

MINUTES

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

MAY 6, 2004 2:00 P.M. SCOTT HEYMAN CONFERENCE ROOM

Present: B. Blanchard, Chair; G. Totman; L. McBean-Clairborne; M. Robertson; M. Koplinka-Loehr

Staff: D. Wolf, Probation; J. Vitale, Sheriff's Office; K. Leinthall, Probation Director; S. Whicher, County Administrator; P. Meskill, Sheriff; O. Mack, Offender Aid and Restoration; D. Neimi, Sheriff's Office; W. Skinner, Public Information; L. Shurtleff, Emergency Response; S. Cook, County Attorney's Office; R. Bunce, Lieutenant

Guests: A. Tutino, Ithaca Journal; Legislator Kiefer; Legislator Schuler; L. deProsse, League of Women Voters

Called to Order

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

Changes to Agenda

The following items were added to the agenda:

- Position Request - Probation Department
- Program Reconfiguration - Sheriff's Department

The following agenda items were withdrawn:

- Report - Public Safety Building
- Appointments

Sheriff's Department

Resolution

It was noted that the following resolution was approved at the last Budget and Capital Committee meeting and questions were raised at that meeting. Mr. Koplinka-Loehr said one question raised related to comparable fees with other counties. Mr. Meskill said the Department's fees are in the mid-range and others are on the high end.

Ms. Robertson asked about the second Whereas and if the new fees are the actual costs. Mr. Meskill said the Department is trying to more accurately represent the costs and recommended the word ..."more" accurately... be added for clarity and the Committee agreed. He said a new system was installed for identification cards which creates a more secure card.

It was MOVED by Mrs. McBean-Clairborne, seconded by Mr. Koplinka-Loehr, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve and submit the following resolution to the full Legislature for approval:

RESOLUTION NO. - TO INCREASE THE FEES FOR TOMPKINS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE IDENTIFICATION AND FINGERPRINT CARDS

WHEREAS, it is important to charge a reasonable fee that reflects the time needed to process identification and fingerprint cards, and

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Sheriff's Office wants to more accurately reflect the cost associated with these services, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendations of the Public Safety Committee, the Sheriff of Tompkins County can increase the amount charged for the Tompkins County Sheriff's Identification card from a \$12.00 fee to a \$15.00 fee and fingerprinting non-criminal civilians from a \$7.00 fee to a \$10.00 fee.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II 20

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Board-Out Cost Model

Ms. Blanchard said this document was prepared to help better understand the costs associated with boarding out prisoners. The document will hopefully assist with decisions that need to be made in the future on the Public Safety Building. The Sheriff, Director of Probation, and Assigned Counsel have contributed to the cost estimate components and assumptions outlined in the model. The calculations were made on the conservative side recognizing the number of variables that affect board out costs.

Ms. Robertson asked what expenses were included in the miscellaneous charges. Mr. Meskill said to the best of his knowledge medical and prescription costs were the two biggest items included.

Ms. Blanchard noted that Probation and Assigned Counsel costs were not factored into the formula as there was no basis to make an automatic assumption that the County would incur those costs.

Mr. Koplinka-Loehr asked if under current circumstances the County did not have the variances, would boarding out be necessary. Mr. Meskill said it would be necessary to board out and the number would depend on population and classification. He noted that Tompkins County is not certified to board-in. Mr. Joseph said, in looking at the figures, he has concluded that transportation costs are not a big factor. The number of people you're boarding is the biggest variable in overall costs.

Ms. Robertson asked about State ready prisoners. Mr. Meskill said an inmate is immediately transported to State prison upon State authorization. All State transportation is the responsibility of the County. The males are taken to Elmira and the females are transported to Bedford Hills. He said a State ready inmate or a parolee is not boarded out due to flight risk. Over the last year, the State has been moving State ready prisoners from jail almost immediately.

Mr. Koplinka-Loehr said he would like to know what is leading to longer stays in the jail and if the County is doing everything it can to minimize the length of time of those stays.

Ms. Kiefer asked which public safety facility the County used the most to board out. Mr. Meskill said it depends on the population of the jails and if they are males or females. Typically, the facilities in Tioga County and Chemung County are used. Mr. Whicher said that if we know we'll need a large number of beds, we may be able to negotiate a lower daily cost; Ontario County has suggested this.

Ms. Kiefer said that she was unable to stay for the remainder of the meeting and asked if the number of beds in each facility could be addressed in the item on the agenda pertaining to the information received from the Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives.

Mr. Koplinka-Loehr asked if the Committee would consider developing an average number when referring to the cost of boarding out prisoners. Ms. Blanchard said she would like to discuss that further at a future meeting.

Report from Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives

Ms. Cook reported briefly on the report received from the New York State Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives and said the Alternatives to Incarceration service plan submitted was approved. In the report it also stated that in the Executive Budget a five-percent reduction is being recommended for all Division's Aid to Localities appropriations. Mr. Wolf said included with the report was additional information that provided a "snap shot" of the County's jail population. The report was

done by the New York State Commission of Corrections and is being forwarded on a monthly basis to the State Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives.

Ms. Cook said the information included in the above-mentioned report is incorrect and the State Department was contacted. They acknowledged the numbers were inaccurate and would be updating the information. The County has asked for clarification of the numbers and what do they represent including the number of beds in each facility. Ms. Robertson said that "unsentenced" could mean pretrial or post-convictions; for policy reasons it is important to know the difference. Ms. Blanchard requested that the Jail Administrator and the Sheriff's office be included in the distribution list and asked that this request be made.

Mr. Whicher asked what percentage of the numbers are sentenced and unsentenced. Mr. Meskill said the new software he is having installed may allow the breakdown of the numbers that way.

Ms. Cook said she will be following up with this information from the State and make sure it is accurate.

Resolution - Program Reconfiguration

It was MOVED by Mr. Koplinka-Loehr, seconded by Ms. Robertson, to approve and submit the following resolution to the full Legislature for approval. The resolution requests the programs Criminal Investigation and Uniform Division be combined into one program and called Law Enforcement Division. A voice vote resulted as follows: Ayes - 5; Noes - 0. RESOLUTION CARRIED.

RESOLUTION NO. – PROGRAM RECONFIGURATION – SHERIFF'S OFFICE

WHEREAS, the Sheriff's Office is divided into four programs known as Civil, Uniform, Criminal Investigation, and Court Security, and

WHEREAS, the current program configuration is artificial in that staff assignments and program responsibilities are interchangeable and do not reflect the function of the agency as it is currently organized, and

WHEREAS, the current program configuration has caused confusion during the budget review process of mandated payments, mandated responsibilities and locally controlled spending, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Public Safety and Budget and Capital Committees, That effective with the 2005 budget, programs be reorganized to form three Budgeting Units, Civil, Uniform (Law Enforcement Division), and Court Security,

RESOLVED further, That Program 4200, Uniform Division be renamed Law Enforcement Division,

RESOLVED further, That the following programs be combined to form one program known as Program 4200, "Law Enforcement Division":

FROM: Program 4100, Criminal Investigation (3112)

Program 4200, Uniform Division (3113)

TO: Program 4200, Law Enforcement Division (3113)

SEQR ACTION: Type II-20

Probation and Community Justice Department

Position Request

Ms. Leinthall gave an overview of the request to fill the vacancy of Probation Officer contingent upon approval of rollover money. She distributed copies of a "snap shot" of the workload within the

Department from 2003-2004. The Department has seen in the first quarter of the year a 20 percent increase in its workload. She reported briefly on the staffing levels as a result of budget constraints. Rollover money is available if approved to support the position for six months. Patricia Carey has expressed interest in trying to help the Department with some funding as there has been an effort to keep kids out of placement. Ms. Leinthall said the Department is feeling very stressed and the quality of work is beginning to suffer from the shortage in staff.

Ms. Leinthall suggested the Committee discuss this further at the next meeting as the funding if approved will only pay for the position for six months. The Committee agreed to postpone further debate until the next meeting and to allow adequate time for review of the information distributed.

Rollover Requests

Assigned Counsel

No action is necessary. The Department is requesting to use their rollover in 2005.

District Attorney

It was noted the Department had a 2003 deficit as it fell short of revenue funds. A grant deadline was missed; however, the Department is expecting to receive the money in the Spring to pay back the deficit.

Emergency Response

Mr. Shurtleff reported there were three items that caused his Department to have rollover funding: (1) 911 surcharges and reimbursements from wireless 911 accounts at the State level; (2) EMS Assistant/Coordinator's position left unfilled to discuss at the time rollover funding was available; and (3) purchasing of system's equipment postponed until building was closer to completion.

He is requesting the full amount of rollover (\$102,543) be used as follows:

Computer equipment	\$16,000
Communications equipment	\$35,000
Program Expense	\$32,543
EMS Assistant Director (1/2 time)	\$19,000

In the long-term, he would like to discuss with the Committee the creation of an equipment reserve fund in the Department's budget. The Department is replacing a tremendous amount of equipment and there is no standing equipment line in the budget. Mr. Shurtleff said the Department is equipment intense with computer equipment and telephone systems running 24/7. This is equipment that cannot be handled as a capital project; a replacement plan should be in place to cover the expenses of replacing equipment. The request to purchase the logging recorder will be 90 percent paid by the State and the remainder will be paid out of the Department's operational budget.

Following discussion, it was MOVED by Mrs. McBean-Clairborne, seconded by Ms. Robertson, to approve the following rollover request:

Communication equipment	\$35,000
Program expense	\$15,000
EMS Assistant Director (1/2 time)	\$19,000

Mr. Shurtleff asked the Committee for direction on long-term planning for equipment replacement. Ms. Blanchard recommended this subject be discussed at the next meeting.

Further discussion followed and Mr. Shurtleff reminded the Committee that the revenue received from the 911 surcharge is prohibited from being used for personnel costs.

A voice vote on the motion above resulted as follows: Ayes - 3 (Blanchard, Robertson, McBean-Clairborne); Noes - 2 (Koplinka-Loehr and Totman). MOTION CARRIED.

Probation and Community Justice

Ms. Leinthall briefly explained her rollover request and suggested the Committee postpone its discussion until the next meeting on the following rollover request related to the position request discussed earlier in the meeting:

Salary for Probation Officer (7/1/04-12/31/04)	\$21,519
Fringes for Probation Officer	\$ 8,392

Discussion followed on the remainder of the rollover request of \$27,516. The Department is in need of replacing several computers and addressing ergonomic issues. Questions were raised as to what computer equipment would be replaced specifically and Ms. Leinthall said this discussion needs to be held with her staff because some issues have come up since this request was submitted. The Committee recommended postponing further discussion on the rollover request until the next meeting when more specific information is available.

Community Justice Center

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Koplinka-Loehr, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve the following rollover request:

Salary for Security Officer	\$ 6,886
Fringes for Security Officer	\$ 2,685
Fringes for Administrative Services Coordinator	\$ 150
Computer equipment	\$ 2,000
Instructional Books and Educational Videos	\$ 3,000

Sheriff/Jail

Mr. Meskill explained the following rollover request of \$62,277:

Professional services	\$30,000
Vehicles	\$25,000
Miscellaneous equipment purchases	\$ 7,277

The surplus money was a result of a Deputy Sheriff being on military leave for almost one year. The amount of \$30,000 for professional services will allow the Department to update the crimes computer system through training and data conversion.

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Totman, to approve the rollover request as presented above. Discussion followed on the request for a vehicle and Mr. Meskill said he is in need of replacing an unmarked vehicle. Mr. Koplinka-Loehr asked if there was a specific list of miscellaneous equipment the Sheriff was purchasing. Mr. Meskill did not have a specific list but said he would be purchasing a printer, keyboards, etc.

It was MOVED by Mr. Koplinka-Loehr, to amend the motion and delete the amount of \$7,277 for miscellaneous equipment purchases and come back with more information. MOTION FAILED DUE TO LACK OF A SECOND. A brief discussion followed and Ms. Blanchard asked that Mr. Meskill come back to the Committee with more information and details of the costs for the crime package upgrade.

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A voice vote on the original motion resulted as follows: Ayes - 4 (Blanchard, Totman, McBean-Clairborne, and Robertson); Noes - 1 (Koplinka-Loehr). MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Meskill spoke about the request of rollover funds in the amount of \$283,000. He said the rollover money is a result of positions being left vacant, revenue received over budget, and miscellaneous expenditures not being made.

Ms. Robertson asked for a list of trends of revenue over the last five years; Mr. Meskill said he would provide the information.

Mr. Meskill continued to explain the requests for rollover including the purchase of the security board, cameras, and security equipment. Mr. Meskill said the security board is in need of replacement; however he feels it may be used if the County were to build a new facility.

It was MOVED by Mr. Koplinka-Loehr, seconded by Ms. Robertson, to approve the following request:

Professional services	\$ 15,000
Vehicles and miscellaneous equipment	\$ 30,000
Security Board, cameras and security equipment	\$200,000

A voice vote resulted as follows: Ayes - 4 (Blanchard, Koplinka-Loehr, McBean-Clairborne, Robertson); Noes - 1 (Totman). MOTION CARRIED.

Report from the Communications Capital Projects Committee

Ms. Blanchard said a report was given at the Legislature's meeting.

Status of 911 Consolidation Report

This item was postponed as the County Administrator has a meeting on May 12th concerning this subject.

Resolution and Summary for Jail Population

Ms. Blanchard said she requested this item be referred to the Criminal Justice Advisory/Alternatives to Incarceration Board for discussion.

Approval of Minutes

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Ms. McBean-Clairborne, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve the minutes of the December 30, 2003, March 2, 2004, and March 17, 2004, meetings as submitted.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:02 p.m.