

APPROVED 6:15:07

MINUTES

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

MAY 18, 2007 3:00 P.M. SCOTT HEYMAN CONFERENCE ROOM

Present: L. McBean-Clairborne, Chair; M. Robertson; D. Booth; M. Hattery (arrived at 3:05 p.m.)

Excused: M. Koplinka-Loehr

Staff: C. Covert, Clerk of the Legislature; D. Dietrich, Offender Aid and Restoration Director; S. Hess, Offender Aid and Restoration; S. Whicher, County Administrator; P. Carey, Social Services Commissioner; P. Younger, Deputy County Administrator; M. Lynch, Public Information Officer; L. Shurtleff, Emergency Response Director; S. Cook, Chair, Criminal Justice Advisory/Alternatives to Incarceration Board

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 p.m.

Changes to Agenda

The following items were withdrawn from the agenda:

- Assigned Counsel Program – update
- District Attorney – Departmental overview

Sheriff's Department

Jail Statistics

Ms. Robertson requested financial information on boardouts be made available to the Committee.

Assigned Counsel Program

Mr. Booth referenced a memorandum received from the State concerning the public defender system and said he would like to discuss it further at the appropriate time. Mrs. McBean-Clairborne said Ms. Hughes of the Assigned Counsel Program will provide the Committee with information and an update on the memorandum at the next meeting.

Mr. Hattery arrived at this time.

Public Comment

No one from the public was present.

Approval of Minutes

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Hattery, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of the April 20, 2007, meeting as corrected.

Offender Aid and Restoration

Resolution

Minutes
Public Safety Committee
May 18, 2007

As the resolution was approved by the Budget and Capital Committee, Mr. Booth explained the action taken to remove \$2,000 relating to security deposits from the request. Mr. Hattery added that the intent was to make that a revolving loan payment.

It was MOVED by Mr. Booth, seconded by Ms. Robertson, to approve and submit the following resolution to the full Legislature for approval.

Ms. Dietrich apologized for not attending the Budget and Capital Committee when the resolution was discussed as she was not informed the proposal was on that agenda. She continued by stating that she had not anticipated coming back to the County for money, but the number of people entering the re-entry program has increased. Currently there are four people in the program and three more expected. She will be working jointly with Corrections Officer Potter to identify others that will be entering. She anticipates this program growing to 10-15 people by the end of the year. There is an advisory committee on the re-entry initiative that meets weekly consisting of representatives from various agencies such as Mental Health, Social Services, Alcoholism Council, Probation and Community Justice, etc. Ms. Dietrich briefly explained the Sheriff's re-entry program called Targeting Success that occurs while the person is still in jail; she will be asking if she can attend a couple of those interview sessions. At the same time those interviews are taking place, the advisory committee is meeting and discussing to identify other road blocks such as back orders of child support, fines for driver's licenses, etc. to eliminate those prior to release. In addition she anticipates the criteria and performance measurements being set in the next couple of weeks.

Mr. Booth said there were several questions raised at the Budget and Capital Committee meeting. One of those questions was how are the people chosen for the program. Ms. Dietrich said at this time the Sheriff's Department is selecting the participants, but she said the advisory committee will be discussing this cooperatively. This is a work-in-progress and criteria need to be developed.

Mr. Booth asked if this was a pilot program or an on-going program as he does not believe it would be acceptable if additional requests were made for money. Ms. Carey said this issue was discussed and the advisory committee looked at how many people are anticipating to be discharged every month. After going through a process it was estimated that there would be between 5-10 people per month discharged. She said it is going to be a rolling number because some people will need less case management than others. The goal of the team is to move people back into the system that they came out of when they went into jail such as mental health or adult protective services. The team during its discussions of staffing has always thought a fulltime coordinator on the outside and one in the jail would be needed eventually. The team has looked at everyone providing services at the jail and asked them to be part of the discussions for this initiative. Ms. Carey said her department spends a lot of money on services for people in jail and outside of the jail. She felt that since most of the agencies are funded by her department there needed to be some streamlining and coordination and asked agencies currently providing services to be part of the team. She commented that the only agency not contracted with the Department of Social Services is OAR.

Mr. Hattery asked if the resolution has been reviewed by the Criminal Justice Advisory/Alternatives to Incarceration (CJA/ATI) Board. Ms. Robertson said the resolution has not been specifically discussed but the idea of a re-entry program has for at least a year by a subcommittee of the CJA/ATI Board. Further discussion followed and Mr. Hattery asked which committee would be responsible for reporting on the progress of the plan and was told the Public Safety Committee would be responsible. Ms. Carey said a criminal justice cabinet with the Sheriff's Department, District Attorney's Office, Social Services, and Probation and Community Justice has been meeting for approximately three months and the group agreed to monitor this initiative, asking for reports and setting outcomes. A

memorandum of understanding was requested that outlines the specific responsibilities, expectations and program outcomes.

Discussion followed concerning process and Ms. Cook commented that the CJA/ATI Board has not reviewed or evaluated the proposal presented. She said it is difficult to advise when the Board has not had an opportunity to review the proposal. Ms. Robertson expressed her opinion that she believes the Public Safety Committee is the oversight Committee. Ms. McBean-Clairborne said CJA/ATI has been charged with developing a plan and working through the implementation aspects of it and that a plan of action (not the funding piece) should be discussed by CJA/ATI. Further discussion followed and Mr. Whicher spoke of the overall plan developed by CJA/ATI and believes coordination is important to continue moving forward. Ms. McBean-Clairborne's understanding is that there would be further development of the recommendations of what they will look like at the CJA/ATI level and proposals shared with appropriate agencies responsible for it and then brought to this Committee along with any appropriation requests. As the CJA/ATI Board is meeting May 21st and is able to review the proposal, Mr. Hattery suggested and the Committee agreed to add a Whereas to the resolution that the proposal has been reviewed for consistency with the Strategic Action Plan by the CJA/ATI Board.

Further discussion continued concerning proposed funding for this initiative and the technology required followed with an explanation by Ms. Dietrich on the equipment and software needed. In response to a question raised about monitoring, Ms. Dietrich explained the process that would be followed.

Ms. Robertson spoke about the capacity issue raised earlier and believes limiting this to a small number of people would be more productive. Mr. Whicher reminded the Committee that this funding is for six months. OAR has had preliminary discussions with the Human Services Coalition for a proposal of \$100,000 for 2008. Having outcomes justified and adequate information will be important before additional funds are allocated. Ms. Younger spoke about conversations being held relating to jail overcrowding and recidivism and understood that bringing the professionals from various entities would provide a systematic approach. This would provide the opportunity to look at data as it relates to the entire system. She sees the role of CJA/ATI as advising this Committee.

Discussion continued and a concern was raised by Mr. Booth relating to a policy question with releasing data controlled by the County to a non-county agency and asked that this be looked into. Ms. Dietrich commented that a majority of the information is received from the Sheriff's Department and is public record. Ms. Carey said the issue of sharing information has been discussed. When the Correction Officer is meeting with an inmate part of the package are forms the client can sign for releasing information. She said the client makes the decision on what they will release for sharing. Ms. Dietrich said OAR also has confidentiality agreements for clients.

Mr. Booth said he will support this with the understanding that this is the only request this year.

Mr. Hattery said he is also supportive of the agency's initiative and the inclusiveness; however, he has concerns with accountability. He voted against this resolution in the Budget and Capital Committee as he does not believe the County should be having proposals coming from non-for-profits. Agencies should be coming forward with proposals that contract to provide services.

In response to Ms. Robertson's comments that this is a pilot project, Ms. Carey stated she would be accountable; Ms. Carey noted she does not have a legal relationship with OAR.

Ms. McBean-Clairborne expressed similar concerns as Mr. Hattery and is interested in examining in six months such expenses as staff training and local travel relating to this program. Mr. Hattery is interested in knowing they have performed.

Ms. McBean-Clairborne hoped that someone from CJA/ATI would report back to this Committee after their meeting.

A voice vote resulted as follows: Ayes – 3 (Booth, Robertson, and McBean-Clairborne); Noes – 1 (Hattery); Excused – 1 (Koplinka-Loehr). RESOLUTION CARRIED.

RESOLUTION NO. - APPROPRIATION FROM CONTINGENT FUND – RE-ENTRY INITIATIVE PROGRAM – OFFENDER AID AND RESTORATION

WHEREAS, Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR), in conjunction with the Department of Social Services and the Sheriff’s Office, as part of the “Criminal Justice/Alternatives to Incarceration 2007 Strategic Action Plan”, has developed a pilot program known as the Re-Entry Initiative, where OAR staff will work in conjunction with the Jail Coordinator and individual inmates at the Tompkins County Jail to develop an “action plan” comprised of pre-release planning modules and enrollment in post-release, community-based programs, and

WHEREAS, inmate participation, which is voluntary, has exceeded initial projections, and

WHEREAS, we expect this program to grow over the next year and result in both successful reentry and reduced recidivism, thus saving the county tax dollars, and

WHEREAS, an additional \$28,715 would result in the following:

- Hiring a Client Service Worker with more case coordination experience to support this initiative.
- Provide necessary training to meet this initiative's needs.
- Develop an Emergency Client Flex Fund, which in our past experience, OAR has found that relatively small expenditures on vital necessities have profound impacts on a successful transition back to the community. Expenditures such as security deposits, recognized forms of identification (birth certificates, Sheriff’s Ids), bedding and clothing, and emergency transportation can optimize a client’s chance to successfully reenter the community.

WHEREAS, OAR expects this to result in both successful reentry and reduced recidivism, thus saving the county tax dollars, and will provide a thorough evaluation tied to initial performance measures of this initial stage of the re-entry initiative prior to the 2008 county budget cycle,

WHEREAS, the Public Safety Committee as charged CJA/ATI Board with review of the OAR proposal to ensure its consistent with the overall CJA/ATI Strategic Action Plan, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Public Safety and the Budget and Capital Committees, That the Director of Finance be authorized to make the following budget appropriation:

FROM: A1990.54400 Contingent Fund (targeted for Jail Overcrowding)	\$28,715
TO: A6316.54400 Program Expense	\$28,715

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

Electric Hybrid Vehicles

Training for Emergency Personnel

Mr. Shurtleff said he will find a venue to do a training program on handling accidents with electric Hybrid vehicles and extend it to county agencies. He commented that this is a concern with fire service individuals. Ms. Robertson suggested contacting Mr. Nicholson of the Environmental Management Council as he may have some ideas. Mr. Booth also suggested notifying the manufacturers

Minutes
Public Safety Committee
May 18, 2007

to see if there is anything available. Ms. McBean-Clairborne said she will report to the Legislature that a training program is being looked into.

Appointments

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

Advisory Board on Indigent Representation

Abigail DeLoache – at-large representative – term expires December 31, 2009

STOP-DWI Advisory Board

Chuck Bartosch – at-large representative – term expires December 31, 2009

Other Business

Mr. Whicher distributed copies of a report he received from the Center for Constitutional Rights concerning *Impacts of Jail Expansion in New York State: A Hidden Burden*. He encouraged members to read it.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.