

Public Safety Committee
April 12, 2001

Public Safety Committee
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Location: Sheriff's Department
Noon

Present: G. Totman, B. Blanchard, T. Joseph (arrived at 12:15 p.m.), N. Schuler, T. Todd
Staff: P. Meskill, D. Neimi, J. Miller, L. Shurtleff, B. Richmond, M. Pottorff, C. Covert
Guests: Desiree Johnson, Ithaca Drug Court; O. Mack, OAR;

Mr. Totman called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m.

Approval of Minutes of March 6 and 8, 2001

It was MOVED by Ms. Blanchard, seconded by Mr. Todd, and unanimously adopted by voice vote to approve the minutes of the March 6 and 8, 2001 minutes. MINUTES APPROVED.

Changes to the Agenda

Ms. Blanchard and Mrs. Schuler asked to give a preliminary report on the advisory board assignment they had been given.

Reports received from April

VAWA from Sue Robinson, Domestic Violence Coordinator
OAR monthly report
Sheriff's Department report (distributed at meeting)

Report on Advisory Boards

Ms. Blanchard said she and Mrs. Schuler were assigned the task of looking at all advisory boards that report to the Public Safety Committee. She distributed copies of a matrix they had developed that contains information on all of the advisory boards, background information, and whether there is a New York State mandate or requirement for funding. She asked that everyone review the matrix and fill in any of the existing blanks or correct wrong information. She said they will continue to work on this and said she expects to have a recommendation in a couple of months.

Appointment

It was MOVED by Mr. Todd, seconded by Ms. Blanchard, and unanimously adopted by voice vote to approve the appointment of Doug Cotterill to the E911 Operations Committee representing the Town of Dryden as an alternate for a term to expire December 3, 2001.

Assigned Counsel

It was MOVED by Mr. Todd, seconded by Ms. Blanchard, and unanimously adopted by voice vote to approve the following resolution and submit to the full Board:

**RESOLUTION NO. - URGING THE STATE OF NEW YORK TO INCREASE THE
ASSIGNED COUNSEL RATES**

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WHEREAS, New York State will be discussing an increase in the assigned counsel rates and how the increase should be funded, and

WHEREAS, the current rates for assigned counsel are forty dollars (\$40.00) in court and twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) out of court, which rate has not been increased since 1984, causing a grave hardship to the day-to-day operations of the court system, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Public Safety Committee, That the Tompkins County Board of Representatives urges our State Legislature to increase assigned counsel rates and to fund it by monies contributed by the State of New York,

RESOLVED, further, That copies of this resolution be sent to Governor George Pataki, Senator John R. Kuhl, Jr., Assemblyman Martin Luster, and the New York State Association of Counties.

SEQR ACTION: TYPEII-20

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E911 Surcharge Resolution

It was MOVED by Ms. Blanchard, seconded by Mr. Todd, and unanimously adopted by voice to approve the forthcoming resolution that will allow an additional \$.20 charge on telephone access lines.

Sheriff's Department

Mr. Meskill distributed copies of his report dated April, 2001. He reported he has been advised by the State that the Sheriff's Department needs to begin taking precautions against clothing that is contaminated with blood or feces. He said his options are to purchase a special machine which will cost \$12,000-\$15,000 or take the last of his garage bays and convert it into an area that would preserve this evidence. Mr. Meskill said the Purchasing Division has said if a department has been cited by the State, the emergency purchasing procedure can be invoked, and they can move forward without going through the bidding process. Mr. Meskill said he needs to obtain rollover funds from last year's budget in order to do this, otherwise, his Department will be cited and fined by the State. He asked for direction on how to proceed from the Committee. Mr. Joseph expressed concern over approving actions outside of the budget process.

It was MOVED by Mr. Todd, seconded by Ms. Blanchard, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to endorse the purchase of this equipment with funds from the current year's budget, to invoke the emergency bidding procedure, and to direct Sheriff Meskill to apply for rollover funds at the appropriate time during the budget process. MOTION CARRIED.

At this time the Committee took a tour of the Sheriff's Department and the Jail.

Report from Drug Court

Desiree Johnson reported on the graduation ceremony that was recently held for Ithaca City Drug Court and said over 12 individuals graduated. She also reported the felony drug court has had over eleven referrals in the last three months. She reported Judge Sherman is presiding over the felony drug court and they are hoping for another half-time judge for that program.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:40 p.m.