

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

NOVEMBER 9, 2000

NOON

SCOTT HEYMAN CONFERENCE ROOM

PRESENT: G. Totman, B. Blanchard, C. Evans, T. Joseph

EXCUSED: N. Schuler

STAFF: B. Benjamin, Deputy County Administrator; S. Robinson, Domestic Violence Prevention Coordinator; B. Richmond, Community Justice Director; J. Miller, L. Shurtleff, Fire, Disaster and EMS; J. Wood, Deputy County Attorney; J. Hughes, Deputy County Attorney; P. Meskill, Sheriff; O. Mack. OAR; W. Skinner, Public Information Coordinator, J. Beach, Stop-DWI

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting opened at Noon.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was Moved by Mr. Evans, seconded by Ms. Blanchard and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present to approve the minutes of September 14, 2000, as submitted.

RESOLUTION NO. – SUPPORT OF REFORM OF ROCKEFELLER DRUG LAWS RESTORING GREATER DISCRETION TO THE JUDICIARY

It was Moved by Mr. Joseph, seconded by Mr. Evans and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present.

WHEREAS, we recognize that the experience of the past 27 years has shown that the Rockefeller Drug Laws have failed to stem the tide of illegal drug sales and use in New York State, and

WHEREAS, FBI and National Institute for Drug Abuse studies have shown that more than half of drug dealers are white, yet 94% of people serving time in state prisons are Black or Latino, and

WHEREAS, we know that more than 20,000 New York State residents have been incarcerated for drug-related offenses, many of them minor, at a cost of approximately \$32,000 annually per inmate, and

WHEREAS, we believe that Tompkins County and New York State residents are better served by empowering our judges to meet out solutions for drug offenders that include substance abuse treatment, support for change, and compassionate intervention which may include reasonable periods of incarceration, and

WHEREAS, we are convinced that non-violent drug offenders who endure long and harsh incarceration periods do not come out better people, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Public Safety Committee, That the Tompkins County board of Representatives supports State Assemblyman Martin Luster in his proposal of Bill A10051 to reform the Rockefeller Drug Laws and restore greater discretion to the judiciary.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

OAR

Mr. Mack stated that the number of client services hours and volunteers hours have gone down some. He stated the client services hours are attributed to the lower jail population at this time and the volunteer hours are down because of inconsistencies in volunteers getting access to the jail. He believes this issue has been resolved. He stated that the bail program provided five bails last month.

STOP-DWI UPDATE

Mr. Beach distributed the monthly statistics. These are on file with the original minutes. He stated the numbers of arrests are down and the number of crashes has gone up. Mr. Joseph asked about the number of arrests on the special

patrol being zero and asked if the patrol has been running. It was determined that Mr. Beach was provided the wrong name of the deputy running the special patrol and he will run these numbers again.

Mr. Evans asked why the arrests numbers are down. Mr. Beach said that people are getting smarter and not getting caught and also police agencies are asked to do more with less and they are unable to do traffic stops. He stated that when agencies target DWI's they are making the stops but at certain times during the year their resources need to be used in other areas. He stated that overall he believes the number of drunk drivers has gone down. Mr. Meskill stated that he disagrees and stated that his department is down staff people on the prime shift and the DWI car is being used for regular complaints.

Mr. Beach stated that the number of arrests is down by five percent from last year. Mr. Joseph stated that this number is within a normal fluctuation. Mr. Meskill stated that last year was an exceptional year for DWI arrests within his department and deputies went out of their way to make them. He stated he is not sure that his department will consistently make the 215 arrests like last year.

Mr. Beach said that he hopes that the number of arrests goes up in the next two months, not only because of the holiday season, but because funding is contingent on the numbers of arrests and several law enforcement agencies depend on that funding. Mr. Meskill stated that he anticipates increasing the number of patrols during the holidays.

PROBATION DEPARTMENT

Ms. Leinthal was not in attendance.

FIRE, DISSASTER AND EMS

Mr. Miller did not have a report.

RESOLUTION NO. – ADOPTION OF LOCAL LAW h OF 2000 – PROVIDING FOR THE MANDATORY ROUTING OF ALL WIRELESS 911 CALLS

It was Moved by Mr. Joseph, seconded by Mr. Evans and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present. Ms. Blanchard asked if the switching process is easy for cellular phone companies. Mr. Miller explained that each tower is assigned a phone number and the companies simply change the number to route calls to the County. Mr. Meskill stated it should not be misconstrued that dispatchers know the location of the calls made. Dispatchers know only the location of the call based on the tower it is coming from, they do not know the exact location of the call. Mr. Evans stated that in the future GIS positioning will be available. Mr. Meskill stated that this is true, but it may be delayed for some time at the federal level.

Mr. Totman said he has read information that as of January 1, 2001, cellular phones will have new technology in them that indicates where a call is originating within 200 feet of the actual location. Mr. Miller stated that this could be true, but before this is useful to the County the County needs to find out what system is being used and purchase any necessary equipment.

WHEREAS, routing all wireless 911 calls to the County Public Service Answering Point (PSAP) will be provide for the safety of county residents in the event of an emergency, and

WHEREAS, local wireless telephone service suppliers will route all wireless 911 telephone calls originating within Tompkins County to the PSAP if the County adopts a local law requiring them to do so, and

WHEREAS, a public hearing has been held before the Board of Representatives on November 21, 2000, to hear all persons interested in proposed Local Law No. h of 2000, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Public Safety Committee, That Local Law h of 2000 be and hereby is adopted.

RESOLVED, further, That the Clerk of the Board shall publish in the official newspaper of the County a notice of adoption containing a synopsis of said Local Law, and shall within five (5) days file one certified copy in the Office of the County Clerk, and one copy with the Secretary of State.

ASSIGNED COUNSEL UPDATE

Ms. Hughes stated that things are running smoothly in her department. She stated to date there is \$190,000 left in the budget to pay attorneys for the year and it may be used up very quickly by year-end. She said that this year is unique because Judge Barrett is retiring and a request has been made to defense attorneys that they submit any outstanding bills to Judge Barrett's office as soon as possible for payment.

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Mr. Meskill distributed the statistics for September and October. These are on file with the original minutes. He also distributed a memo from Dr. Traboulet regarding the rising cost of prescription drugs. He stated that the jail's medical budget is over budget and the cost of mental health costs is driving this rise. He stated an increase was not requested in the 2001 budget and he hopes to utilize other efficiencies within the department to help cover these costs.

Ms. Blanchard asked if there has been interest in alternative approaches such as behavior modification programs. Mr. Meskill stated that he is not aware of any programs. Since the state closed down their mental health facilities it has become a local issue and other local jails are also experiencing an increase in their mental health costs. He stated that in his budget he has \$50,000 for board-out costs and to date \$6,000 has been used for board-outs for mental health issues.

Mr. Evans stated there are number of groups in the community interested in the alternative approach, but these are considered a long extensive solution to the problem and although it is probably better, the drugs are basically medical straight jackets that solve the immediate problem.

Mr. Meskill stated that another issue is there aren't enough mental health services available in the jail like there has been in the past. He stated he foresees the situation getting worse. He noted that many inmates are having drugs dispensed to them before entering jail and once inside the County has to pay for the cost of the medication.

APPROVAL TO SEEK BIDS – PHARMACY SERVICES

It was Moved by Mr. Evans, seconded by Ms. Blanchard and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present to approve the Purchasing Division seeking and awarding the bid for pharmacy services at the jail.

Mr. Meskill stated his office has scheduled a number of additional patrols beginning November 17, 2000. He stated a joint event with the Ithaca Fire Department will be held for child safety restraint training. The event will be held at the fire's department's facility near the Cayuga Medical Center. He said he is also working on a similar initiative with the Newfield Fire Department. He noted that Deputy Teeter was highlighted on the front page of the Newfield News in relation to the new satellite office in Newfield. He also reported that he is still awaiting notification from the Federal Government on the Community Policing Grant.

Mr. Meskill stated he is disappointed that his office did not receive funding from the Governor's Traffic Safety Board (GTSB) for the speed-monitoring trailer. He said he was able to purchase the trailer at the same cost without GTSB funding, but he would still like to find a way to bring the \$4,500 requested from the GTSB into the department's budget. Mr. Evans asked about the possibility of purchasing speed trailers that also issue tickets. Mr. Meskill stated he does not support this because he questions the legality of it. He said the trailer that has been purchased also provides traffic counts that can be used by the Highway Department and if it works well he hopes to use rollover money next year to purchase a second one.

Mr. Beach stated that he too was disappointed that the GTSB did not fund the County's top priority. He stated he met with staff of the GTSB and emphasized the County's list of priorities. He said he felt it was a perfect opportunity to recognize the county for its 2/3 local match. He reported that when the County's Traffic Safety Board was first reappointed last year there was concern about who the traffic safety partners should be and the types of requests that would be funded. He said effort should be made to expand those partners for the 2001 funding cycle because there was a wide-range of requests funded by the GTSB.

Mr. Joseph stated it is important to note that although the GTSB did not provide funding to the Sheriff's Department, or fund the County's priorities in the order in which they were submitted, some of the requests were funded and money was brought into the County.

BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS

It was Moved by Ms. Blanchard, seconded by Mr. Evans and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present to approve the following budget adjustments:

REVENUE:	3113.42665	Sale of Equipment	\$4,750
	3113.42665	Sale of Equipment	2,000
APPROPRIATION:	3113.52231	Vehicles	\$4,750
	3113.54319	Program Supplies	2,000

Explanation: Monies needed to cover the cost of a new vehicle and to purchase program supplies.

REVENUE:	3113.42680	Insurance Recoveries	\$17,210
APPROPRIATION:	3113.52231	Vehicles	\$4,750
	3113.54319	Program Supplies	2,000

Explanation: Monies needed to cover the cost of a new vehicle and to purchase program supplies.

BUDGET TRANSFERS – INFORMATION ONLY

FROM:	3150.54342	Food	\$2,000
	3110.51000	Regular Pay	200
	3112.51000	Regular Pay	200
	3113.51000	Regular Pay	200
TO:	3150.54333	Education and Promotion	\$2,000
	3110.54333	Education and Promotion	200
	3112.54333	Education and Promotion	200
	3160.54400	Education and Promotion	200

Explanation: Monies to cover the cost of education and promotion.

FROM:	3150.54342	Food	\$5,000
TO:	3150.54340	Clothing	\$5,000

Explanation: Monies needed for clothing.

FROM: 3150.51342 Food \$5,000

TO: 3150.52206 Computer Equipment \$5,000

Explanation: Monies needed to purchase computer equipment.

FROM: 3113.54306 Automotive Supplies \$2,500

TO: 3113.54340 Clothing \$2,500

Explanation: Monies needed to cover the cost of the Community Response Team clothing.

FROM: 3112.54347 Ammunition \$1,000

TO: 3112.54340 Clothing \$1,000

Explanation: Monies needed to purchase vest carriers.

FROM: 3113.51000 Regular Pay \$25,000
3150.51000 Regular Pay \$25,000

TO: 3113.52231 Vehicles \$25,000
3113.52231 Vehicles \$25,000

Explanation: Monies needed to purchase an additional vehicle.

RESOLUTION NO. - TRANSFER OF PERSONNEL UPON TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS - SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT DISPATCHERS TO FIRE AND DISASTER

It was Moved by Mr. Evans, seconded by Ms. Blanchard and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present. Mr. Meskill stated that this allows the transfer of the dispatchers in the Sheriff's Department to the Fire Coordinator's office and this is necessary from a Civil Service perspective. He stated that the dispatching operation will be centralized to one answering point by January 1, 2001. Mr. Evans asked if the positions also change unions. Mr. Meskill stated that he believes they will, but this a negotiated item that the unions will deal with. Mr. Benjamin stated that union negotiations will focus on keeping the employees whole as far as accumulated time, etc.

Mr. Meskill stated the Board put aside \$140,000 in contingency funds to deal with the change in personnel in his department and he is working with Mr. Benjamin and the Personnel Commissioner to put together a plan. He said he believes it will be ready by the end of next week and feedback will then be sought from employees in the department.

WHEREAS, It is in the best interest of the public to have all dispatch positions centrally located in an Emergency Services Dispatch Center under the direction and control of the Tompkins County Fire and Disaster Coordinator's Office, and

WHEREAS, upon transfer of their dispatching functions, transfer of the Tompkins County Sheriff's Department Dispatch personnel is governed by Civil Service law, Section 70 - 2, and must be effected by an action of the Tompkins County Board of Representatives, and

WHEREAS, the Commissioner of Personnel, has determined that the dispatching functions and duties currently located in the Tompkins County Sheriff's Department are substantially similar to the duties that are performed by Emergency Services Dispatchers in the Department of Fire and Disaster, and

WHEREAS, the necessary budgetary transfer is addressed in the 2001 County Budget, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Public Safety Committee, that five full-time, 40 hour per week positions be created in the title of Emergency Services Dispatcher (12-551) in the Tompkins County Fire and Disaster Department effective January 1, 2001.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that five full-time, 40 hour per week Dispatchers in the Sheriff's Department are hereby transferred into the title of Emergency Services Dispatcher without further examination or qualification, along with their respective civil service classification, status and accrued fringe benefits and that the Dispatcher positions in the Sheriff's Department thus vacated shall be abolished effective January 1, 2001.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

Mr. Meskill stated that the grant was received for the snowmobiles and toboggan and they have been purchased. He stated Captain Vitale will be holding training next week on the safe operation of the all terrain vehicle (ATV) and the Parks and Recreation Department will be providing training for the snowmobiles in January.

DEPUTY COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Benjamin introduced and the Committee welcomed Becky Richmond, Community Justice Director. Mr. Benjamin stated that he is working swiftly to get Ms. Richmond settled in her new office and noted she will be attending future Committee meetings. He asked that a Justice Center Report be added to the monthly Committee agenda.

Ms. Richmond stated she is working to become familiar with the circumstances that have brought the County to the decision of creating a community justice center and what the vision of the program will be for the future. She stated she appreciates everyone's support.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

BUDGET TRANSFER - INFORMATION ONLY

FROM:	3160.51000	Regular Pay	\$ 433.42
	3160.51000	Regular Pay	\$1,169.20
TO:	3160.54400	Program Expense	\$ 433.42
	3160.54400	Travel/Training	\$1,169.20

Explanation: Expenses incurred in advertising for job title accommodated in unspent salary and expenses incurred in candidate's travel/accommodation for interview accommodated in unspent salary.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:52 p.m. The next meeting will be held December 14, 2000 at Noon in the Scott Heyman Conference Room.

Public Safety Committee
November 9, 2000

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Luu, Administrative Assistant, Board of Representative's office.