

MINUTES

Approved 10-17-08

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

SEPTEMBER 19, 2008 2:00 P.M. SCOTT HEYMAN CONFERENCE ROOM

Present: G. Stevenson, Chair; W. Burbank; J. Dennis; M. Hattery, M. Robertson
Legislators: M. Koplinka-Loehr, F. Proto
Staff: S. Cook, County Attorney's Office; P. Buechel, Department of Probation and Community Justice; S. Whicher, P. Younger, M. Lynch, County Administration; R. Stolp, Assigned Counsel; J. Hughes, Assigned Counsel; L. Shurtleff, Emergency Response Director; M. Pottorff, Legislature Office; P. Carey, Commissioner of Social Services; G. Wilkinson, District Attorney; G. Potter, K. Moore, Information Technology Services; A. Fitzpatrick, Commissioner of Personnel;
Guests: K. Damm, W. Furniss, D. Bruns, L. Gold, H. Bissel, J. Dietrich, G. Bush, S. Peacock, Advisory Board on Indigent Representation; J. Leifer, K. Shaw, M. Kennedy-Smith; N. Burston, Human Services Coalition; T. Ashmore, Ithaca Journal; D. Dietrich, S. Hess, OAR; J. Muson, Human Rights Commissioner; D. Wright, City of Ithaca Police; A. Krasin, City of Ithaca Information Technology Department; T. Boyce, Cayuga Heights Police Department; T. Ferretti, Village of Trumansburg Police; J. Muson, former Human Rights Commissioner

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. At this time everyone present introduced themselves and identified what entity they represented.

Changes to Agenda

A budget adjustment for the Department of Emergency Response was added to the agenda.

Report from the Chair

Mr. Stevenson welcomed Patricia Buechel to her first Public Safety Committee meeting in her new title of Director of Probation and Community Justice.

Mr. Stevenson reported the PAD (Public Access Defibrillation) Program is being prepared for consideration at an upcoming Expanded Budget and Capital Committee meeting for inclusion in the 2009 Tompkins County Budget.

Sheriff's Office

Ms. Robertson noted in reviewing the transport costs contained in the summary provided by the Sheriff, that most of the transport costs are not a result of boardouts. She will be discussing this further with the Sheriff.

Department of Probation and Community Justice

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

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Hattery, and unanimously adopted by voice vote to approve the following resolution and submit to the Expanded Budget and Capital Committee.

WHEREAS, the Department of Probation and Community Justice had its Director retire effective July 25, 2008, and

WHEREAS, the Fiscal Policy of Tompkins County allows for terminal-pay reimbursement to the Department from the Contingent Fund, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Public Safety and the Expanded Budget and Capital Committees, That the Director of Finance is hereby authorized and directed to make the following budget appropriation for 2008:

FROM:	A1990.54400	Contingent Fund	\$7,888
TO:	A3140.51000238	Probation Director	\$5,716
	A3140.58800	Fringes	\$2,172

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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Information Technology Services

LETSS (Law Enforcement Technology Shared Services Group)

Mr. Wright provided the Committee with the following presentation on the work of the LETSS Group:

Meeting Objective

To seek the support of County government to establish a governance structure and program-based budget unit to sanction the LETSS Group and further advance the activities of unified technology services within Tompkins County Law Enforcement Agencies, the District Attorney's Office and Information Technology Services.

History of LETSS

- 2003: A decision by local law enforcement agencies to initiate a common electronic records management system (SJS) hosted by ITS and accessible through a secure Citrix Internet connection.
- 2004-2006: The group, formerly referred to as CJDCS, continued to collaborate with ongoing needs and new projects.
- Spring of 2007: Members from County IT and Tompkins County Law Enforcement Agencies secured a grant to implement TraCS (hardware, software and installation) in Tompkins county.
- Early 2008: A revised Use and Dissemination agreement was jointly signed by all participating agencies.
- July 2008 – A Technical Assistance workshop with the Center for Technology in Government (CTG) was coordinated to provide direction and guidance for LETSS.

LETSS Recent Success/Achievements

- Regular monthly meetings to coordinate technology and program service requirements.
- Use and Dissemination form was agreed upon and jointly signed by all participating agencies.
- Successful collaborative effort for grant application and approval of \$140,000 in grant funds leading to 40 standardized Mobile Data Unit installs for implementation of TraCS.
- Continuing: - integration of TraCS data to SJS, Customization of reporting tools, Access to CRIMES data through CITRIX, CRIMES Field Reporting Module demo.
- ITS received 2008 Outstanding Lead Agency award from the State for the full implementation of TraCS in Tompkins County.
- Access to NYS E-Justice Portal for local agencies through County Network.

Future Identified Projects

- Coordination and support for conversion of AS400 main frame and upgrade of current CAD system to NaviLine. Includes module for export of CAD incident information to SJS.
- Coordination of existing technology and data sharing processes with DA's Office.
- Implementation of customized SJS reports based on existing NYSP templates.
- Incident and crime mapping based on outcome of Enterprise Address management Systems.
- Collaboration of NY DCJS and LETSS for implementation of LiveScan (digital fingerprinting).
- Coordination, review and implementation of wireless air cards to further utilize existing technology, leading to discussion, development and agreement of future County mobile data Network.
- User/public friendly searchable web-based interface, which allows access to law enforcement information and statistics.

Key Points

- LETSS has come to the conclusion that today's professional and proactive law enforcement services require dedicated and integrated technology resources and support. Current resources are inadequate to meet present demands.
- LETSS has seen the tangible results of the group reduce duplication of effort and is dedicated to further advance this collaborative project: open communication among agencies that leads to collaborative efficiencies, standardization and common solutions; County IT support and project management; data sharing.
- Immediate: Continuance of efforts of this group and its successes require a budgetary commitment of \$30,000 OTR to replace servers that also serve a multitude of non-law enforcement County functions.
- Short-Term: With support and commitment from County government, LETSS will submit within the next eight months a recommendation to the public Safety Committee that will include the proposal for a governance and budgetary structure and continue current momentum of the group to complete identified projects.

LETSS Requests the following actions:

- To provide support for 2009 budget (\$30,000) OTR within ITS Budget.
- Statement of support (Resolution) and approval from County Government to proceed with establishing a governance structure and independent budget unit for formalization of current and future LETSS initiatives.

Value of LETSS

- LETSS will promote the establishment of standardized data management and reporting tools.
- LETSS will serve as a successful multi-agency collaborative model for future data and technology shared service initiatives that can be applied throughout Tompkins County.

The continued support of LETSS will sanction the firm foundation of collaboration toward better service, efficiency, and continued technology and information sharing throughout Tompkins County.

Mr. Dennis asked why Ithaca College, TC3, and Cornell University police are not a part of this. Ms. Moore responded each of them have their own dispatching functions and are currently using a different system. Mr. Wright said it is hard to integrate some of the functions of those agencies at this time. Although they are not a part of this now, they could be brought in at some point in the future. The Sheriff presently uses a different system.

Ms. Robertson said she appreciates all of the work that has gone into this. She asked if there is a Chair of this group. Mr. Potter said there is not a Chair at this time. Their goal is to develop a formal structure and bylaws and then proceed with electing a Chair. Mr. Ferrretti said once a solid foundation is built there are many other areas that could be explored.

Mr. Hattery said he sees value in the County's role and contribution, and asked if the independent budget but would include contributions by participating agencies or other municipalities outside the County. It was explained that the group is not seeking contributions from outside sources at this time. Ms. Moore said an enormous amount of time and effort have been invested in this process and in order to move forward there needs to be a formal governance structure in place. Once that governance structure is in place, many of the questions being raised can then be addressed. Mr. Hattery said he would support a resolution but at the time of considering the creation of an independent budget, he would like to have a good reason why participating municipalities will or will not support such a budget.

Mr. Burbank asked if there would be an opportunity to integrate the Sheriff's Office at some point. Mr. Potter said it would be possible but would require the purchase of a separate piece of software

Mr. Burbank asked what would happen if the one-time \$30,000 OTR was not approved. Mr. Potter said if the system were to fail the agencies would lose access to their records. Mr. Whicher said this OTR is contained in his recommended 2009 budget.

Ms. Robertson said she can support this but would want to see some additional language, specifically budget unit information. Mr. Potter explained the importance in removing the comparison of the money associated with this program with external agencies, from the support for Information Technology Services for internal County departments. He said it is not clear at this time what the long-term funding for this would be. Ms. Robertson then suggested the following wording: "Resolved, further, That the issue of ongoing financial support will be addressed by the governing board and a proposal developed". She said she does not want it assumed that the County would be taking this over. It was requested that the resolution also address Mr. Hattery's question as well.

Mr. Potter said there is no way to know what the final discussion is going to be, and is something that needs to come from the governance structure.

Mr. Dennis said he will support the overall concept of the request for \$30,0000 but would like to see this move ahead as soon as possible. He also thinks this should be a County initiative.

Mr. Whicher stressed the importance of determining the need to very clearly define what this information is and how it will be shared at different levels.

Ms. Robertson said she would like some explanation as this moves forward if this fits into a model where the County provides the service for everyone or if it is similar to the funding model of the Recreation Partnership.

Criminal Justice Advisory/Alternatives-to-Incarceration Board

Ms. Cook, Chair, Criminal Justice Advisory/Alternatives-to-Incarceration Board, said the advisory board is required by the State to annually submit a service plan that documents its analysis of the Jail population and ATI programs. They also have mandates related to the ongoing process of that analysis that includes answering a variety of data-based questions. Also, there are now performance measures required on the annual service plans to see whether milestones are being met. Ms. Cook said this emphasizes the increased need for data and information, including the NYSID numbers from the Jail. She noted these numbers are not confidential in nature and explained the difficulty she has experienced in

obtaining these data from the Sheriff. As a result, the CJA/ATI Board is not fulfilling its mandates with Executive Law. She spoke of the requirements of the New York State Department of Probation and Correctional Alternatives and consequences the County can face if mandates are not met. Ms. Cook said there can be serious consequences as a result of this, such as State funding being withheld or Jail classifications being changed which would lead to additional boarding of prisoners to other facilities.

Ms. Carey said she respects the concern the Sheriff has with the protection of this information. She said a memorandum of understanding was developed and signed by the Sheriff yesterday with the Department of Social Services that outlines the route data received by DSS from the Sheriff will take. She said she has assured the Sheriff information will move directly from DSS to the Department of Probation and Community Justice.

Mr. Proto said he has been asking for information related to ATI for over ten years. He also stressed the importance of departments working together in order to avoid interruptions in any department's funding stream.

Ms. Cook reiterated her earlier comments that the information in question is not confidential in nature. She said she will continue to work with the Sheriff to increase his comfort level in providing the information and to assure him of how this information will be handled.

Department of Emergency Response

Mr. Shurtleff reported the City of Ithaca Police Department has been active on the 800 mhz system since the return of college students to the community and said this has worked fabulously. The date for the transition of the remainder of law enforcement has been set for September 24th. Everyone has the radios installed and they are now working on moving the fire and EMS systems over. Discussions are continuing with the Statewide Wireless Network; he believes there will end up being a Statewide network given the amount of money the State has invested, but the final product is not known at this time. He reported the microwave and paging systems are also working well.

He spoke of the communication towers and said he believes there will be a resolution soon on the Enfield tower site issues.

Budget Adjustment

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Hattery, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to add the following budget adjustment to the agenda:

It was MOVED by Mr. Dennis, seconded by Ms. Robertson, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve the following budget adjustment:

Revenue:	3410.43389	Other Public Safety	\$15,000
Appropriation:	3410.52214	Office Furnishings	\$ 2,000
	3410.52222	Communications Equipment	\$ 7,000
	3410.54400	Program Expense	\$ 2,000
	3410.54412	Travel and Training	\$ 4,000

EXPLANATION: Department was reimbursed by Office of Homeland Security for expenses incurred in training and program activities. Funds will replace funds taken out of previous budgets.

OAR

RESOLUTION NO. - APPROPRIATION FROM CONTINGENT FUND –BAIL FUND PROGRAM – OPPORTUNITIES, ALTERNATIVES AND RESOURCES (OAR)

It was **MOVED** by Mr. Burbank, seconded by Ms. Robertson, to approve the following resolution and submit to the Budget and Capital Committee.

Mr. Burbank asked what the forfeiture rate for these monies are. Ms. Dietrich said approximately five percent. She said they are currently going into OAR’s personal line of credit to do bails and have used \$2,150. She said there has been some bail inflation over the last few years so funds are not going as far as they used to. Mr. Hattery said he recalled there was a long time between last year’s contribution of \$10,000 and the previous infusion of funds into the Bail Program. It was unknown how long, if the County’s contribution had ever been increased prior to that. Ms. Hughes said this program not only saves boardout costs, but it also reduces travel expenses that would be incurred by assigned counsel attorneys if their client were boarded-out to another facility. Ms. Hess said in 2007 there was \$17,000 in the Bail Fund, and with those funds OAR circulated \$65,000 in bail funds. There was also mention of the time it takes for bails to re-circulate back to the program and a delay in the process of collecting funds back from various town and County courts that needs to be addressed.

A vote by show of hands resulted as follows: Ayes – 3 (Burbank, Dennis, and Robertson); Noes – 2 (Legislators Hattery and Stevenson). **MOTION CARRIED.**

WHEREAS, Opportunities, Alternatives and Resources (OAR), through its Bail Fund program, makes bail accessible for low-income individuals when available funds are the only barrier to release from the Tompkins County Jail pending trial, and

WHEREAS, additional funding is needed at this time to continue to increase the number of bails provided, and

WHEREAS, \$10,000 was earmarked for jail overcrowding by the Legislature, and

WHEREAS, OAR expects to exceed last year’s number of bails and with the addition of \$10,000 to the Bail Fund, OAR will be able to bail out nearly 85 individuals in 2008,

WHEREAS, OAR achieves a ninety percent return rate on its bails posted, with only very few forfeitures in the last six years, now therefore be it

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

FROM: A1990.54400	Contingent Fund	\$10,000
TO: A6316.54400	Program Expense	\$10,000

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

EXPLANATION:

Opportunities, Alternatives and Resources (OAR) of Tompkins County requests \$10,000 earmarked for jail overcrowding by the Tompkins County Legislature in the 2008 contingency fund. These funds will be used to increase the number of individuals bailed from the Tompkins County jail while awaiting trial.

Although the population at the Tompkins County Jail fluctuates, our community has seen an overall increase in the number of inmates boarded out to other counties over the past several years. In 2007 and so far this year, the numbers boarded out were modestly reduced due at least in part to the County Legislature’s allocation of additional dollars to OAR’s Bail Fund. Boarding out costs the county over \$90 a day per person. In 2006, OAR bailed out 48 individuals awaiting trial and in 2007 was able to bail out 71 people. County funding of increased staff time for doing bails, as well as County contributions to the

Bail Fund itself, have contributed significantly to this sharp increase. Last year OAR circulated the \$20,000 in its Bail Fund to make 71 interest-free bail loans totaling nearly \$60,000. The provision of these loans saved both our clients and the county an estimated 5300 incarceration days. This translates into a real economic benefit for Tompkins County, which would have paid over \$400,000 to board these individuals out.

Additional funding is needed at this time to continue to increase the number of bails provided. OAR has bailed 56 individuals so far this year, and if the current pace continues, we should be able to exceed last year's number. We expect that with the addition of **\$10,000** to the Bail Fund, OAR will be able to bail out nearly 85 individuals in 2008, resulting in savings to Tompkins County of approximately **\$550,000**.

Assigned Counsel – Proposal to Move a Portion of Program to a Public Defender's Office

Ms. Robertson was excused from the last meeting but there have been brief discussions of the document presented at the last Public Safety meeting by the Expanded Budget and Capital Committee. She suggested this Committee produce a clear statement of what it would like to see next year for the purpose of making more informed decisions at the Expanded Budget and Capital Committee level. Mr. Stevenson said it is his intention to appoint a special committee in October to study the issue as presented at the August 15 meeting of this Committee.

Mr. Whicher said the proposal addresses two areas: 1)whether the Assigned Counsel Program should be reviewed in general, and 2)shifting the responsibility of the Assigned Counsel Program.

Mr. Hattery said he is not in favor of this particular group of changes and if it were going to be studied he does not want to see the study performed within an effected department.

Mr. Dennis said he would support a study in 2009 with no personnel changes. He would support the creation of a Task Force to include involved parties and those who are outlined in the County Charter. Ms. Robertson agreed with comments made by Mr. Hattery and Mr. Dennis.

Liaison Reports

There were no liaison reports.

Approval of Minutes of August 15, 2008

It was MOVED by Mr. Dennis, seconded by Ms. Robertson, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve the minutes of August 15, 2008 as corrected. MINUTES APPROVED.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:02 p.m.