

MINUTES

Approved 3/21/08

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

MARCH 4, 2008 5:15 P.M. LEGISLATIVE CHAMBERS

Present: G. Stevenson, Chair; J. Dennis; M. Robertson
Excused: M. Hattery
Vacancy: District No. 12 – Town of Ithaca
Staff: P. Younger, Deputy County Administrator

Call to Order

Mr. Stevenson called the meeting to order at 5:18 p.m.

Resolutions

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Dennis, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve and submit the following resolution to the full Legislature for approval:

RESOLUTION NO. - AUTHORIZATION TO ACCEPT AN AWARD OF A GRANT FROM THE NEW YORK STATE DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES

WHEREAS, the Probation Director has been notified of a grant award from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services in the amount of \$35,600 and referred to as the STOP grant, and

WHEREAS, the STOP grant represents a collaborative effort among Tompkins County, Cayuga Medical Center, The Advocacy Center of Tompkins County, Cornell University Police Department, and the Human Services Coalition, and will fund the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) program, Self-Defense Training, and a lock-change program for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Public Safety Committee, That the County Administrator or his designee execute all contracts related to this award,

RESOLVED, further, That the Director of Finance is directed to make the following adjustments to his books for 2008:

BUDGET ADJUSTMENT

Table with 4 columns: Revenue, Appropriation, State Aid, and Administrative Services Coordinator. Values include A3994.43389, A3994.51000754, .58800, .54442, \$35,600, \$ 5,000, \$ 1,900, and \$28,700.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

It was MOVED by Mr. Dennis, seconded by Ms. Robertson, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve and submit the following resolution to the full Legislature for approval:

RESOLUTION NO. - URGING THE GOVERNOR AND THE STATE LEGISLATURE TO INCLUDE BUDGETARY LANGUAGE TO INCREASE PROBATION REIMBURSEMENT TO THE STATUTORILY REQUIRED FIFTY PERCENT

WHEREAS, Section 246 of the New York State Executive Law stipulates, "State aid shall be granted to the City of New York and the respective counties outside the City of New York only to the extent of reimbursing fifty per centum of the approved expenditures incurred by the county or City in maintaining and improving local probation services.", and

WHEREAS, over the past two decades, local reimbursement for probation services has decreased from 46.5 percent to lower than 20 percent, and

WHEREAS, this deficiency was not addressed by Governor Spitzer in his 2008-2009 budget proposal, and

WHEREAS, while reimbursement has diminished, state mandates on probation have increased to include interim supervision, DNA collections, sex offender registration, ignition interlock, and community service for Driving While Intoxicated (DWI), and

WHEREAS, counties have been forced to assume a greater proportion of probation costs as the scope of probation services expands and new technologies arise for tracking and monitoring the activities of probationers, and

WHEREAS, in recent years, these costs have escalated sharply and dwindling State reimbursement and dedicated local funds are not enough to meet the demands placed on local probation departments, and

WHEREAS, probation officers typically travel great distances to meet with probationers at home or work, incurring additional non-reimbursed expenses, and

WHEREAS, the high costs associated with quality probation services has forced counties to assume a greater proportion of probation expenses, resulting in layoffs, reductions in services, and/or increases in property taxes, and

WHEREAS, Tompkins County realizes that effective probation services provide substantial savings for the State by reducing the reliance on incarceration and placements, as evidenced by the 63,000 felons and the 43,000 juveniles currently receiving probation services, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That Tompkins County in conjunction with Chief Judge Judith Kaye, the Office of Court Administration, and the New York State Council of Probation Administrators (COPA), urges the Governor and the State Legislature to support the restoration of State aid to local probation departments to a full fifty percent of approved expenditures incurred by the county or City of New York in maintaining and improving local probation services,

RESOLVED, further, That any new public safety mandate imposed pursuant to State law, regulation, or Executive Order that imposes additional duties upon local probation departments, or directly increases the population of offenders subject to the jurisdiction of any such department, be fully funded by the State,

RESOLVED, further, That the Tompkins County Legislature shall forward copies of this Resolution to Governor Spitzer, the New York State Legislature, and all others deemed necessary and proper.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Dennis, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve and submit the following resolution to the full Legislature for approval:

RESOLUTION NO. – URGING THE GOVERNOR AND THE STATE LEGISLATURE TO HOLD COUNTIES HARMLESS FOR ANY STATE-MANDATED INCREASES FOR DISTRICT ATTORNEYS’ SALARIES

WHEREAS, legislation proposed by Governor Spitzer as part of his 2008–2009 Executive Budget provides a twenty-one percent salary increase for State-paid judges and justices, retroactive to April 1, 2006, and an additional 2.5 percent on April 1, 2008, and

WHEREAS, historically, when the Governor and the Legislature have authorized pay increases for these judges and justices they have also included supplemental appropriations for counties to offset the state mandated pay increase this creates for district attorneys, and

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WHEREAS, the Governor's proposal will provide \$3 million to counties for a portion of those costs, with counties being responsible for the sizable retroactive difference in district attorney salaries, and

WHEREAS, if the State does not completely cover this mandatory salary increase for District Attorneys, county taxpayers will be forced to shoulder these expenses, and

WHEREAS, with county budgets already in place for 2008, the burden of state set retroactive salary increases for district attorneys will have a \$26,000 negative fiscal impact on Tompkins County, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Public Safety Committee, That Tompkins County is calling upon the Governor and the Legislature to remain consistent with past practices and include language holding counties harmless for any pay increases for judges and justices of the Unified Court System and District Attorneys,

RESOLVED, further, That the Tompkins County Legislature shall forward copies of this Resolution to Governor Spitzer, the New York State Legislature, and all others deemed necessary and proper.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:22 p.m.