

MINUTES

APPROVED

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

APRIL 18, 2008 2:00 P.M. SCOTT HEYMAN CONFERENCE ROOM

Present: G. Stevenson, J. Dennis, M. Hattery; M. Robertson

Excused: M. Koplinka-Loehr (temporarily member)

Staff: S. Whicher, N. Jayne, M. Lynch, County Administration; J. Potter, Sheriff's Office; P. Carey, D. Perine, D. Bodnar, A. Mills, P. Gibson, Department of Social Services; P. Meskill, Sheriff; J. Hughes, Assigned Counsel Program; M. Pottorff, Legislature Office; P. Buechel, Probation and Community Justice Department; C. Howard, Cornell Public Safety; C. Whitten, New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee; M. Freedman, City of Ithaca Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Council

Guests: D. Dietrich, S. Hess. W. Sapp, Offender Aid and Restoration; S. Wampler, WHCU

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

Changes to the Agenda

The resolution entitled Appropriation from Contingent Fund – Replacement Pay – Department of Probation and Community Justice, was added to the agenda.

Chair's Report

Mr. Stevenson reported on work that has been done since the last meeting by Paula Younger, Deputy County Administrator, on the subject of technical assistance for the Tompkins County Criminal Justice Data Sharing Initiative. Ms. Younger has been in contact with the National Center for State Courts, and there is a possibility the County can receive technical assistance at no cost. This would be in the form of a one-day working session given by the National Center for State Courts for key representatives of the public safety system. Ms. Jayne said May 19th is being explored as the date for this work session. Phone calls have been made to judges and other public safety entities with the County and several have committed to attending this session. She said she would like Legislators to attend and to encourage others to attend this session that will pull everyone together to discuss what information sharing is all about.

Mr. Dennis said he would be interested in seeing information about some of the other places this Center has worked, who with, and what they did while they were there.

Ms. Robertson asked for a list of who has committed to attending and who has not been reached, and also an overview of the session.

Mr. Stevenson said another national not-for-profit "Family Justice" also sent in a proposal but they are much more costly.

Sheriff's Office

RESOLUTION NO. - AWARD OF CONTRACT - PHYSICIAN SERVICES

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Hattery, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the following resolution and submit to the full Legislature. Sheriff Meskill said this is a two-year contract with the option of three annual renewals. He also said there were no other bidders. There were also no other bidders the last time as well.

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Finance Department has duly requested proposals for Physician Services for the Tompkins County Jail,

WHEREAS, one (1) proposal was received on February 14, 2008, now therefore be it,

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Public Safety Committee, That the proposal from Marshall Trabou, MD of Aurora, New York for Physician Services for the Tompkins County Jail for \$61,044 annually be and hereby is, accepted for a two-year term (3/1/08 – 2/29/10) with additional renewal options for up to three, one year terms upon mutual agreement,

RESOLVED, further, That the County Administrator be authorized to execute an agreement to implement this contract.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II - 25

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Department of Probation and Community Justice

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

It was MOVED by Mr. Hattery, seconded by Ms. Robertson, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, 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	\$8,232
TO:	A3142.51000585	Probation Officer	\$5,965
	A3142.58800	Fringes	\$2,267

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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**RESOLUTION NO. - AUTHORIZATION TO ACCEPT AN AWARD OF A GRANT FOR
THE BENEFIT OF THE DRUG COURTS OF TOMPKINS COUNTY**

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

WHEREAS, the Probation Director has been notified of a grant award in the amount of \$35,000 from a local foundation that has requested no publicity for the grant, to provide support for the Drug Treatment Courts of Tompkins County,

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

RESOLVED, further, that the Director of Finance is directed to make the following budget adjustment for 2008:

BUDGET ADJUSTMENT

FROM: (Revenue)	A 3990.42705	Gifts & Donations	\$35,000
TO: (Appropriation)	A 3990.51000049	Project Assistant	\$ 600
	A 3990.54333	Education & Promotion	\$15,000
	A 3990.54491	Sub-Contracts	\$19,340
	A 3990.58800	Fringe	\$ 60

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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Report on Re-Entry Program

Ms. Bodnar reviewed the following information to the Committee:

Program Goals:

- Provide transition planning and service linkages for participants upon release into the community
- Provide continued support and service linkages to move toward full integration back into the community

Desired Outcomes:

- Program participants will have housing, employment, DSS benefits, resolution of child support/custody issues, counseling and other service linkages established upon re-entry into the community. (Measures: numbers of participants obtaining above goals)
- Program participants will increase pro-social behaviors and community connections. (Measures: numbers of family and social supports, number of connections/contactys with community groups and organizations)

Program Structure and Organization

- Reentry Program is composed of Jail Reentry Coordinator, Reentry Team and Reentry Community Coordinator
 - Jail Coordinator: Corrections Officer (Jeff Potter)
 - Reentry Team: representatives from the following organizations: OAR, Probation, Mental Health, DSS, Workforce Development, Red Cross, Community Dispute Resolution Center, Faith-based community
 - Community Coordinator:
 - * OAR (March, 2007-February, 2008)
 - * DSS Reentry Group (February, 2008-present): substance Abuse Evaluator (primary contact person), Housing Specialist, Job Search Specialist, Temporary Assistance and Food Stamp Intake
- Potential Program participants are identified by the Reentry Jail Coordinator, who then brings names and profiles to the Reentry Team. The team discusses the appropriateness of participants in relation to program criteria and motivation for engagement in the program
- Reentry Jail Coordinator conducts comprehensive assessment of participants' strengths and needs with regard to the community.
- Community Reentry Team meets weekly to discuss participant needs and progress. Team problem solves with regard to identifying and connecting participants with community resources and service linkages when they are released from Jail.
- Jail Reentry Coordinator works with participants to identify goals and develop problem solving skills for developing plan a plan to meet these goals. (Targeting Success Program)
- Prior to release Jail Reentry Coordinator and Community Reentry Coordinator work with participants to develop a transition plan for release that identifies action steps to be taken in different life areas: housing, employment, counseling, child support custody, legal, etc.

- Reentry Community Coordinator provides service referrals and linkages to participants once they are in the community. Also provide ongoing follow-up and support to participants in working towards their reentry goals.

Mr. Potter distributed a packet of information that is provided to each potential participant. The program participants are County-sentenced inmates only who have 60-90 days left in jail; none of them are on probation or parole. A lot of these people have issues such as with child support or the DMV and the team attempts to resolve issues prior to release. At the present time participants are not required to sign a contract but this is under consideration and there may be a contract in the future.

A question was raised of whether requiring participants to sign a contract would make them comply or if would set them up for failure if they were unable to abide by the terms of the contract. Ms. Hughes said she thinks contracts are good because it provides the participants with something to go by and it has been successful in the drug courts. Ms. Carey said she thinks the program plan achieves this without requiring a contract. Ms. Bodnar said she understands the desire to formalize the process but their goal is to keep people on track and to not have any barriers while doing so. Ms. Carey said the Team is continually working on this program and the issue of having a contract continues to be discussed.

Mr. Whicher asked how many participants have been in the program. Mr. Potter said there have been 17 clients in the program since March, 2007. Of those, 13 have been released from jail and 4 are in jail participating in the program. Although this has not been discussed by the Team, the capacity of the program is 3-4 at a time (12-14 per year). A copy of the program outcomes is attached to these minutes.

Ms. Bodnar said during the first year of the program staff spent a lot of time “running around”, however, since then, the case manager piece has been moved to DSS. That position spends a lot of time meeting with people in the jail and acts as a support. Sheriff Meskill said he does not board these participants to other facilities in order for them to be close to the services they need through this program.

Mr. Hattery asked if department heads think this program is working. Ms. Carey said from the pilot program they were able to determine a program like this would work. She said they are happy with it and will tweak the program as necessary. She also stated from DSS’s perspective, this program streamlines many things because these are people who would very likely be coming through their doors anyway. Ms. Carey said the program has experienced a good collaboration with the Sheriff, Probation Department, and OAR, and she thanks them.

Ms. Robertson asked if there is a graduation or some type of event recognizing participants who have completed the program. Ms. Dietrich said OAR will be including a recognition of these individuals at their annual meeting.

Mr. Potter spends a significant amount of time ensuring that participants are exposed to the various components of the program. He stressed that although all have found housing it not always in the best of conditions. Upon a participants’ release, the goal is to have provided them with housing, benefits, a personal set of goals, employment options, and transportation to appointments. Ms. Gibson said individuals who are receiving public assistance are not staying in services as long they she thinks they would have without participating in this program. Mr. Potter concluded his presentation stating he thinks the program has seen some pretty good success so far.

Committee Goals

Mr. Stevenson referred to a document contained in the agenda packet from Paula Younger relating to the 2008 Reentry Housing Goal and asked if there were any questions on the information provided.

Ms. Robertson referred to email communications that have gone between various parties concerning this subject. She said she thought the first step was going to be to get numbers from those who are working with folks who are being released in order get a concrete picture of what housing is needed and what is lacking. Mr. Potter said almost everyone had received housing other than the shelter. Although some of it was not the best, everyone had a place to go. She said she is not clear that Tompkins County needs to duplicate services being provided in large metropolitan areas. Ms. Robertson said she would like to hear a report back from the Reentry Team on what the housing situation is and what needs exist.

Mr. Stevenson said he plans to get everyone together to discuss reentry initiatives at one time and in one place. He thinks this would help resolve any miscommunication about what each person thinks they are doing as well as to help understand what others are doing.

Mr. Meskill said it is important to have a discussion about what the Committee is trying to do and to have everyone understand what each other is going.

Ms. Carey said she would like to provide a presentation to the Committee on what the Staff is doing.

Mr. Whicher clarified that Ms. Younger was working on looking for resources and would like people to recognize the good intentions behind this work.

Mr. Stevenson clarified no decision has been made to spend any amount of money on technical assistance. Mr. Meskill said this came as a surprise to all of those involved in working with this issue and while he understands the Committee has a housing goal, there needs to be improved communication amongst all parties.

Ms. Robertson referred to the February 15 minutes and said there needs to be a self-evaluation before looking at others are dealing with these problems. She said the information needs to be pulled together in a systematic way.

Mr. Stevenson said he will be in contact with committee and involved parties to schedule this meeting.

Liaison Reports

There were no reports.

Approval of Minutes

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Koplinka-Loehr, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of the February 15th and March 4th meetings as submitted.

Minutes
Public Safety Committee
March 21, 2008

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Michelle Pottorff, TC Legislature Office