

MINUTES

APPROVED 4-18-08

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

MARCH 21, 2008 2:00 P.M. SCOTT HEYMAN CONFERENCE ROOM

Present: J. Dennis, Vice Chair; M. Hattery; M. Robertson; M. Koplinka-Loehr (temporarily appointed himself a voting member)

Excused: G. Stevenson, Chair

Staff: C. Covert, Clerk of the Legislature; P. Buechel, Probation and Community Justice Department; D. Dietrich, Offender Aid and Restoration; P. Younger, Deputy County Administrator; P. Meskill, Sheriff; G. Potter, Information Technology Services Director; S. Cook, County Attorney's office; M. Lynch, Public Information Officer; S. Martel Moore, Deputy County Administrator; L. Shurtleff, Emergency Response Director; B. Stolp, Assigned Counsel Supervising Attorney; J. Hughes, Assigned Counsel Coordinator

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

Chair's Report

Criminal Justice Advisory/Alternatives to Incarceration (CJA/ATI) Board – how the Public Safety Committee can best use this resource of County and community members

Ms. Younger said Mr. Stevenson asked that this item be discussed at the next Committee meeting as the CJA/ATI Board will be reviewing its bylaws at their next meeting. Ms. Robertson reported the CJA/ATI Board has included transitional housing as one of its work items this year and a subcommittee consisting of Debbie Dietrich, Gino Bush, and Kathy Schlather have agreed to work together as a group. The CJA/ATI Board will define how this group should begin.

PAD Program

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

Traffic Safety 2008 grant awards

Mrs. Covert announced the initial letters were sent out in early March to various agencies informing them of the grants and the deadline for filing grant applications is April 8th. Ms. Pottorff is proposing the Traffic Safety Board meet April 18th to review and approve the Traffic Safety grants.

Mr. Meskill provided a brief history and overview of the Governor's Traffic Safety grant program.

Committee Goals Update

Status of Criminal Justice Data Communication System

Mr. Potter provided an update of the activities of the Criminal Justice Data Communications System and said a lot of progress has been made over the last few months. The Use and Dissemination Agreement has been finalized and signed by all police agencies in the County, the District Attorney, the Sheriff's Department, and the Information Technology Services Department. This is a one-year agreement. An inventory of what is currently being used is underway and discussions are being held with the Sheriff's Department on how to begin allowing other agencies to gain access to their data.

Another project being rolled out is the Tracs program, a State provided initiative out of the Department of Motor Vehicle and New York State Police. Last year, Tompkins County received a grant of \$160,000 to implement 40 new mobile data terminals in the cars of County and local police agencies. At the conclusion of this project, data will automatically transfer to a Tracs application. Mr. Potter

reported that this project has taken more of his staff time than expected. Mr. Potter spoke of his concerns with staffing and said discussions will need to be held on the staff support needed in the future.

Ms. Robertson asked about the progress of the governance issue. Mr. Potter said each organization has an assigned representative that meets regularly. He sets the agenda but the decisions are being made at the meetings. Mr. Potter agreed to provide a list of the representatives participating to Ms. Robertson as requested.

Ms. Robertson suggested that the Council of Governments could discuss some of the issues and concerns raised by Mr. Potter above.

Ms. Younger spoke about technical assistance opportunities available and said two entities have confirmed (The National Center for State Courts and the Center for Technology in Government) and she continues to work with and receive information from The Governor's Commission on Local Government Efficiency and Competitiveness. She suggested involving the Council of Governments would be appropriate for this area of the project. As this is being demonstrated as a possible model, there is interest from various entities to want to help. The technical assistance needed will help the County by working directly with law enforcement and develop a business plan that would assist with competing for grants.

Mr. Hattery commented that Ulster County is in a similar situation and suggested they be contacted.

Sheriff's Office

Report from the Sheriff and review of Jail Statistics

Mr. Meskill reported that there are 65 inmates currently at the jail and 6 (females) are boarded out.

Criminal Justice Advisory/Alternatives to Incarceration Board

Resolution

It was MOVED by Mr. Koplinka-Loehr, seconded by Ms. Robertson, to approve and submit the following resolution to the full Legislature for approval. Ms. Cook explained the resolution and said a similar resolution was adopted last month. The State granted the County permission to use the funds not spent last year. The CJA/ATI Board sought proposals and following a review, recommended the proposal submitted by OAR (Offender Aid and Restoration).

Ms. Dietrich said this is one-time money and the proposal is to pay a portion of a position's salary in the office of OAR and to provide two services: (1) create a revolving security deposit fund for people getting out of jail and help them with housing (similar to Catholic Charities model); and (2) contract with Family and Children's Service to provide counseling services to some of OAR's clients. The breakdown of the money is approximately: support staff – 50% and security deposit and contract with Family and Children's service – 50%.

Ms. Robertson requested a one-page summary be prepared and available with the resolution. A voice vote resulted as follows on the resolution: Ayes – 4; Noes – 0; Excused – 1 (Stevenson).
RESOLUTION CARRIED.

RESOLUTION NO. – ACCEPTANCE OF ALTERNATE 2007 ANNUAL ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION CONSOLIDATED SERVICE PLAN – OFFENDER AID AND RESTORATION RE-ENTRY SERVICES

WHEREAS, the Criminal Justice Advisory/ Board at its February 25, 2008, meeting approved the Alternate 2007 Annual ATI (Alternatives to Incarceration) Consolidated Service Plan for use of State Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives funds in the amount of \$26,800 by OAR (Offender Aid and Restoration) for re-entry services, and

WHEREAS, it is a requirement that the approval of the legislative/governing body accompany the Plan upon submission to the New York State Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Public Safety Committee, That the Tompkins County Legislature approves the Alternate 2007 Alternatives to Incarceration Consolidated Service Plan for Tompkins County for use in 2008, and the contract date shall run from January 1, 2008, to January 1, 2009,

RESOLVED, further, That a copy of the Service Plan will be kept on file at the office of the County Administrator, the office of the Chair of the Criminal Justice Advisory/Alternatives to Incarceration Board, and office of the Tompkins County Legislature.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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Department of Emergency Response

Public Safety Communications System

Mr. Shurtleff updated the Committee on the communications system and said they have basically tied up all of the systems relating to construction. He believes they will be transitioning in the near future. Microwave radio systems that ties it all together has been completed. The final technical piece with the radio consoles control mechanisms at the dispatch center has been completed. He will be doing a cutover on those Tuesday morning. Last Friday, testing with the paging system was completed and found no dead spots in the County. The mobile and portable radios have been arriving in waves over the last several weeks. Programming and installation of the equipment will be done once the console piece is completed. Final agreement for policies and procedures have been reached with the oversight emergency committee which will now roll into training programs. Some training was held during the month of March and will continue until all training is complete.

Assigned Counsel

Program Update

Ms. Hughes reported the Assembly bill to appropriate \$.5 million for the creation of an Independent Public Defense Commission to study the public defense system did not pass. On March 31st, the office is suppose to receive a considerable amount of money, but Ms. Hughes said she has not had any contact with the State and expressed concern that she does not know how much they will receive. However, she will be contacting the Comptroller's office next week to try to find out more information.

Ms. Hughes reported on a meeting with the County Administrator and other staff concerning the increased assigned counsel costs over the past couple of years. There will be a review of the 2004 report on the cost of a Public Defender's office done and how it relates to current conditions. A group from Cornell will be doing a study and updating information and sharing it in June or July. Ontario County also did a similar study which is available. The study will include information about the three entities: public defender, assigned counsel, and a conflict office.

Discussion followed concerning the studies and Mr. Stolp commented that a County cannot have just one entity; at least two are necessary. At this time he explained how these three entities operate.

Minutes
Public Safety Committee
March 21, 2008

Appointments

It was MOVED by Mr. Koplinka-Loehr, seconded by Mr. Hattery, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve and submit the following appointments to the full Legislature for approval:

Local Emergency Planning Committee

Greg Stevenson – no set term

Criminal Justice Advisory/Alternatives to Incarceration Board

Greg Stevenson – term expires December 31, 2009

Liaison Reports

There were no reports.

Approval of Minutes

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Koplinka-Loehr, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of the February 15th and March 4th meetings as submitted.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:08 p.m.