

**Public Safety Committee  
October 11, 2001  
Noon  
Scott Heyman Conference Room**

Present: G, Totman, T. Joseph, T. Todd, Blanchard, N. Schuler  
Staff and Agencies: S. Whicher, K. Leinthall, P. Meskill, L. Shurtleff, J. Miller, D. Johnson, B. Richmond, O. Mack, J. Hughes, J. Wood, C. Overstreet, M. Pottorff

**Called to Order**

Mr. Totman called the meeting to order at noon.

**Changes to the Agenda**

Reports were added to the agenda from OAR and the Community Justice Center.

**Approval of Minutes of September 13, 2001**

It was MOVED by Ms. Blanchard, seconded by Mr. Todd, and unanimously adopted by voice vote to approve the minutes of September 13, 2001 as submitted. MINUTES APPROVED.

**Sheriff's Department**

Sheriff Meskill distributed copies of a citation report that was created through the crimes package that now allows the Department to generate traffic reports by individual officers.

Mr. Meskill reported the Commission of Corrections is in the Jail right now doing an inspection and will be leaving tomorrow. On October 16<sup>th</sup> he and the Jail Administrator will meet with them in Albany and will be discussing the existing variances the Jail has been granted.

The following resolution was MOVED by Ms. Blanchard, seconded by Mrs. Schuler:

**RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_ AUTHORIZATION FOR MANDATE CLASSIFICATION  
RECONFIGURATION FOR INMATE MEDICAL COST**

Mr. Joseph said he does not feel the Jail Medical unit meets the definition of a Class A mandate because it includes salary money. Mr. Meskill said he would be willing to transfer the salary money into another line in the Corrections budget.

A vote by show of hands resulted as follows: Ayes - 4, Noes - 1 (Joseph). MOTION CARRIED.

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Sheriff's Office is mandated by the New York State Commission of Corrections to provide adequate medical care to the inmates housed at the Tompkins County Jail, and

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Sheriff's Office is mandated to provide the medical care with very little control over the manner in which the service is provided, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that a new budgeting unit called Jail Medical be created with it's own fiscal target and that all salary and fringe expenses that are currently included in that line be transferred to the Corrections unit, and

RESOLVED further, on recommendation of the Public Safety and Budget and Capital Committee, that the budgeting unit called Jail Medical is now classified as an 'A' mandate.

**SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20**

\* \* \* \* \*

It was MOVED by Mr. Joseph, seconded by Mrs. Schuler, and unanimously adopted by voice vote to approve the following resolution and submit to the full Board:

**RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_ AUTHORIZATION TO ACCEPT AN ANONYMOUS GRANT  
TO PURCHASE A SPEED TRAILER**

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Sheriff's Office applied for grant monies from an anonymous agency in the amount of \$8,000 to purchase a speed trailer and,

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Sheriff's Office has been awarded a grant from an anonymous agency in the amount of \$8,000 to purchase the speed trailer, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Public Safety Committee, that the County accept the grant of \$8,000 to be used for the purpose of the aforementioned grant,

RESOLVED, further, That the bid is to be awarded by the Purchasing Division is to award the bid,

RESOLVED, further, that the Director of Finance is directed to make the following adjustments to his books for 2001:

**BUDGET ADJUSTMENT**

|               |             |                             |         |
|---------------|-------------|-----------------------------|---------|
| Revenue       | A3113.42770 | Other Miscellaneous Revenue | \$8,000 |
| Appropriation | A3113.52220 | Department Equipment        | \$8,000 |

**SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20**

\* \* \* \* \*

The following resolution was MOVED by Mr. Todd, seconded by Ms. Blanchard:

**REESOLUTION NO. -AMENDMENT TO FISCAL POLICY 05-02 SECTION 05-03  
REGARDING CONTINGENT FUND APPROPRIATIONS FOR  
REPLACEMENT PAY**

Mr. Joseph said he feels it is inappropriate for this resolution to be before this committee. He said any resolutions to amend the Fiscal Policy belong in the Budget and Capital Program Committee. Furthermore, he said this had been considered and rejected already by that Committee. Mr. Meskill said this version is different than the one presented to the Budget and Capital Program Committee. He also stated he brought it here because he wanted to inform his program committee about this.

Mr. Whicher expressed concern over doing this in the middle of a budget process. He feels these departments have created their 2002 budget under the current set of guidelines and by changing those guidelines at this time should not be done unless budgets are changed accordingly. He cautioned the Committee that approving this would be reducing the Sheriff's Department's costs.

Mr. Joseph said this issue was raised at a recent department head meeting. At that meeting objection was raised to handling 24/7 operations differently. Department heads felt there are other circumstances where the same problem exists and people need to be replaced immediately.

Mr. Todd said he would like to adopt this policy change; however, have it in effect so that it begins with the 2003 budget process.

Following a lengthy discussion, it was suggested that this issue be discussed at a joint meeting of this Committee and the Budget and Capital Committee.

At this time the resolution was withdrawn.



handle the Domestic Incident Reports (DIRs) in the same way that the Bill of Particulars is handled by John; I, or Ujjal Mukherjee, will enter the data from the DIR into the database, and then the DIR will be shredded. The information in the database would only be shared for statistical purposes; numbers of arrests, convictions, dispositions, and characteristics of offenders like gender, race, and age. No names of offenders or victims would be available to anyone other than me or Ujjal. George indicated that he saw no problem, legal or otherwise with doing so. I talked with all but one of the Chiefs of the local law enforcement agencies during the first week in July and got general agreement that this would be acceptable to them. Since then, I have learned that several have had second thoughts and are concerned about liability.

Ithaca Police Chief Rick Basile asked me to provide him with an agreement regarding how this database was to be used, including a hold harmless clause for IPD. In return, IPD would provide me with copies of DIRs on all domestic violence arrests. I have discussed this possibility with Jonathan Wood and he said that he could do so, but only with the consent of the Public Safety Committee.

I am sorry that I am unable to be at the Public Safety Committee meeting on October 11, but Jonathan said that he would be present to answer committee members' questions or concerns. I would appreciate it if you would address this issue at your October meeting."

Sheriff Meskill expressed a strong concern over his personal liability. He said he does not support allowing staff outside the Sheriff's Department having access to this information. Ms. Leinthall said one suspicion why the VAWA grant was not approved was because there was a lack of data gathering. She spoke in support of this request and said she feels Sue Robinson is very capable of maintaining confidentiality. When asked what the County would gain by approving this Ms. Leinthall responded that this would enable to County to access more grant funds and offset some of the funding losses that will be present in the 2002 budget.

It was MOVED by Mr. Joseph, seconded by Ms. Blanchard, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to allow access to these records and to agree to indemnify the Sheriff and pay for defense and damage costs should they be incurred as a result of this action. It was agreed that the full Board would receive all back-up information along with this resolution.

### **OAR**

Mr. Mack distributed copies of the Agency's monthly report. Also attached was a copy of a communication that the OAR Board sent to Sheriff Meskill to help delineate some of the issues that surround the delivery of OAR's services at the Jail. The report contains some of the difficulties OAR is having as they are trying to adjust to the changes made at the Jail. Mr. Mack said there have been several requests to meet with the Sheriff; however, those requests have not been answered.

Mr. Joseph said he is very upset by the decision made by the Sheriff to change the policy in regard to access to inmates by OAR staff. He also said he doesn't agree with reasons behind the decision, that it has not been temporary as it was first intended, and is disturbed the Sheriff has not met with OAR staff.

Sheriff Meskill responded that he does not meet on a regular basis with other programs or agencies. He stated at the present time the Jail is overcrowded and understaffed, and that he will be operating less programs when he is short staffed.

Following a lengthy discussion it was felt that this issue was not going to get resolved by this Committee.

### **Assigned Counsel**

Ms. Hughes reported that due to the events of September 11, assigned counsel rates probably will not be increased this year. She reported the first assigned counsel voucher was signed by a County Court Judge at \$75 per hour. She noted this was a very exceptional case and does not mean all cases would be billed at this amount.

### **Community Justice Center**

Ms. Richmond distributed information on a Racism and Domestic Violence Workshop to be held November 2<sup>nd</sup>. She also distributed copies of the statistics for the Community Justice Center. Ms. Richmond said there are rumors circulating that the Center only serves 12 individuals. She said the Center serves several individuals

Mrs. Schuler was excused at 1:37 p.m.

### **Local Emergency Management Plan**

Mr. Shurtleff distributed copies of a synopsis of the Local Emergency Management Plan. He said there is now an Emergency Action Plan Committee who have been charged with developing a comprehensive emergency management plan for Tompkins County, incorporating and updating existing response plans, mutual aid agreements, hazardous materials plans, and to develop additional plans and agreement as appropriate and facilitate appropriate training activities

### **Executive Session**

It was MOVED by Mr. Joseph, seconded by Mr. Todd, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to enter into executive session at 1:58 p.m. to discuss a personnel matter. The meeting returned to open session at 2:08 p.m.

The Committee discussed the submission of an application from David Cornelius to remain a member of the Fire, Disaster, and EMS Advisory Board to represent the City of Ithaca. It was stated that Mr. Cornelius is no longer a resident of the City of Ithaca.

It was MOVED by Mr. Joseph, seconded by Ms. Blanchard, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to reconsider the appointment of Mr. Cornelius made on September 13, 2001 by this Committee.

It was MOVED by Mr. Joseph, seconded by Ms. Blanchard, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, that a letter be sent to the City of Ithaca asking them to appoint someone to the Fire, Disaster, and EMS Advisory Board who is a City of Ithaca resident and an active firefighter, and that a copy of this letter be sent to Brian Wilbur, City of Ithaca Fire Chief.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.