

**APPROVED**

**Public Safety Committee  
June 20, 2008  
2 p.m.  
Scott Heyman Conference Room**

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

Excused: W. Burbank

Staff: P. Meskill, R. Tubbs, Sheriff's Office, P. Younger, S. Martel-Moore, M. Lynch, N. Jayne, County Administration; G. Wilkinson, District Attorney; K. Leinthall, Department of Probation and Community Justice; L. Shurtleff, Department of Emergency Response; M. Pottorff, Legislature Office

Guests: K. Damm, Advisory Board on Indigent Representation

**Call to Order**

Mr. Stevenson called the meeting to order at 2 p.m.

**Changes to the Agenda**

There were no changes to the agenda.

**Chair's Report**

Mr. Stevenson had no report.

**Sheriff's Office**

**Rollover**

Sheriff Meskill said there is no rollover monies in the Jail budget. There were excess funds on the road patrol side of the budget because of employees either leaving, retiring or being transferred to the State Court Security. The Jail budget end-of-the year balance was \$-108,000 and the road patrol budget had \$156,000 in rollover monies, of which \$10,000 was training funds from the previous year.

It was MOVED by Mr. Hattery, seconded by Mr. Dennis, to approve the Sheriff's Rollover request.

Mr. Meskill spoke of budgeting in the future and said there is going to need to be a fusion of funds or a reduction in services in the Jail to balance the budget in the future. Mr. Dennis asked if the Sheriff lost personnel if the same amount of work would still need to be done and most likely using overtime or rollover funds. The Sheriff replied yes.

A voice vote on the request resulted as follows: Ayes – 4, Noes – 0, Excused – 1 (Burbank).  
MOTION CARRIED.

**Training Update**

Sheriff Meskill reported on the Department's training that occurred on February 25 and 29, 2008 with Ednita Wright. He said the training was part of a four-part series with the primary goals as follows:

- To support learning from past trainings and to provide new employees with essential key concepts for building cultural competence;

- To link the two of the five Core Performance Dimensions for supporting a service-focused culture: Customer Service and Staffing Team Confidence with responsibilities associated with specific positions.

Mr. Meskill commented how well the training went and although most of the participants were hesitant at first to fully participate, throughout the process the majority of participants became fully engaged. He also spoke highly of the Ms. Wright and her performance in conducting trainings. Mr. Dennis reiterated Mr. Meskill's comments with regard to Ms. Wright.

Ms. Younger stated she was pleased to hear Sheriff Meskill's report on training and the reference to the Core Performance Framework.

### **District Attorney**

#### **Rollover**

It was MOVED by Mr. Hattery, seconded by Ms. Robertson, to approve the District Attorney's rollover request.

Mr. Hattery questioned the reason for having a reduction in anticipated revenue. Ms. Wilkinson said this may be the result of grant funds for the victim impact panel not coming in; this could arrive at a later date and show as a surplus later. When asked what impact the two percent State aid cut will have on the District Attorney's Office Ms. Wilkinson said she does not foresee any loss in services.

A voice vote resulted as follows: Ayes – 4, Noes – 0, Excused – 1 (Burbank). MOTION CARRIED.

### **Department of Emergency Response**

#### **RESOLUTION NO. – INCREASE IN HOURS AND ABOLITION OF POSITIONS – EMERGENCY SERVICES DISPATCHERS – DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

MOVED by Mr. Hattery, seconded by Ms. Robertson. Mr. Shurtleff explained the Department currently has 4.25 part-time Dispatcher positions that have been on the books for several years. They have been trying to combine those into one position which will provide needed benefits to the Department in the area of staff coverage and will alleviate usage of overtime funds. He said there are presently 20 positions for the Department's 24/7 operations. A voice vote resulted as follows: Ayes – 4, Noes – 0, Excused – 1 (Burbank). MOTION CARRIED.

WHEREAS, the Department of Emergency Response created four (4) additional part-time positions equivalent of one full-time position at 40 hours per week of Emergency Services Dispatcher labor grade L/12 (12/551), white collar to cover shift shortages per Resolution No. 172-99, and

WHEREAS, it is no longer feasible for the department to hire multiple part-time employees due to the extensive training requirements and the necessity to maintain proficiency in all disciplines and equipment, and

WHEREAS, the Department of Emergency Response requires a full time employee due to the significant increase in call and incident volume, and

WHEREAS, no new monies are needed to fund these position changes, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Public Safety Committee, That one (1) part-time position of Emergency Services Dispatcher, labor grade L/12 (12/551), white collar, be increased to 40 hours and three (3) part-time positions of Emergency Services Dispatcher, labor grade L/12 (12/551), white collar, be abolished effective immediately,

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the department is not requesting additional funding.  
**SEQR ACTION:** TYPE II-20

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**Rollover**

It was MOVED by Mr. Hattery, seconded by Ms. Robertson, to approve the Department's Rollover request. Mr. Shurtleff said 911 funds in the amount of \$55,000 will be subject to the State aid two percent cut (\$1,500). A voice vote resulted as follows: Ayes – 4, Noes – 0, Excused – 1 (Burbank). MOTION CARRIED.

*Ms. Robertson requested a report on how things are going with the Communications system and the rental of space on the towers.*

Mr. Shurtleff provided the Committee with a brief update on the Communications System and said they have completed acceptance testing with Motorola. They drove through 1,100 plotted grids throughout the County. Mr. Potter, Director of ITS overlaid Motorola's maps with the County's GIS (Geographic Information System) and everything identified as a roadway was tested. Out of 1,130 grids they all passed testing. Mr. Shurtleff said the radio system coverage far exceeded what we expected or what was guaranteed with Motorola.

He said they have signed final acceptance, started installation of equipment with various departments, started distributing the portable radios, and have begun training. The microwave system is operational, and a number of the Legacy systems have been moved onto it.

The paging system went online eight weeks ago. Mr. Shurtleff said that required a lot of adjustments but it is at a point where it is meeting what they wanted it to do from a coverage standpoint.

Mr. Shurtleff said they are at a transition point where they will be brining people on board the system. By the next meeting everyone should be on the system and it should be fully operational.

**Dispatch Operations**

Ms. Robertson said in the past there have been concerns raised with regard to the handling of calls at the Dispatch Center, and asked Mr. Shurtleff how things are going now.

Mr. Shurtleff said it is an ongoing process and said there will be an improvement as soon as they can get past the technical struggles thing have been dealing with. He said they are also working on training and supervisory issues to address various personnel issues.

Mr. Hattery asked if the increased usage in cell phones has had an impact on the volume of calls coming into the Center and whether new equipment will help with that. Mr. Shurtleff said there has been a dramatic increase in calls due to cell phone usage but they believe the new equipment will allow them to map call as they come in and that will greatly help with people trying to describe where they are.

**Department of Probation and Community Justice**

**Rollover**

It was MOVED by Mr. Hattery, seconded by Mr. Dennis, to approve the Department of Probation and Community Justice's request for usage of Rollover funds. Ms. Leinthall noted that several years ago the Department gave back their Rollover funds. If they hadn't they would not be in the situation now of needing funds. She also asked the Committee to consider including the Community Justice Center budget in the Department's budget as it would provide more flexibility in moving funds around.

### **Retirement of Kathy Leinthall**

Mr. Dennis expressed his appreciation for the many years of service Ms. Leinthall has provided to Tompkins County. Ms. Leinthall said during her career she has worked for two other counties. The Probation Department in Tompkins County is good and solid, and the people working there are really trying to find ways to help clients live a lawful and responsible life. She thanked the Legislature for its support over the years and urged Legislators to continue to be supportive of the Department of Probation and Community Justice. Ms. Robertson spoke of the many changes the Department has been through. She particularly spoke of data she has reviewed that showed while Tompkins County may have some of the highest expenses in Probation services, it also has the lowest Jail costs, making the net cost to the County taxpayers much lower. The Public Safety Committee expressed its appreciation to Ms. Leinthall and offered best wishes in her retirement.

Ms. Robertson asked who serves on the Probation Department Search Committee. Mr. Whicher said Committee members are Greg Stevenson, Steve Whicher, Diane Burke, Gwen Wilkinson, Patricia Carey, Michael Koplinka-Loehr, and Anita Fitzpatrick. He will be bringing forward a recommendation to the full Legislature at the July 1 meeting.

### **Assigned Counsel**

#### **Rollover**

It was MOVED by Mr. Dennis, seconded by Mr. Hattery, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the Assigned Counsel Program's Rollover request.

Ms. Damm spoke of past conversations that have taken place with regard to a study concerning assigned counsel versus a public defender's office. She said the Advisory Board on Indigent Representation is concerned that their calls to discuss this with the County have gone unanswered. Ms. Jayne said she will be assisting Ms. Martel-Moore with a study that will be done but at this point nothing has been started. Ms. Damm said she will share information she has with Ms. Martel-Moore who will be leading that study.

### **Committee Goal: Public Access Defibrillator Program**

The Committee referenced a report prepared and distributed previously by Ms. Martel-Moore.

Ms. Martel-Moore said she received information on how many actual deaths have occurred due to cardiac arrests in Tompkins County in 2007 and said the total was 81. At the Committee's request she will attempt to find out how many people went into cardiac arrests. Mr. Stevenson said in order to find out how relevant this is in Tompkins County it would be very helpful for the Legislature to hear a presentation he has spoke of previously by Dr. Mouser.

Mr. Stevenson asked if there is Committee support to take this proposal to the Administrator with a request to integrate it into the budget process.

There was a discussion of what department this program would be placed in. Ms. Martel-Moore said the Emergency Planning Committee recommended it be placed in the Health Department.

Mr. Shurtleff said the Department of Emergency Response would supplement any needed staffing assistance to the Health Department where Ms. Martel-Moore proposed the Program be housed as they currently have a Safety Coordinator and CPR training is already given.

Mr. Hattery said he would prefer this program be phased in. Mr. Stevenson said from a risk management standpoint, the phasing in of such a program would present a problem as there would be a perception that the County would be prioritizing one department over another.

*Ms. Robertson requested a spreadsheet showing projected costs over a ten-year period that includes a replacement schedule. She would also like to hear from Alice Cole, Public Health Director, on the impact this program would have on the Health Department and also staffing costs, given the comments that were made during the recent WIC Program discussion and statements made concerning workloads of existing staff.*

Ms. Younger said costs should include Facilities Division time for installation of AED's.

Mr. Stevenson said he would like Mr. Koplinka-Loehr and Mr. Whicher decide which departmental budget this program would be placed in and to include in the proposed 2009 budget.

### **Criminal Justice Data Communications – Technical Assistance**

Ms. Younger said the Committee's criminal justice data communications goal is related to the 1999 Technologies opportunities grant the County received and the question of how do we best maximize the communications piece that is in place and how to do we use it as the information-sharing source that it was intended to be. She said the NCSC (National Center for State Courts) sponsored a free technical assistance meeting in Ithaca on May 19<sup>th</sup> that was attended by representatives from the State Department of Criminal Justice Services, Nassau County, SEARCH, local municipalities, law enforcement, court representatives, the Department of Probation and Community Justice, and the District Attorney, and County government.

The next step is Phase II and will include law enforcement only. This group is the closest to demonstrating information sharing, but are only sharing services through the use of shared systems and not shared data. They will be bringing in CTG from Albany to provide the technical assistance through problem solving and capability analysis. They will be working on developing what an outline and governance structure could look like for the law enforcement group. A model will then be presented to the Public Safety Committee showing what true information sharing looks like and what it would take to make it successful for the law enforcement group. They would also show what would be necessary for information across-the-board for the public safety community across Tompkins County. She said information sharing is not a technology issue but a management issue. The leadership has to decide that this is something it wants for the County.

Ms. Robertson said she is still looking for the leadership and it seems like the people who are talking are not the ones who are going to benefit from the information sharing on a fundamental level.

Mr. Dennis stressed the importance of everyone sharing together and the need for getting onboard even if they don't think the sharing of information will be useful to them. Ms. Younger said any one discipline operating in isolation may not see the value of the data to another but once information begins to be exchanged, that value will become apparent.

Ms. Robertson asked if we are any closer to Greg Potter's question of two years ago and if we are any closer to finding leadership for this. Mr. Stevenson said the answer and discussion will take a substantial amount of time and suggested this discussion take place at a future meeting.

Ms. Younger will let the Committee know when the CTG date and time is confirmed.

**Appointment(s)**

It was MOVED by Mr. Hattery, seconded by Ms. Robertson, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the following appointment(s):

Local Emergency Planning Committee – No set term  
Greg Cotterill – Community Group representative (ARC)

Traffic Safety Committee – term expires December 31, 2010  
Will Burbank – Public Safety Committee member

An appointment to the Emergency Communications Review and Oversight Committee was withdrawn from the agenda due to questions raised regarding residency.

**Approval of Minutes – May 16, 2008**

It was MOVED by Mr. Hattery, seconded by Ms. Robertson, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of May 16, 2008 as submitted. MINUTES APPROVED.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Michelle Pottorff, TC Legislature Office