

**MINUTES OF THE ONEIDA COUNTY  
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING  
March 12, 2020**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Russ Fisher, Mitch Ives, Billy Fried, Chairman Mike Timmons

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Todd Troskey (Health Department), Crystal Schaub (Medical Examiner), Heidi Ihn (District Attorney's Office), Jean Meyer (Branch I), Brenda Behrle (Clerk of Courts), Brian Desmond (Corporation Counsel), Jennifer Allen (Branch II), Amy Franzen (Register in Probate), Grady Hartman (Sheriff's Office), Tracy Hartman (Clerks Office), Dan Hess (Sheriff's Office), Dawn Robinson (Emergency Management), Cambrya von Schrader (Sheriff's Office)

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Timmons called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. at the Oneida County Courthouse, Committee Room #2, stated the meeting notice had been posted and mailed in accordance with the Wisconsin Open Meeting Law and noted accommodations would be made for handicap accessibility.

**APPROVE AGENDA**

MOTION: To approve the Agenda as presented (Fischer/Fried, PASSED).

**APPROVE PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

MOTION: To approve the February 20, 2020, Public Safety Committee Meeting Minutes (Ives/Timmons, PASSED).

**SCHEDULE COMMITTEE MEETING DATE(S)**

The next meeting was scheduled for April 16, 2020

**BILLS, VOUCHERS AND LINE ITEM TRANSFERS FOR PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENTS**

MOTION: To approve bills, vouchers, and line item transfers for Public Safety Departments (Fried/Fischer, PASSED).

**LARGE ASSEMBLY**

Bubba's Bog Bash Large Assembly Application – Keith Troutman

Tracy Hartman of the Clerk's Office passed out a copy of the application turned in to her office by Keith Troutman (Exhibit 1) and advised that Troutman would be following essentially the same rules as Fall Ride. Tracy advised that there was not a copy of the insurance at that time and that would be turned in later on. Hartman advised she would ensure the form was completed appropriately.

Fried asked Sheriff Hartman if this would cause patrol to increase and if the Sheriff's Office would be staffing the event. Sheriff Hartman advised that the Sheriff's Office will

staff the event accordingly, but Sheriff Hartman did not know to what extent, as there was no funding to do so and it may cause overtime. Sheriff Hartman stressed that he believes these events are good for the community, but does not want this to cause an issue with and discussion about overtime at the end of the year.

Budget was discussed between Fried and Sheriff Hartman. Sheriff Hartman advised that the Sheriff's Office is expected to staff these kinds of events, but the employees end up paying through benefits. Discussion began of PTO and comp time.

Discussion of the cost to the public by staffing these for profit events and the possibility of increasing the \$100.00 fee.

Troskey advised that he had no concerns in regard to health related issues. Troskey advised that a separate bacteria test for the well would be done for this event in addition to the test for Fall Ride, due to the time in between the events. Troskey advised that the event would run the same way as Fall Ride with port a potties, showers, and hand washing stations.

Fried inquired as to what activities would take place at this event and T. Hartman advised that it would involve ATVs, UTVs, and mud bogs.

MOTION: To approve the Large Assembly Application for Bubba's Bog Bash as presented (Fried/Ives, PASSED)

### **DISTRICT ATTORNEY**

#### 2019 Line Item Transfers

Discussion of budget being over as a result of two large and unexpected trials occurring took place. Fried asked if this has been a trend and Ihn advised that it has not been a trend and that these trials consisted of a lot of travel pay for out of state witnesses.

MOTION: To approve the 2019 Line Item Transfers for the District Attorney's Office as presented (Fischer/Ives; PASSED)

### **CLERK OF CIRCUIT COURT**

#### 2019 Line Item Transfers

Discussion of why items were moved took place. All items were paid for within the budget.

MOTION: To approve the 2019 line item transfers for the Clerk of Courts Office as presented (Fried/Timmons; PASSED)

### **CIRCUIT COURT BRANCH I, REGISTER IN PROBATE, AND CIRCUIT COURT BRANCH II**

#### 2019 Line Item Transfers

Discussion took place indicating that all of the costs were within budget, but \$37,000.00 was moved around to make it work (Exhibit 2).

Fried inquired as to if this has been a trend in the last three years.

Jennifer Allen advised that it is hard to budget for some cases, as one of the costs was for a high profile felony case and public defenders were needed, but only certain attorneys can take certain level felony cases. Allen advised that the Public Defender's Office has raised their rates and that might motivate more attorneys to take more cases. Allen also advised that they are attempting to be reimbursed for some of the cost by the Public Defenders Office.

Allen also advised that their office has changed the collection procedure from the public as well and have received approximately \$6,000.00 in public charges, which is a significant increase from previous years.

It was reported that the Clerk of Courts Office has also started program with collections, which has increased the amount collected from the public.

MOTION: To approve the Circuit Court Branch I, Register in Probate, and Circuit Court Branch II 2019 line item transfers as presented. (Fried/Fischer; PASSED)

Approval for Register in Probate to attend the 2020 WIRPA Spring Educational Conference in Wisconsin Dells, WI, May 13-15, 2020

Advised that the conference is at the Great Wolf Lodge in Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin and is within budget.

MOTION: To approve the Register in Probate to attend the 2020 WIRPA Spring Educational Conference in Wisconsin Dells, WI on May 13 through May 15, 2020 as presented (Fried/Ives; PASSED)

Discussion was had about how the office is covered during this conference. Fried was advised that the office would be covered by another employee during that time and Register in Probate would cover for that employee when they are gone in April.

MOTION: To approve the Register in Probate to attend the 2020 WIRPA Spring Educational Conference in Wisconsin Dells, WI on May 13 through May 15, 2020. (Fried/Ives; PASSED)

## **SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

### Hazard Mitigation NOAA Weather Radio Grant Application

Sheriff Hartman advised that Ken Kortenhof (EM) was going to be at the meeting, but was on another assignment at the time. Sheriff Hartman and Chief Deputy Hess advised that Kortenhof has applied for and received the grant as he has in the past. It was reported that paperwork would be sent to Dave Hintz to sign.

### Dispatch Recruiting Difficulties

Sheriff Hartman began talking about the difficulties of hiring staff for dispatch in order to keep the committee informed and have the committee keep these difficulties in mind with their day-to-day decisions.

Sheriff Hartman and Chief Deputy Hess advised that there are a total of 14 dispatch employees including Dispatch Lt. Sherri Congleton. Sheriff Hartman advised that dispatch is 30% down, has been down for some time, and has not been fully staffed in 7 yrs.

Sheriff Hartman advised that dispatching is a difficult job with low pay and he appreciated the passing of the Carlson Dettman increase.

Fried inquired as to the pay of the Sheriff's Office dispatchers. Sheriff Hartman advised that dispatch receives a starting wage of \$18.50.

Sheriff Hartman discussed that dispatchers work in a room with no windows and odd hours and experience high levels of stress on a daily basis. Sheriff Hartman reported that only 4% of the population is capable of the job, so takes skill and the Sheriff's Office is struggling to get people with no one "in the hopper" currently.

Sheriff Hartman advised that the Sheriff's Office is one dispatcher away from crisis mode and in that event, he would need to pull deputy off the road to cover dispatch.

Sheriff Hartman advised that the Sheriff's Office has hired 13 dispatchers who haven't passed training, 7 that passed but did not stay long, offered the job to 8 people who then declined, and offered the job to 7 people that didn't pass the background check for a total of 35 people in 7 years with no real solution.

Fried inquired about increasing the dispatcher's wages as a possible solution.

Sheriff Hartman discussed dispatchers' wages and benefits and how talk of reducing benefits has ripple effect on all employees. Sheriff Hartman discussed that word of mouth is best way to get people to apply and when the employees are demoralized by talk of benefits being cut, you do not have good word of mouth.

Ives inquired as to how Oneida County compares to other Sheriff's Offices in the area.

Sheriff Hartman and Chief Deputy Hess advised that this is a trend everywhere and that Vilas has been struggling, Minocqua Police Department dispatch is fully staffed, but there is less to that job in comparison with the Sheriff's Office dispatch, and Marathon County's wage is quite a bit higher. Sheriff Hartman also expressed that he feels dispatch, corrections, and technical support should receive equal starting pay.

Fischer discussed that more people are retiring than coming into the work force at this time and it is harder to find employees because there are fewer people to apply.

Sheriff Hartman advised that patrol, corrections, and technical support positions are difficult to fill, but dispatch is impossible to fill. Sheriff Hartman advised that the Sheriff's Office has spent money on recruiting and job fairs in an effort to fill the positions.

Fisher discussed sign on bonuses, benefits etc. as incentives to help, as many people are leaving government jobs for private sector jobs for the incentives and opportunities.

Sheriff Hartman expressed that if a new employee receives a sign on bonus or incentive, then suddenly the new employee makes more than 20-year employee, which could cause the 20-year employee to become upset and/or leave.

Fried discussed what it would take to fill the position and that perhaps it should be looked at as a more difficult job to do and fill and should receive the incentives/ sign on bonus to get the spots filled.

Ives inquired about cross training between corrections and dispatch. Chief Deputy Hess advised that Corrections and Dispatch used to be cross-trained to do both jobs, but studies showed that those types of employees were not keeping up with skills.

Ives inquired about the possibility of hiring part time LTEs. Sheriff Hartman advised there are 3 more LTE positions to fill as well. Chief Deputy Hess and Sheriff Hartman discuss the requirements/ limitations of LTEs.

Timmons advised that the discussion should remain about public safety matters and not wages/ benefits. Timmons expressed that he is in support of doing something, as dispatchers are the first person "on scene" at a call and do not get as much recognition as law enforcement officers.

Sheriff Hartman advised that his goal was to have the Public Safety Committee aware of the struggle at Sheriff's Office regarding the hiring of dispatchers and that he could not approach LRES about the issue at this time because he does not have a solid plan in regard to what he would like to do about the problem.

Fried expressed to Sheriff Hartman that he believed it was important that when Sheriff Hartman did know what he would like, he keep the committee informed before going to LRES. Fried advised that the Sheriff's Office has the biggest budget, so people look there for cuts in the budget, but non-mandated costs need to be looked at more closely.

Sheriff Hartman advised that it is easy to increase health care and leave programs as is, but it is demoralizing to the employees and it has reached a point where it will not be accepted quietly.

Ives discussed that the Sheriff's Office has the largest budget, but also has a large revenue and if the Sheriff's Office is bringing revenue in, then they should be able to tap into it. Ives then made the example of the revenue generates from the jail's state inmate contract.

### Sheriff's Office Budget Closeout

Sheriff Hartman advised that 2019 was a great year regarding the budget. Sheriff Hartman advised that different people at six different meetings stated the Sheriff's Office would not make their budget and there is 1.4 million dollars coming back (Exhibit 3).

Sheriff Hartman discussed the budget in relation to the Sheriff's Office, the jail, and medical costs. Chief Deputy Hess advised that an inmate with cancer was treated out of Oneida County's budget, as that inmate was an Oneida County Inmate and not a state inmate.

Sheriff Hartman stated he previously heard that overtime and comp pay was out of control, but overtime was down 18% and the Sheriff's Office budget is in great shape.

Fried and Sheriff Hartman discussed that one individual does not speak for an entire committee/ board. Sheriff Hartman advised that this was brought to attention to provide data so that when comments are made in regard to budget, the committee would have this data in mind to respond to those comments appropriately.

Fried inquired as to how the current budget is looking and Sheriff Hartman and Chief Deputy Hess advised that the current year is looking good. Sheriff Hartman advised that the Sheriff's Office is hoping to bring in more revenue in the coming year.

It was pointed out that the line item sheet said 2019 not 2020. Sheriff Hartman acknowledged to make that change.

MOTION: To approve the Sheriff's Office 2019 line item transfers as presented (Ives/Fischer; PASSED).

### Update on 2020 Capital Improvement Projects:

#### **a) LEC 911 Center Furniture and Flooring**

Chief Deputy Hess and Sheriff Hartman advised that the dispatch center was officially shut down and moved, which was a seamless transition to outside world. Chief Deputy Hess and Sheriff Hartman advised that the carpeting is being worked on in the dispatch center and hopefully the whole project will be completed in approximately 1 month.

Timmons inquired as to if the project was within budget and Chief Deputy Hess advised it was within budget and coming out of the radio system budget.

#### **b) Radio System Upgrade**

#### **c) Phase III Radio**

Chief Deputy Hess advised that phase III radios are in the squads, siren, mobile, and pucks are on roofs of the squads. Chief Deputy Hess advised that the price came down considerably, the Sheriff's Office received a good price, and they are testing a few out at the moment.

#### **d) Taser Replacement**

Chief Deputy Hess advised that the tasers have been received and they are being assigned to the deputies currently.

**e) Body Scanner**

Chief Deputy Hess and Sheriff Hartman advised that the body scanner waiver was received from state regarding the radiation emitted to operate system. Chief Deputy Hess advised that the body scanner would be received in March and the room is ready for it already. Chief Deputy Hess advised that trainers for the body scanner will train corrections staff and those corrections staff members will in turn train the rest of the staff.

**ONEIDA COUNTY A SECOND AMMENDMENT SANCTUARY**

Timmons advised that changes were made to lines 44-48 as per the previous meeting. Timmons advised that he was asked to postpone the resolution in lieu of public concerns of health and size of the meeting room.

Fried inquired about public interest or lack there of and why this was a necessary motion. Timmons advised that the topic is national and state wide news and it is more a statement than anything, to show the counties interests.

Sheriff Hartman advised that he would be unavailable for that meeting, but Captain Terri Hook would attend the meeting in his place, as she was advised of his opinions on the matter.

Timmons signed the draft resolution and indicated the resolution will move forward to the County Board Chairperson unless pulled due to a safety issue.

Fischer advised that he believed the matter should move forward so a decision could be made either way so it need no longer be discussed.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

**ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA(S)**

Corporation Counsel spring conference for Mike Fugle and Brian Desmond.

**ADJOURN**

**10:41 a.m. Motion to adjourn the meeting (Fried/ Fischer; PASSED)**

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Mike Timmons, Chairman

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Cambrya von Schrader, Committee Secretary

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Russ Fisher, Vice-Chairman