

**Public Safety Committee
December 21, 2007
Scott Heyman Conference Room
3 p.m.**

Present: L. McBean-Clairborne, M. Hattery, M. Koplinka-Loehr, M. Robertson
Vacancy: 1 (formerly held by R. Booth)
Legislators: J. Dennis, T. Joseph
Staff: S. Whicher, P. Younger, County Administration; P. Carey, DSS; S. Cook, County Attorney's Office; L. Shurtleff, Department of Emergency Response; P. Meskill, Sheriff; A. LeMaro, Facilities Division; M. Pottorff, Legislature Office.
Guests: D. Dietrich, S. Hess, OAR

Call to Order

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

Public Comment

No member of the public wished to comment.

Changes to the Agenda

Sheriff Meskill asked for a brief discussion on the Ithaca Police Department's SWAT bus.

Approval of Minutes of October 19, 2007

It was MOVED by Mr. Koplinka-Loehr, seconded by Mr. Hattery, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve the minutes of October 19, 2007 as submitted. MINUTES APPROVED.

Sheriff

Sheriff Meskill presented Jail boardout statistics for the Committee's information and stated he expects costs related to boarding prisoners to other facilities in 2007 will end up costing approximately half of what expenses were the year prior.

RESOLUTION NO. – APPROPRIATION FROM CONTINGENT FUND – TERMINAL-PAY REIMBURSEMENT– SHERIFF'S OFFICE – JAIL

It was MOVED by Mr. Koplinka-Loehr, seconded by Mr. Hattery, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve the following resolution and submit to the Budget and Capital Committee:

WHEREAS, the Sheriff's Office had three (3) Correction Officers resign, two (2) effective August 8, and one (1) on September 27, 2007, and

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

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Public Safety and Budget and Capital Committees, That the Director of Finance is hereby authorized and directed to make the following budget appropriation for 2007:

FROM:	A1990.54440	Contingent Fund	\$9,093
TO:	A3150.51000290	Correction Officers	\$6,542

A3150.58800 Fringes \$2,551

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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RESOLUTION NO. – APPROPRIATION FROM CONTINGENT FUND – REPLACEMENT PAY – SHERIFF’S OFFICE - JAIL

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Koplinka-Loehr, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve the following resolution and submit to the Budget and Capital Committee. Ms. Robertson suggested the committee overseeing personnel issues in 2008 should look at the overall issue of employees being out of work for extended periods of time and departments being responsible for absorbing the first two months of pay. She suggested the committee review how many employees have been out and how much departments have had to pay.

WHEREAS, the Sheriff’s Office has four (4) employees out on medical leave for greater than two months in the Jail, and

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

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Public Safety and Budget and Capital Committees, That the Director of Finance is hereby authorized and directed to make the following budget appropriation for 2007:

FROM: A1990.54440	Contingent Fund	\$67,663
TO: A3150.51000290	Corrections Officer	\$48,678
A3150.58800	Fringes	\$18,985

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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Ithaca Police Department SWAT Vehicle

Sheriff Meskill said his department participates on the SWAT Team with Ithaca Police Department. The bus that is currently used is old and in need of replacement. Sheriff Meskill said the Police Subcommittee has been exploring various pots of money to replace this vehicle, which is estimated to cost approximately \$.5 million. He would like the County to consider making a contribution towards this because it is a vehicle that is used Countywide. A private party has donated \$100,000 and he intends to make a similar request of the County towards the purchase because the Sheriff’s Office does not have the ability to have a tactical team on its own and he believes the current system works very well for the community and the taxpayers. He explained the team approach to using the tactical process, and said that when an incident happens within the City the bus is operated by the City and when an event happens outside of the City, the bus is operated by the Sheriff’s Office. He spoke of the County/City agreement for dispatch with payment due from the City to the County next year in the amount of \$287,000 and suggested the County lower that amount for the purpose of contributing towards the vehicle. Ms. Robertson said she would like to see Cornell and Ithaca College approached with a request for funding.

Offender Aid and Restoration – Bail Program

Ms. Dietrich said although they have not received the case in hand, they are grateful for the County’s appropriation of \$10,000 at the November 7 Legislature meeting. She reported they had been using their line of credit for the bail fund but have collected some of the bail funds back. The present balance of the Bail Fund is between \$2,500 to \$3,000. In 2006, OAR was able to do 48 bails; to date in 2007, they have done 69 bails. She believes the funds the County has provided OAR has resulted in a significant savings to the County. Ms. Dietrich reported the maximum bail amount has increased from \$1,500 to \$2,500. The majority of bails are in the \$500 to \$1,500 range and approximately five are at the

\$2,500 level. Another change that has been implemented is that co-signers do not have to hold full-time employment. This is because many receive disability or unemployment benefits and they did not think it was fair to those persons to be ineligible based on those circumstances.

Ms. Dietrich also reported on cross-training efforts that have been taking place among OAR staff and said other staff, in addition to the Bail Fund Coordinator, are now able to do bail intakes and this has been very helpful.

CJA/ATI Service Plan Funding

Ms. Cook, Chair, CJA/ATI Board, said for several years the annual service plan has been in the amount \$26,800 and has been used previously to fund a position in the Probation Department for Drug Court. When that changed and Probation no longer had that position, Ms. Carey offered to use this for a position that would do assessments in the Jail. Ms. Carey has worked all year to define and hire for the position to do these assessments; however at the last minute, a person who was offered the position declined the offer. Ms. Cook said this has resulted in them not being able to meet milestones so that they could receive the funds. She said she has spoken with representatives the DPCA (Division of Parole and Correctional Alternatives) about this and they have said they may be able to roll the funds from 2007 over to 2008 because Tompkins County has a five-year plan.

Ms. Cook spoke of the 2008 funding, and said Ms. Carey has indicated that she would still like to fill this position and the judges have expressed a strong desire to have the assessments happen. Ms. Carey said she is trying to change the type of position to a Certified Alcohol Substance Abuse Counselor and is also working with CARS (Cayuga Addiction Recovery Services) on performing these assessments until an individual is hired. Ms. Cook will keep the Committee updated on this.

Probation Department

**RESOLUTION NO. - APPROPRIATION FROM CONTINGENT FUND - REPLACEMENT
PAY – DEPARTMENT OF PROBATION AND COMMUNITY
JUSTICE**

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Koplinka-Loehr, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve the following resolution and submit to the full Legislature:

WHEREAS, the Department of Probation and Community Justice had an employee out on disability for greater than two months in the Core Probation Services Program, and

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

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Public Safety and Budget and Capital Committees, That the Director of Finance is hereby authorized to make the following adjustment to his books for 2007:

FROM:	A1990.54440	Contingent Fund	\$5,553
TO:	A3142.51000585	Probation Officer	\$3,995
	A3142.58800	Fringes	\$1,558

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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Budget Transfer

A budget transfer for the Department of Probation and Community Justice was presented for information. Mr. Koplinka-Loehr asked if there is something in the Professional Services account was not being done. An answer was not available.

A discussion on the Community Justice Center building took place later in the meeting.

Criminal Justice Data Communications System

Ms. Younger provided the Committee with background information with regard to technical assistance for the Criminal Justice Data Communications System (Committee Goal No. 1). She said four agencies have responded to help with this, and said two of the agencies receive federal funds and are able to provide technical assistance to entities like Tompkins County. Ms. Younger said they are now trying to map out how the County can use all of the available resources and is looking at ways to begin to engage people and bring them to the table.

Ms. Younger said we know that one of our most valuable assets are the law enforcement entities who have been true users of the data. Greg Potter meets routinely with them as matter of information technology support. They are beginning to look at a way to engage this group and bring them to the table to talk about what is going well and they will then gradually bring in other stakeholders to discuss what they are looking for. She said there are several issues that need to be addressed, such as proprietary issues, confidentiality, trust, and privacy issue. She said one of the entities who have offered to provide technical assistance (Center for Technology and Government) has the road map to address all of these issues.

Mr. Potter said his role in the project is primarily focused on supporting the electronic records and information. He said he has been meeting with a representative of all of the police agencies within the County once a month and they are now getting to a point where they are talking about the issues and priorities that he can then put a scope to the project. There are many issues that have to be resolved, such as use and dissemination issues and privacy issues; however, Mr. Potter said things are moving forward.

Ms. Younger spoke to this group and presented information. She said they are willing and anxious to receive the technical assistance that has been presented to them, and also added there are other groups that should be engaged as well, such as the District Attorney, Courts, and the Department of Emergency Response.

Ms. Younger explained the technical assistance that would be provided to the County and read a letter from the Commission of Local Government Efficiency and Competitiveness that state they have arranged for the Department of Criminal Justice Services to provide assistance to Tompkins County as it pursues information sharing and cooperation among criminal justice agencies in Tompkins County. This initiative will receive expedited technical assistance, legal and logistical help to facilitate their implementation.

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne said she is very glad to see something being put in place and a governance structure being developed that has everyone on board.

Mr. Potter stressed that he will only be involved in this project if it is clear and the focus is on police agencies.

There was a brief discussion of who should “champion” this project. Mr. Hattery said he believes it should be someone in the law enforcement community and Mrs. McBean-Clairborne concurred.

Mrs. McBean-Clairborne said this Committee wants to see this move forward with the parameters that have been mentioned.

Ms. Jayne, Mr. Potter, and Ms. Younger will continue to move forward and will continue to let the committee updated.

Department of Emergency Response

Mr. Shurtleff updated the Committee on the Communications Capital Project said they are winding down the construction contract on the civil work. The microwave system was optimized last week and we have preliminary acceptance on that. After the high winds last week the old microwave system was on and off the air because of failure. They were able to isolate the components to allow for only a partial system shutdown. He stressed this reinforces the urgency in completing the project as soon as possible. He said he has a plan to transition the most important equipment over to the new microwave system. As far as the paging system, all of the installation is complete and they are ready to begin testing. All of the subscriber groups are working intently on finalizing policies and procedures and will then put together a training program that incorporates those polices and procedures.

Mr. Shurtleff reported the Assistant Director position was filled in October and is working out quite well. He said he has asked various divisions to begin to prepare formal work plans which is something that hasn't been done in the past. There will then be a concentration on implementing different operating measures.

The Emergency Communications Review and Oversight Committee has been charged with review of dispatch calls but have been very busy working on the communications system. Ms. McBean-Clairborne said she would be asking for Common Council to send Committee agendas to Mr. Shurtleff so that he is aware when dispatch operations are being discussed at the City meetings.

Community Justice Center Building

Mr. LeMaro updated the Committee on the Community Justice Center Building and said repairs have been over the last couple of years. He said he could not justify \$200,000 in expenditures to replace the roof so that project was diverted to 2010; he noted they are looking for clear direction from the County on what is going to happen to the building. Mr. LeMaro reported the Personnel Department received a grant to look at the feasibility of improving the space in the building. They have received proposals from consultants and are starting that in early 2008. He said there are many areas of that building that need to be addressed but at the present time they are heating and cooling the space as well as maintaining it as best as they can without making any major financial investment into the building. He noted the building is occupied under a temporary variance that was granted seven years ago. Mr. LeMaro also noted this is not a good use of funds for County records as the entire building is being heated.

Review of Committee Goals

The Committee reviewed 2007 goals. There was consensus that Goal Nos. 1-3 were done well, with little time spent on Goals 4 and 5.

Ms. Robertson spoke of dispatch calls and said she had heard of problems in the past but has not heard of any recently, and said this is an area she would like to learn more about. Mr. Hattery said he would like to receive a synopsis of complaints and calls as well as what is being done to address complaints.

2007 Public Safety Committee Goals

Goal 1: Establish a reliable method for routinely analyzing public safety operations and program data to better guide policy, budget, and funding decisions/recommendations regarding the County's jail population and recidivism rates, and improving alternative-to-incarceration services.

Need Statement: The County has been challenged with establishing a good method for routinely analyzing current data to determine the effectiveness of the current array of public safety programming in minimizing jail crowding and reducing recidivism. Additionally, there are no clear criteria for defining the data needed (e.g., differences in perceptions, concerns, and program intent) to support and guide program effectiveness. Recently, the CJ/ATI Advisory Board established a "data subcommittee," to look at jail data and trends as they relate to the Board's 2007 strategic action plan and to the Board's annual service plan, which is required by NYS DPCA. The Public Safety Committee should consider the approach and progress of this data subcommittee to help establish a reliable method for routinely analyzing public safety operations and program data in order to better guide Committee policy and funding recommendations.

Goal 2: Establish a process and timeline for routinely monitoring the progress of the Emergency Management Strategic Group (EMSG) and begin implementation of the monitoring process on or before August 2007. In effect the monitoring process will provide the Committee timely and consistent updates on the County's workforce and operational readiness regarding response and recovery in the event of an emergency or disaster; progress in developing a comprehensive County readiness plan; and issues or challenges that need attention or resolution.

Need Statement: In 2006, the EMSG was created to facilitate the development of an emergency response and recovery plan specific to County government operations. Recognizing the importance of County services and programs to the citizens of Tompkins County, the Group is looking to ensure a protocol that will support time-critical, essential services an alternative infrastructures and resources for any County department or division in the event of an emergency or total loss. Undoubtedly, the County's workforce and operational readiness is a public safety concern as much as it is a general management concern. To this end, the Public Safety Committee needs to be kept abreast of EMSG activities and any related issues or challenges that require the Committee's guidance and support.

Goal 3: Establish a routine system for receiving and analyzing information and monitoring progress and effectiveness of the County's communication system, including the communications capital project and the centralized dispatch operation.

Need Statement: With a multi-million dollar communication system being developed and a collaborative dispatch service, the County needs to establish a routine reporting system to ensure that money is being spent responsibly and that the system is working well. This will help the County to perhaps be able to explore better collaborations with NYS around communication systems thus exposing the County to continuous resources for maintenance and upgrades. Additionally, it is essential to continue to perfect the dispatch operations so that it remains centralized as this is of benefit to County taxpayers.

Goal 4: Develop a plan for conducting a needs assessment of the jail – including operations, staffing, and program and service delivery systems – to determine short-term and long-term space needs, formulate options, and if needed, alternative sites to meet future operational requirements. The needs assessment study should be completed by December 2008.

Need Statement: Given the challenge of jail overcrowding and 2006 board-out costs in excess of \$700k, there is a need for a realistic plan to provide additional space to meet future population

projections, while accommodating in-jail programming to help reduce jail overcrowding and recidivism. The former *LaBella Study* is five years old, and includes data as far back as 1998. Current demographics and crime trends suggest that it is time to revisit the need for a new public safety facility.

Goal 5: With the assistance of the County Public Information Officer, develop guidelines for (a) maintaining advantageous media and public relations, and (b) encouraging orderly, consistent management and delivery of Public Safety Committee-related information released to the media.

Need Statement: Currently, there is no coordinated approach to release of information to the media regarding public safety initiatives, and no active outreach to effectively communicate with the public and taxpayers regarding the activities of this committee. Although all Legislative standing committee meetings are open to the public, it cannot be assumed that all members of the public are able to access or attend these meetings. An organized approach to increase the public awareness of this Committee's activities, including but not limited to, enhanced media relations, will help to better demonstrate this Committee's work and its understanding of citizen concerns regarding the safety of our community.

Appointment(s)

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

Youth Services Board

Gale Smith	Town of Ithaca	12/31/10
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Emergency Comm. Review and Oversight Committee

Edward Abruzzo	NYS Police	12/31/10
Leslie P. Gifford III	Vol. Ambulance Squad	12/31/10
Jason Fulton	West side – Fire/EMS	12/31/10

Fire, Disaster, and EMS Advisory Board

David H. Cornelius	At-large	12/31/10
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Criminal Justice Advisory/Alt. to Incarceration Bd.

John P. Beach	Crime Victim	12/31/10
Peter J. Meskill	Sheriff	12/31/10
Linda Riley	Director of Community Services	12/31/10
Betty F. Poole	Town/Village Court Judge	12/31/10
William Furniss, Jr.	At-large	12/31/10
Diana Bodnar	DSS	12/31/10
Susan Cook	County Attorney's Office	12/31/10
Judith Saul	Agency providing mediation Services	12/31/10

Advisory Board on Indigent Representation

Deborah Dietrich		12/31/10
Diane V. Bruns		12/31/10
Kelly A. Damm		12/31/10

Traffic Safety Committee

Fernando DeAragon	MPO	12/31/10
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Public Safety Committee
December 21, 2007

Family Court Advisory Council

Louise Miller	At-large	12/31/10
Mary Cole	Schools	12/31/10
Patricia M. Karr-Segal	Family and Children's Service	12/31/10
Diane Withiam	At-large	12/31/10

STOP-DWI Advisory Board

Ronald H. Schoneman	At-large	12/31/10
Stu Bergman	Substance Abuse Subcommittee	12/31/10
Sonja Seamon	Restaurant/Tavern/Hotel	12/31/10
Peter J. Meskill	Sheriff	12/31/10

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Michelle Pottorff, TC Legislature Office