

MINUTES

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE—via tele-conference

Monday, May 4, 2020 1:00 p.m.

Present: Supervisor Verkey, County Administrator Rick House, Fiscal Assistant Ken Blake, via Zoom Supervisors: Miller, Verno, Eynor, Lasher, Bender, Jacobs, Groat and Emmel, Public Defender Andy Correia, Assigned Counsel Administrator Bruce Chambers, Probation Director Mark Ameele, Coroner Keith Benjamin, District Attorney Mike Calarco, Sheriff Barry Virts and Emergency Services Representatives George Bastedo and Jim Lee.

Minutes from the April 6th meeting were approved as written.

The monthly activities report for the Coroner's Office was distributed with the agenda. In the first three months of the year there have been 41 cases referred to the Coroner's Office and 23 sent out for autopsies. There are 12 pending cases; one from early 2019.

Mr. Benjamin requested consideration for the Coroner's Office to begin charging for copies of autopsy and toxicology reports except when requested by Wayne County Departments. He noted other counties charge for this documentation and recommend a fee of \$15-\$20 per document. Copies of these documents can only be provided to specific individuals and the Office will continue to use the same form request as it has in the past. It was agreed this issue would be reviewed in additional detail by Mr. Blake and a transmittal prepared to come before this Committee in June.

At the end of April the Public Defender's Office had 455 open cases.

Mr. Correia reviewed the complexity of funding mechanisms in his Office and provided a State Fund Overview PowerPoint presentation to the group. Prior to 2010 public defense offices received State funding and were not required to provide much of an explanation for its expenditures. These appropriations were being misused by many counties and the NYS Office of Indigent Legal Service (ILS) took over administration of all distributions. Now public defense offices have to meet performance standards and include data in their reimbursement requests from the State. The County's Public Defenders Office receives the majority of their grant funding through a Hurrell-Harring legal settlement; funding is for a higher level of public defense representation than previously given. Since the first distribution of ILS funds in 2011 the County has received nine more, at this time five grants are active. Mr. Correia noted funding for the ILS program remains in the 2020-21 State budget. Over the years funding has been used for office renovations, equipment purchases and the addition and upgrade of personnel. With the 10th ILS funding grant Mr. Correia will be requesting funds to pay 50% of a full-time Attorney's salary in the Office, to support the Pre-Trial Release Adult Diversion Program and pay for improvements to the assigned counsel programs technology and equipment. The second year plan of the Hurrell-Harring funding targets additional personnel and personnel changes, additional technology and support for data requirements in the office. It also increases support to the

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Assigned Counsel Program so it can continue to work towards meeting ILS standards. Mr. Correia noted the County has no financial match for receipt of Hurrell-Harring grant funds. The items recommended for purchase, individuals for hire, or upgrades reflect no County cost; and if the funding is not received the staff it pays for will be eliminated.

Probations monthly activities report was distributed with the agenda. During April 16 non-secure bed days were served, there were a total of 25 open PINS cases at the end of the month and 104 JD cases. Staff are supervising 568 cases, 20 electric home monitoring cases and 260 ignition interlock system cases. In the first quarter of 2020 the Probation Office collected over \$58,000 in revenue.

The following monthly reports were included with the agenda for the Sheriff's Office (not all reports were available due to staff furloughs):

- Overtime: A total of 2,512 hours of overtime were earned during March; the majority to cover staff shortages.
- Hall of Justice: During March 1,879 individuals entered the Building through the magnetometer.

The following transmittals were presented by Sheriff Virts:

--Authorization to accept a 2019 Stop School Violence Grant and amend the 2020 budget for receipt of \$150,000. Funds will be used to provide mental health training to School Resource Officers, school staff and students. Approved 5-0.

--Authorization to accept and receive a New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services Grant in the amount of \$20,000. Funds will be used toward the purchase of Livescan units, software and related equipment. The County will pay the remaining \$33,700 expense. The request also authorizes the Chairman of the Board to sign related documentation for the grant. Approved 5-0.

Sheriff Virts noted he requested Board proclamations for both Corrections Officers Week and Police Officers Week.

Sheriff Virts informed the group his out of state travel request to attend the National Sheriff's Association Conference has been cancelled.

The monthly activities report for the Emergency Services Office was distributed with the agenda. Two staff members have been assigned to deal with COVID-19 issues and two with Lake Ontario water level issues. Katie Dean has been appointed provisional Operations Manager of E-911.

Mr. Bastedo informed the group Ginna sirens will be activated on Tuesday morning. He noted next year at this time there will be no nuclear power plants operating downstate.

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The following transmittals were presented for the Emergency Services Office:

--Authorization to release requests for quotations for radiological contractor services to assist the Office in updating their Radiological Emergency Response Plan. The plan is required to be updated every two years and due to the technicality and the volume of work needed, existing staff cannot perform the function. Approved 5-0.

--Authorization to expend funds and amend the 2020 budget for the 2019-20 Public Safety Answering Point Grant in the amount of \$182,796. Mr. Bastedo noted these grant funds will only be available through 2020. Supervisors questioned the status of this funding in light of the recent State health emergency. Mr. Bastedo said he would wait until a project is reimbursed before starting another one. Four projects were planned with these funds. Approved 5-0.

--Authorization to advertise for bids for the development of the Wayne County Public Safety Radio System. Mr. Bastedo noted a site has yet to be selected for the location of this tower; however, he would like to be prepared for construction once a site is selected. Approved 5-0.

The Wolcott tower now has power, the transmitter will be installed this week and it is believed the tower will be operational in three weeks. The generator has yet to be installed.

Todd Sheridan from Fitch Associates reported on their results, from a 2019 request, to review their existing County emergency medical services response program. (A copy of the power point presentation was sent to Supervisors following the meeting.) The last study on the County's emergency medical response system was performed in 1999. Since that time, eight of the 21 transporting agencies in the County no longer exist; and as recommended in the report that year, a Countywide ALS system was implemented. In order to perform their review Fitch Associates requested all emergency medical service agencies in the County respond to their questionnaire regarding services and budget. Out of the 14 agencies contacted, only seven eventually ended up providing full data sets. This report is based off the information that was made available. Mr. Sheridan noted several attempts were made to retrieve the information from all agencies, some chose not to cooperate and only submitted a small portion of the information requested. Research showed response times to emergencies has not improved since the last study was performed 20 years ago, County's 911 Communications is key to system improvement, financial sustainability is questionable and EMS agencies are not transparent to the County. The report showed the County's EMS system logged 12,010 incidents and 8,103 transports in 2019; a 2.6% increase in volume over one year; yet the population for the County has decreased. Over 14% of the time the primary response agency was not the first vehicle on the scene. The overall system does not benchmark well against best practices. The report noted concern with the three-minute delay by dispatchers to sound for a back-up when the primary service does not respond. Mr. Sheridan stated most systems do not utilize a delayed responding resource anymore. At this time, County Dispatch does not know when EMS crews are available, possibly this could be mandated; a move that could expedite response times. Mr. Sheridan voiced concern with the lack of consistency across the whole County ALS system. Response times to emergencies are

approximately 20 minutes; which is no longer the acceptable standard of care. Response times vary according to the time of day and day of the week. The report recommended a fully-staffed ambulance be sent on initial requests and that a dispatcher agreement be executed with all agencies. Some agencies stated they do not have funding to pay staff and purchase necessary equipment. The County's EMS system is not earning the same revenue as in the past.

The report made four recommendations:

- Stay Status Quo: with the recommendation that dispatch agreements be put in order with no cost to do so.
- County Obtain a Certificate of Need and Provide Coordination: set minimum performance standards for all agencies, fund a Medical Director to coordinate clinical activities, place two 24/7 County medics in ALS transport units and purchase and implement Automatic Vehicle Location Systems for response vehicles so closest unit can be dispatched. These changes have an estimated cost of \$1.2 million annually.
- Fund Improvements: develop EMS revenue stream, offer group purchase contracts and implement a system-wide patient care reporting system. To ensure coverage of demand, add three transport ambulances in addition to the two medics requested in the above recommendation. This option calls for the development of a strategic plan for the EMS system. These changes have an estimated cost of \$2.59 million annually.
- Single Provider: a single provider can achieve needed efficiencies and flexibility. The report stated the market and financial pressure will change the current EMS system in the County. As agencies dissolve this may be the only option.

The draft report will include the names of those emergency response agencies that did not respond to the Fitch Associates questionnaires or fully complete them. This report will be addressed again by the Public Safety Committee at a later date. Mr. Sheridan said he would take questions from any Board member once they reviewed the report.

The meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m. The next meeting of the Public Safety Committee is scheduled for Monday, June 1st at 1:00 p.m.