

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
APRIL 7, 2009

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Lindsay, Suprenant, Scribner, Alexander, Henke, Sady

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Banks

SUPERVISORS: Wilbur, LaPointe, Trinkle

Debra Prehoda, Clerk

Undersheriff Mabb

Gary Evens, Deputy Fire Coordinator

Mike Gray, Alternative Sentencing

Kevin Kortright, District Attorney

Bill McCarty, Code Enforcement

Bryn Reynolds, Captain Sheriff Dept.

Sheriff Leclaire

Ray Rathbun, Fire Coordinator

Kevin Hayes, County Administrator

Roger Wickes, County Attorney

Bill Cook, Director Public Safety

Anthony White, Probation

Bruce Mason, EMS Coordinator

AGENDA AS PRESENTED IN COMMITTEE NOTICE:

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes – March 10, 2009
3. Department Requests/Reports:
  - A. Probation
    1. Agency Updates
  - B. Fire Bureau
    1. Training Center Update
    2. Juvenile Firestarter Program Update
  - C. Alternative Sentencing
    1. Request Permission to Seek Grant Funding
  - D. Sheriff
    1. Salem Police Contract
    2. Resolution to Honor John Bailey
  - E. Department of Public Safety
    1. Closeout of Capital Project #73 and Return of Unused Funds to General Fund
    2. Final Colfax Radio System Report
    3. Discuss Annual Training Requirements
4. Other Business
5. Adjournment

Chairman Lindsay called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M.

A motion to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2009 meeting was moved by Mr. Henke, seconded by Mr. Scribner and adopted.

PROBATION – Anthony White, Director, addressed the following items with the committee:

- Agency Updates – Anthony displayed photos of items (i.e. guns, knives, beer/liquor, pills, needles) found in probationers homes during home visits and also distributed a police report concerning the seventy-four year old mother of a probation officer who has been receiving phone threats regarding her son and another probationer. He stated everyone in the department has received threats but this is the first time a threat has been made to a family member. He thanked the committee/Board for allowing him to pursue and receive a 50/50 grant to purchase bulletproof vests for the probation officers. Saratoga County does not

do home visits and Warren County does them on a limited basis. He is concerned about the officer's safety and is making a request to allow them to carry side arms. He made this same request about a year ago. At that time they were approved to carry pepper spray and approved to pursue monies toward bulletproof vests. The DA stated he prosecutes the violation of probation and it is very beneficial that Probation does these home visits. Anthony stated to arm his staff; he would need the funds to purchase the guns and equipment/supplies. Officers have already taken the mandatory state firearm and officer safety training. He has spoken with staff and the majority are in favor of being armed. He would like the option to grandfather certain staff to allow them not to carry. He has explored other county's policies and some are allowed to carry while others do not. Anthony stated that if any home visit begins to feel unsafe then the officer is to make a swift and orderly retreat from the home. Chairman Lindsay stated additional information is needed regarding costs, yearly training requirements and a policy. Roger Wickes, County Attorney, stated that the Probation Officers are required by the State to take the yearly training for carrying firearms even though officers do not carry firearms. Mr. LaPointe asked the Sheriff if drug forfeiture funds could be used to purchase guns. This would be an allowable expense and he probably has forfeiture funds to cover this expense. Chairman Lindsay stated bring back the costs and policies.

FIRE BUREAU – Ray Rathbun, Fire Coordinator, addressed the following items with the committee:

- Training Center Update – In response to a question about the total cost of the project at the March 20<sup>th</sup> Board meeting, Ray stated the total project is projected to cost between \$6M and \$7M, handout dated 2/6/07 on file. Sean McGuire, State grant representative, is looking for ways to best utilize the shared services grant.
- Juvenile Firestarter Program Update – This group is active and since the last meeting they are dealing with two incidents involving children ages 9 and 11. He requested \$4,000 in funding from Senator Little and it appears the request will be cut in half but it will provide for the second half of their juvenile firestarter training.
- CDL – The legislation is being reworked because it does not allow non-CDL license holders to drive the fire truck to and from trainings, service work on the vehicle or in a parade.

ALTERNATIVE SENTENCING – Mike Gray, Director, addressed the following items with the committee:

- Request Permission to Seek Grant Funding – Mike is requesting to apply for grant funding, Recovery Act Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program through the U.S. Department of Justice, handout attached. Washington County would be eligible for \$20,156.00 in grant funding. There is flexibility with how use this funding. The submission deadline for this grant is May 18, 2009. A motion to move approve grant application was moved by Mr. Scribner, seconded by Mr. Alexander and adopted.

- Recovery Act – Mike stated also in the Recovery Act there might be an opportunity to get positions through EOC. The department could be a worksite sponsor that would allow them to bring on an employee for one year at no cost to the county funded by stimulus monies through EOC. He plans to bring a department reorganization plan to the next committee meeting. A motion to allow Mike Gray, Director Alternative Sentencing, to express that department's interest in participating as a worksite sponsor was moved by Mr. Alexander, seconded by Mr. Suprenant and adopted.

SHERIFF – Sheriff Leclaire, addressed the following items with the committee:

- Salem Police Contract – The Village of Salem does not plan to continue their contract with the Sheriff's Department that ends May 31, 2009. Sheriff Leclaire in his handout, on file, proposed the following for the position hired to cover the Salem Village Deputy position:
  - Option A. "Apply for a Cops Grant which would cover a position. However there are some problems with this, which I will discuss."
  - Option B. "Take the amount of revenue loss out of the part-time budget line to cover the remaining months of 2009 and keep this officer on pending the 2010 budget and a potential retirement. I will discuss some related facts concerning this proposal. "

Regarding the Cops Grant, he explained that in this grant, the officer's salary and benefits are totally covered but the municipality has to keep the existing force on for four years. The other proposal is to take funding from his part time budget line to cover the expense of the officer position no longer needed for Salem and allow him time to address this matter in the 2010 budget with potential retirements forthcoming. The Cops Grant would definitely keep the officer during that time period but the disadvantage is that any staff retirement would need to be backfilled. The grant will pay the full salary and fringe benefits for an entry-level deputy. The downside is committing to keeping the staffing level as is for four years. The Sheriff stated he has approximately \$45,000 in forfeiture funds and is anticipating additional monies. He stated if he keeps this deputy on that has been assigned to the Village of Salem for the remainder of 2009, the personal services line will be within budget. He watches that budget line very carefully. The committee discussed options of incorporating the Village of Salem into this grant opportunity but that would require a financial commitment, Salem taking responsibility for the 4<sup>th</sup> year. Chairman Lindsay stated the disadvantage of the Cops grant is that the County would have to commit to not reduce staff and we do not know what is ahead. A motion to apply for grant was moved by Mr. Scribner and seconded. Discussion. The Undersheriff stated this is a lengthy grant application and he would like some reassurance that the committee should be committed to accept if they are approved. Chairman Lindsay asked Supervisor Alexander if the Village of Salem would be willing to contract for a lesser amount. In addition, if this grant does not work then he is asking for approval to proceed with option B. He would like an answer to give to this deputy. The motion to apply for grant was moved by Mr. Scribner, seconded and adopted. The grant application is due by May 18<sup>th</sup>. The committee considered the following motion: A motion to go to option B should option A not be successful was moved by Mr. Scribner and seconded by Mr. Henke. Discussion.

It was questioned why is this motion needed when the committee already approved moving forward with option A, Cops Grant. It was stated that if the Village of Salem is not interested in participating (i.e. agree to 4<sup>th</sup> year payment), the committee should know that information prior to determining how they then want to proceed. The motion to proceed with option B if option A is not successful was moved by Mr. Scribner, seconded by Mr. Henke and adopted. Mr. Suprenant opposed.

- Resolution to Honor John Bailey – Mr. Bailey passed away and the Sheriff is requesting a resolution in honor of John Bailey's twenty-eight years of service to the Traffic Safety Board. A motion to present a resolution in honor of John Bailey's twenty-eight years of service to the Traffic Safety Board was moved by Mr. Suprenant, seconded unanimously and adopted.
- Approval to Use Forfeiture Funds to Purchase Photo ID System. The Sheriff stated a company has been producing the photo ID's and shipping them through the mail. Recently a mail shipment appeared to be lost but the ID were recovered from the post office where the package had been damaged which left the IDs out of the package on the floor. A motion to amend budget to purchase ID system in the amount of \$4,092.90, moving funds from crime proceeds, was moved by Mr. Henke and seconded by Mr. Scribner. Discussion. The fob system does not interfere with this identification system. The Sheriff stated if his department was reimbursed, cost of supplies and personnel time, they could do the entire county workforce. The motion to amend budget to purchase ID system in the amount of \$4,092.90, moving funds from crime proceeds, was moved by Mr. Henke, seconded by Mr. Scribner and adopted.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY – Bill Cook, Director, addressed the following items with the committee, handout attached:

- Closeout of Capital Project #73 (Telephone, CAD, Mapping and Pictometry) and Return of Unused Funds to General Fund – A motion to close out Capital Project #73 and return funds to General Fund in the amount of \$5,969.83 was moved by Mr. Scribner, seconded by Mr. Sady and adopted.
- Capital Project #52 Closeout (Radio System) Bill will be meeting with the County Administrator and the Treasurer to close out this project.
- Final Colfax Radio System Report –The radio system testing on Colfax was completed on March 24<sup>th</sup> and it exceeded their expectations regarding coverage. Kevin Hayes, County Administrator, stated that \$250,000 was budgeted for the project and the project came in just under \$214,000. The County will be going out to borrow for the \$214,000.
- CART Plan Approval – (County Animal Response Team) – This plan has been completed and needs to be added to the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, plan on file in the Public Safety Department. A motion to add CART Plan to the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan was moved by Mr. Henke, seconded by Mr. Scribner and adopted.
- Presbytery Hill Tower Lease – He has received a lease agreement for Presbytery Hill in the amount of \$1,000.00/month. He stated that the agreed upon amount was \$1,500.00/month and the lease agreement will be changed to reflect that amount. The committee approved moving forward with this lease at last month's meeting.

- Bruce Mason, EMS Coordinator, was introduced and welcomed.
- Statewide Wireless Initiative – this proposal has been trashed by the State and they are looking at a more regional approach.
- Tour of the Battenkill – The mobile command post will be on site during the two-day race.

OTHER BUSINESS:

DISTRICT ATTORNEY – Kevin Kortright, District Attorney, addressed the following items with the committee:

- WeTip, Anonymous Tip Line – As discussed last month, the WeTip hot line is an anonymous tip line. The District Attorney has spoken with the Sheriff, Director of Public Safety and Police Chiefs and they are all in support of this program. He is requesting to use \$3,765.00 in forfeiture funds to participate in this program, proposal on file. A motion to move forward with the WeTip hot line was moved by Mr. Alexander and seconded by Mr. Henke. Discussion. This is a one-year contract and he will review to determine if he will proceed with it in the future. Mr. Henke stated he has received positive feedback on this program. The District Attorney estimated he has \$18,000 in state forfeiture funds and \$1,600 federal. The motion to move forward with the WeTip hot line using crime proceeds was moved by Mr. Alexander, seconded by Mr. Henke and adopted.
- Permission to apply for grant funding for his two part investigators. After hearing the Sheriff's presentation, he would like to explore the grant opportunity to fund his two part-time investigators, Cops Grant. A motion to apply for grant funding was moved by Mr. Scribner, seconded by Mr. Henke and adopted.
- Transfer Monies (Drug Forfeiture) for ID kits for the Sheriff's Department – He is requesting to transfer funds to purchase ID kits for the Sheriff's Department to use in school presentations and at the Washington County Fair. A motion to amend budget, transferring \$500 in forfeiture funds for the purchase of ID kits was moved by Mr. Alexander, seconded by Mr. Sady and adopted.

CODE ENFORCEMENT - Bill McCarty, Code Enforcement Administrator, stated they have been tracking the number of permits since the beginning of the year compared to the same time period last year, handout attached. He is proposing to come to the Finance and Personnel Committee with a plan to cut back the hours worked by the Code Enforcement Officers from 40 to 35 per week. He has discussed this with the staff. A motion to move this request to reduce Code Enforcement Officers work hours from 40 hours per week to 35 hours per week to the Finance and Personnel Committee for consideration was moved by Mr. Scribner and seconded by Mr. Sady. Discussion. Mr. McCarty stated he would rather not have to cut staff. Mr. Suprenant stated he was contacted after Mr. McCarty met with his staff and the staff stated the permits are equal with last year. Questions arose about a possible permit application from Irving Tissue. Kevin suggested contacting Irving Tissue. The motion to move this request to reduce Code Enforcement Officers work hours from 40 hours per week to 35 to the Finance and Personnel Committee for consideration was moved by Mr. Scribner, seconded by Mr. Sady and adopted. Messrs. Suprenant and Alexander opposed.

The meeting adjourned at 11:46 A.M.