also operates a number of alternative-to-incarceration programs for low level, non-violent offenders.

Ms. Buechel explained the following types of supervision:

- Intensive Supervision – for high risk individuals who are at a high risk of being incarcerated;
- Misdemeanor and Felony Drug Court Program – smaller caseload but usually more intensive with reporting requirements;
- Electronic monitoring – an ATI program that provides information as to where the probationer is throughout the day; and
- Day Reporting Program – a structured ATI programs where probationer receives services throughout the day in areas such as education and employment

The Department also offers a number of technology tools, including the SCRAM device that monitors alcohol consumption; sobriety which are voice activated through a telephone line, the Ignition Interlock Device, and a computer-restriction program that monitors web sites that are accessed by a probationer. She noted the cost of these tools are paid for by the Probationer and not the County.

**Resolution (DOC ID: 1791): Appropriation from Contingent Fund – Terminal-Pay
Reimbursement – Department of Probation and Community Justice**

RESULT:	RECOMMENDED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	James Dennis, Member
SECONDER:	Leslyn McBean-Clairborne, Member
AYES:	Shinagawa, Dennis, McBean-Clairborne, Robison, Stein

WHEREAS, in the Department of Probation and Community Justice, one Probation Supervisor retired effective December 31, 2009, and one Registered Professional Nurse left the services of the County effective January 1, 2010, and

WHEREAS, the Fiscal Policy of Tompkins County allows for terminal-pay reimbursement from the Contingent Fund, now therefore be it

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RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Public Safety and the Budget and Capital Committees, That the Director of Finance is hereby authorized and directed to make the following budget appropriation for 2009:

FROM:	A1990.54400	Contingent Fund	\$5,447
TO:	A3141.51000211	Probation Supervisor	727
	A3142.51000211	Probation Supervisor	2,909
	A3141.51000565	Registered Prof. Nurse	369
	A3141.58800	Fringes	395
	A3142.58800	Fringes	1,047

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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Administrative Items

Other - Action Item (DOC ID: 1761): Appointments to Advisory Boards/Liaisons

RESULT:	RECOMMENDED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	James Dennis, Member
SECONDER:	Brian Robison, Member
AYES:	Shinagawa, Dennis, McBean-Clairborne, Robison, Stein

Advisory Board on Indigent Representation

Peter Stein - term expires December 31, 2012

Martha Robertson - term expires December 31, 2012 (amended at 2-2 Legislature meeting; L. McBean-Clairborne appointed)

STOP-DWI Advisory Board

Brian Robison - Public Safety Committee member - term expires December 31, 2012

Local Emergency Planning Committee

Nathan Shinagawa - Chair of the Public Safety Committee - no set term

Criminal Justice Advisory/Alternatives-to-Incarceration Board

Leslyn McBean-Clairborne - Chair of the Public Safety Committee (or designee) - term expires December 31, 2012

Traffic Safety Committee

Leslyn McBean – term expires December 31, 2012

Nathan Shinagawa - term expires December 31, 2011

Brian Robison, Peter Stein - terms expire December 31, 2010

2010 Public Safety Liaison Roles (Non-Voting)

Family Court Advisory Council – Martha Robertson
Fire, Disaster and EMS Advisory Board – Nathan Shinagawa
Opportunities, Alternatives, and Resources
Emergency Communications Review and Oversight Committee
Emergency Planning Committee
Magistrates Association – Brian Robison

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Minutes Approval (DOC ID: 1763): Approval of January 14, 2010 Minutes

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Peter Stein, Member
SECONDER:	James Dennis, Member
AYES:	Shinagawa, Dennis, McBean-Clairborne, Robison, Stein

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Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Michelle Pottorff, TC Legislature Office