

August 9, 2001

Public Safety Committee
August 9, 2001
Scott B. Heyman Conference Room
Noon

Present: G. Totman, T. Todd, B. Blanchard, T. Joseph, N. Schuler
Staff and Agencies: D. Johnson, K. Lienthall, O. Mack, S. Robinson, P. Meskill, Deputy S. Spencer, G. McClure, M. Pottorff

Mr. Totman called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m.

Additions to the Agenda

Ms. Lienthall added an item to her report and OAR added a report to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes of July 12, 2001

It was MOVED by Mr. Todd, seconded by Mr. Joseph, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve the minutes of the July 12, 2001 meeting as submitted. MINUTES APPROVED.

Probation Department

Ms. Lienthall stated she would like to apply for a grant from the Division of Criminal Justice Services in the amount of \$49,408 to fund a position and related costs. She said this would be based on an understanding that the position would last only as long as grant funding is available. She also said the grant does not require them to hire someone new; therefore, if funding for another program ran out in another area in the Department that person could fill this position

On a motion MOVED by Mr. Todd, seconded by Mr. Joseph, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, Ms. Lienthall was directed to proceed with the application for this grant. MOTION CARRIED.

Canine Presentation

Deputy Shane Spencer of the Tompkins County Sheriff's Department introduced the Committee to "Bojar", the Sheriff's Department's canine, and provided the Committee with an overview of his daily activities. It was stated that "Bojar" recently helped locate an individual who was involved in recent motor vehicle thefts.

Assigned Counsel

Ms. Hughes reported everyone is very busy. The Assigned Counsel Administration said in the thirty years he has worked with the program he has never seen it this busy. Ms. Hughes highlighted statistics, stating there are currently 57 people who are waiting to be assigned; this figure is typically around seven or eight. When asked what she felt was the causing the dramatic rise in numbers, Ms. Hughes said she had no answer and that these were all local people who have committed a variety of crimes ranging from felonies to violations, as well as court matters. Ms. Hughes said there has been talk about the increase in assigned counsel fees going through the State Legislature sometime in August which she feels will help to alleviate part of the problem.

Criminal Justice Center

August 9, 2001

Ms. Lienthall reported the number of clients have increased; however, the number of people who fail to comply have also increased. She said she has an employee keeping track and identifying people who are appropriate to release into the day reporting program. Ms. Lienthall said her goal is to get individuals directly released in the day reporting program which she feels will help Sheriff Meskill keep the population at the Jail down.

Ms. Lienthall spoke of the Criminal Justice Center and said if finances continue to be an issue she would like the programs reevaluated after two years and for the Board to consider decentralizing the programs rather than paying for a building and maintenance.

Mr. Joseph said at a Justice Center meeting two weeks ago Judges Sherman and Rowley were present and discussed how ways to fill the program and how to spread the word among town justices. Mr. Joseph said those present at meeting discussed whether the County has too many programs for the same pool of people and did not feel that was the case. But that there needs to be a bigger push to fill the program.

Ms. Lienthall said Becky Richmond needs to meet with magistrates individually and provide them with an overview of the programs. Mrs. Schuler suggested that County Representatives attend these meetings as well.

Felony Drug Treatment Court/Ithaca Drug Treatment Court

Ms. Johnson presented the Committee with statistics on referrals and admissions as of July 31, 2001 and highlighted the following notes of interest:

Felony Drug Treatment Court

- The first graduation for the Felony Drug Treatment Court is scheduled for August 15th at 4 p.m. in the Old Courthouse.
- Dan Cornell, Senior Probation Officer, has joined our staff and will be relocating to the Satellite office within the next two weeks.
- Completed a program handbook for participants and referral sources. It is currently at the printers and will be ready soon.

Ithaca Drug Treatment Court

- Graduation held on June 26th at 3 p.m. in the City Courthouse for 6 participants.
- Coordinator was selected as a faculty member for the New York State Unified Court System and will be providing training to developing drug courts across the State.

Ms. Hughes complimented Ms. Johnson on her work with this program and stated the County is very fortunate to have an asset such as Ms. Johnson because she is easy to work with and very knowledgeable.

OAR

Mr. Mack echoed the comments made earlier by Mr. Meskill and Ms. Hughes regarding the population at the Jail. He said resources at OAR are stretched to the limit. Mr. Mack spoke of a situation that exists between that agency and the administration of the Jail which is making it difficult to provide OAR services.

Mr. Mack explained that a policy has been instituted by the Sheriff which states that OAR can no longer be in the hallways of the Tompkins County Jail providing direct services. All services must now

August 9, 2001

be administered via interview rooms or some other designated space. He has been told by the Sheriff that this policy is being instituted because of the high population at the Jail and because of staff shortages the Sheriff's department is facing. Mr. Mack said this change in policy severely limits OAR's role as advocates for inmates and severely curtails OAR's ability to provide services to inmates.

Mr. Meskill responded stating that the main reason behind this change in policy is due to the a shortage in staff and the high population of inmates at the Jail. He said he has offered many other opportunities to accommodate the delivery of services by OAR such as a Jail block phone system. He stressed his responsibility of protecting the safety of both staff and inmates and the jail.

Mr. Joseph expressed concern that inmates will no longer be allowed immediate assistance to a program by using the hallways as has been done in many years in the past.

Ms. Blanchard asked the following questions:

1. Is it common practice in other jails to have non-jail staff meet with prisoners in hallways?
2. Other than personal frustration, what is the downside to not having immediate access to services?

Following a lengthy discussion, it was agreed that Mr. Mack and Sheriff Meskill would meet to discuss this further and look into what is done in other jails across the State and will report back to the Committee on progress that has been made.

Presentation by ITS

1. Program Mission
 - a) Mission - Provide the environment to enable County departments to accomplish their individual missions through utilization of computer, communication and application technologies; within a consistent, secure technological environment; supported by skilled, competent staff.
2. Current Services
 - a) Project Management
 - b) Equipment Replacement Planning
 - c) Network Planning
 - d) Programming Unique Applications
 - e) GIS Applications
3. Direction and Vision
 - a) Coordination and Consolidation
 - b) Integrated Systems
 - i) Homogeneous Platforms
 - ii) Standardization and Normalization
 - c) Three Year Strategic Technology Plan
 - i) Service Level Agreement
 - ii) Network
 - iii) Applications

Mr. McClure highlighted the following items:

The Tompkins County Probation Department is the only one in the state that has the Prober Plus program implemented.

The Information Technology Services Department is putting together a civil application for the Sheriff's Department.

The Sheriff used the GIS program recently to help in a law enforcement matter.

August 9, 2001

The Information Technology Services Department is also designing a program to accommodate the crimes package.

Budget Review Schedule

The Committee agreed to meet on September 13th from 1 to 4 p.m. The first hour will be used to conduct regular business and the remaining time will be spent reviewing departmental budget requests for 2002. If budget reviews are not completed during that time they will continue the next morning at 9 a.m.

Project Impact

Mr. Totman presented the Committee with a letter he received from Matthew Shulman from the Town of Dryden regarding activities that have taken place to acquire the functionally-abandoned NYSEG water treatment facility located on Lower Creek Road. In the letter Mr. Shulman asks the Public Safety Committee to adopt a resolution similar to the one adopted by the Tompkins County Fire, Disaster, and EMS Advisory Board. Mrs. Schuler said she would like assurance from the Town of Dryden Supervisor that this meets with the Town's approval. Following the meeting, Mrs. Schuler followed up with Supervisor Varvayanis and was assured this meets with the Town's approval.

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

RESOLUTION NO. - ACQUISITION OF NYSEG WATER TREATMENT PLAN

WHEREAS, New York State Electric and Gas owns a facility on Lower Creek Road in the Town of Dryden, formerly used for treatment and pumping of water from Fall Creek to the Route 13 Headquarters, and

WHEREAS, NYSEG discontinued the facility's usage in 1989 and has since attempted to unsuccessfully to market the site, and

WHEREAS, the plant's creek intake piping and double tank storage system hold potential for use by local fire departments for tanker shuttle operations, and an inexhaustible water supply could be established at the site for use by all area departments, and

WHEREAS, the water storage tanks could be utilized for pump testing and engine operations training and

WHEREAS, the site could prove beneficial for other training opportunities, such as water rescue training and highway road maintenance water needs, now therefore be it

RESOLVED on recommendation of the Public Safety Committee, That the Tompkins County Board of Representatives hereby endorses the acquisition of the site by the Town of Dryden for use by the fire departments of that township and Tompkins County,

RESOLVED, further, that the Board of Representatives requests consideration by NYSEG of a mutual beneficial concessionary lease or purchase arrangement to enhance fire protection capabilities through the use of the Lower Creek Road site.

SEQR ACTION: Type II-20

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Sheriff's Department

Sheriff Meskill provided the Committee with a detailed written report on activities in the Sheriff's Department during the last month. Highlights of the report are as follows:

August 9, 2001

During the month of July, the Jail population continued to increase. The average population of 94 inmates is the highest number of inmates ever housed within the Tompkins County Public Safety Building. Sheriff Meskill has written to the Commission of Corrections asking for some immediate change to the 1999 variance. He has also requested a one-year extension on the 1999 variance. Sheriff Meskill will be attending a hearing in Albany in September or October in the hope of having the variance increased from the capacity it currently is, 103 cell spaces plus the holding cell, to 116 or anywhere in between the Commission will grant.

The current limit of 103 leaves the Jail full without any room for managing inmates or dealing with discipline issues in a prudent manner. Instead, they are forced to manage the facility in a reactive mode instead of a pro-active manner. Sheriff Meskill distributed copies of the 1997 statistics to show by comparison the number of people that were in custody in and the number boarded out to other jails.

Sheriff Meskill also reported he has been working with John Beach, STOP-DWI Coordinator, on a grant request through the Governor's Traffic Safety Board and is also with a member of the Ithaca Police Department on applying for a grant for saturation control.

It was MOVED by Mr. Joseph, seconded by Ms. Blanchard, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve the following resolutions and submit to the full Board. Copies of the first and second resolutions were not available at this time due to a clerical error. Sheriff Meskill explained the contents of the resolutions and assured committee members that copies would be distributed as soon as possible.

**RESOLUTION NO. - APPROPRIATION FROM CONTINGENT FUND FOR
TERMINAL PAY AT THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

WHEREAS, the Sheriff's Office had an employee terminate, and

WHEREAS, the Fiscal Policy of Tompkins County allows for terminal pay, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Public Safety and the Budget and Capital Committees, That the Director of Finance appropriate a total of \$1,077 to the Sheriff's budget for terminal pay,

RESOLVED, further, That the money be distributed to the following accounts:

FROM:	A1990.54440	Contingent Fund	\$1,077
TO:	A3150.51000	Corrections – Regular Pay	1,077

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

**RESOLUTION NO. - APPROPRIATION FROM CONTINGENT FUND FOR
TERMINAL PAY AT THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

WHEREAS, the Sheriff's Office had an employee terminate, and

WHEREAS, the Fiscal Policy of Tompkins County allows for terminal pay, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Public Safety and Budget and Capital Committees, That the Director of Finance appropriate a total of \$5,434 to the Sheriff's budget for terminal pay,

RESOLVED, further, That the money be distributed to the following account:

FROM:	A1990.54440	Contingent Fund	\$5,434
TO: UNIFORM	A3113.51000	Regular Pay	5,434

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

August 9, 2001

**RESOLUTION NO. - APPROPRIATION FROM CONTINGENT FUND FOR
REPLACEMENT PAY AT THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

WHEREAS, the Sheriff's Office has employees who were disabled or injured and unable to perform their duty, and

WHEREAS, the Fiscal Policy of Tompkins County allows for such replacement pay for employees who have been out longer than two months, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Public Safety and Budget and Capital Committees, That the Director of Finance appropriate a total of \$92,384 to the Sheriff's budget for replacement pay encompassing the period of January 1, 2001 through June 30, 2001, and further

RESOLVED, further That the money be distributed to the following accounts:

FROM:	A1990.54440 Contingent Fund	\$92,384
TO: Uniform Division	A3113.51000 Regular Pay	33,337
	A3113.58800 Fringe	8,334
Corrections	A3150.51000 Regular Pay	40,570
	A3150.51800 Fringe	<u>10,143</u>
	TOTAL	\$92,384

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2 p.m.