

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
Monday, April 11, 2022 - 9:30 AM

Steve McNally, Chairperson
Ike Tyler, Vice-Chairperson

Chairman McNally called this Public Safety Meeting to order at 9:30 am with the following Supervisors in attendance: Clayton Barber, Stephanie DeZalia, Derek Doty, Shaun Gilliland, Charlie Harrington, Roy Holzer, Kenneth Hughes, Steve McNally, Noel Merrihew, Jim Monty, Tom Scozzafava, Matt Stanley, Ike Tyler Joe Pete Wilson, Davina Winemiller, Margaret Wood and Mark Wright. Robin DeLoria and was excused.

Department Heads present: Dan Palmer, Judy Garrison, Sue Montgomery-Corey, David Reynolds, Daniel Woods and Max Thwaits. Heather Sheehan and Kristy Sprague were excused.

Also present: Miriam Hadden

News Media: Tim Rowland – SUN

McNALLY: I will call the public safety meeting to order, please rise for the pledge. Thank you, first up, Veteran's office – Noel Merrihew.

MERRIHEW: No report this morning.

McNALLY: Anybody have anything for Noel? Thank you. County Sealer, Dan Woods.

WOODS: Good morning everyone, if you flip to the second page you'll see my report for March. I have nothing further to report. If you have any questions, I'd be happy to answer.

MONTY: Dan did you get the email I sent you of those six locations in Lewis?

WOODS: Did you include the addresses?

MONTY: Yes.

WOODS: I will check again. I believe that I got them to Lois and we are getting the letters out if they need to be registered or checked to see if they were.

MONTY: Okay, because I've got a couple more I will be sending you. The report says I didn't have any in Lewis and I know I do.

McNALLY: Anybody else? Alright, thank you. Board of Elections – Sue Montgomery-Corey.

MONTGOMERY-COREY: Good morning. We do not have a lot to report today. Last week was petition season so, the filing for petition season so we had 91 petitions filed in Essex County, ten of those were countywide and the other 81 were local so that's essentially what I have to report today if anybody has any questions I'd be happy to try and answer.

SCOZZAFAVA: If the town wanted to put something on the ballot, what's the absolute deadline?

MONTGOMERY-COREY: I'd have to look that up. It's a little bit later this year, sooner getting that to us, sooner is better though.

SCOZZAFAVA: Okay thank you.

McNALLY: Anybody else? Alright, thank you Sue.

MONTGOMERY-COREY: Okay, great. Thanks so much.

McNALLY: District Attorney, Kristy Sprague is excused. Emergency Services, Max Thwaits.

THWAITS: Good morning. You have my report. I can answer any questions on that. Also, I'd like to bring up that this week is National Public Safety Tele communicators Weeks April 10 – 16th and I'd like to recognize the 13 full time and 3-part time dispatchers that we have.

McNALLY: Anybody have anything for Max?

HUGHES: Can I move a resolution on that.

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE WEEK OF APRIL 10-16, 2022, AS NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATORS WEEK. Hughes, unanimous.

McNALLY: Emergency medical services?

THWAITS: Same, you have our report for EMS any questions?

McNALLY: Anybody have any questions? If not, thank you.

THWAITS: Thank you.

McNALLY: Sheriff's office, Dave Reynolds.

REYNOLDS: I have a few different things. The first one, you have my board report and if you look at it you'll notice the numbers have decreased quite a bit and part of the reason is the five new deputies you approved probably a year ago finally coming out of school, they graduate Thursday so they've been pretty active. We just had in the last week had a couple DWAI, drugs that's something that we haven't had much luck with in the past but there's five new people out there that have been training so our numbers you'll see increasing plus our jail population count and how the average says it's 53 which was what it was for March but we're already up to 67 right now. Everything seems to be coming back to normal for us a little bit more, that's a good thing. The second thing I put on your desks, just a little information about the hospital coverage for our nursing. ECH has provided nursing coverage for us for as long as I can remember, probably more than ten years, probably closer to twenty and with the staffing issues they decided they could no longer submit a bid so we were due for a new contract. We usually go every three years so they informed me in March that they were not going to be able to meet the needs of the jail anymore, they just didn't have the staffing so we went out to bid like we normally do and we received six separate bid proposals all from traveling nurse companies and the costs came back anywhere from \$200,000 to \$368,000, so I tried to come up with every solution and the cheapest

one obviously and I think the cheapest solution is for us to hire our own LPN's and it's going to be around \$200,000, a little bit more so I guess what I'm doing right now is asking for approval to hire two, LPN's instead of taking the bid proposals that came in and some of the companies are Maryland, Texas, New Jersey and they are traveling nurses so it's kind of complicated to have a traveling nurse come into a correctional facility. So, if you have any questions I can probably explain.

SCOZZAFAVA: I'm assuming these are mandated positions, correct? That we've got to have the nurses there?

REYNOLDS: We have to provide services so the MAT program, this is separate from – these LPN's would assist in the MAT program but we need medication coverage from basically 7 a.m. to about 9 p.m. every day, seven days a week inmates on medication so that would cover all the med passes. We need RN's because LPN's cannot necessarily take – LPN doesn't have the same –

SCOZZAFAVA: So they are mandated, we have to have them.

REYNOLDS: We have to have them; I don't know that it is mandated by anybody.

PALMER: You have to have medical coverage. I mean you can either contract out for it or have your own nurse.

SCOZZAFAVA: What is the MAT program?

REYNOLDS: Medicated Assisted Treatment, suboxone, methadone, vivitrol.

SCOZZAFAVA: Okay, thank you.

HUGHES: Thank you sir. Dave, what were we spending with ECH contract each year?

REYNOLDS: So I have it broken down because I also have that grant for the registered nurse to cover the MAT program so I subtracted that out with what the contract was bid out as, ECH was paying \$115,000, give or take.

HUGHES: \$115,000?

REYNOLDS: One-hundred fifteen thousand, there's no way we can do it I don't think, for less than about two-hundred for the year. The bids like I said came in at anywhere from two-hundred to three-hundred.

PALMER: Three fifty-eight.

REYNOLDS: Three fifty-eight so ECH has been an amazing partner over the last twenty years and they have saved with the county hundreds and hundreds of thousands of dollars and it's because they can send a pool of one of twenty people, we weren't absorbing their full time coverage for the fringe and all those other things.

HOLZER: Quick question, so we already have a hundred in change in your budget, where would the balance of the funds come from for these positions?

PALMER: It's going to have to come out of the budget. We will probably have to make a transfer at some point from unappropriated, unreserved fund balance in order to cover this.

REYNOLDS: So I don't assume this is going to happen, so ECH has been gracious enough to continue their contract through June, sometime in June it expired in March so if this takes effect in June obviously that's half a year, so half a year of a \$115,000 would be \$57,500, where it would cost us a hundred so for this year I'm assuming we would have to come up with about fifty.

PALMER: Yeah, and we'll play that down a ways it's like all these other positions I want to see where we are because personnel services you may not even fill some of those positions so, but as we play down towards you know, you'll see it probably in September/October where we will start to have to make those transfers but yeah, we would take it out of unreserved funds.

REYNOLDS: We're always short staffed so like he said, often you can absorb that in your personnel budget.

DOTY: Short staffed is short staffed everywhere. Will this situation create stealing back and forth of current employees and create unrest on two fronts, not just the jail but –

PALMER: Why would it create this?

DOTY: Well, are we kind of appealing to the same workers?

PALMER: To some extent but not nearly as much as you might think.

DOTY: Maybe I should ask it in a different way, are pay scales in line so that we don't create problems for two different services?

PALMER: Again, the pay scales are determined by the union contract so the amount paid is already defined but these positions would be LPN's almost everybody else needs RN's. Public Health needs Public Health RN nurse, you know if we hire nurses somewhere else they are almost always RN's and Dave believes he can get by with LPN's so we're not competing directly with other departments here but we are competing with the outside market.

REYNOLDS: So as a county, we don't pay as much as some other places but our benefits are pretty good.

DOTY: Thank you.

PALMER: So you need a resolution authorizing two LPN positions and a third, per diem LPN position that would be used on a part-time basis. We are going to have to come up with the funding, I may revise that before it gets to regular as to how much exactly we need.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING TWO, LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE (LPN) POSITIONS AND ONE, PER DIEM LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE (LPN) POSITION IN THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT. Harrington, Holzer

McNALLY: Questions, concerns? All in favor, opposed – carried.

REYNOLDS: So to piggyback on that I would like a resolution of appreciation to ECH because again, they've been an amazing partner for us. They have filled in every gap we've ever needed. The CNO, Julie Tromblee has bent over backwards for us. She did not want to send that letter saying she couldn't provide the services and Victoria Savage who has been our liaison for the jail has personally come and worked shifts so that our staff could have time off so if it's possible, a resolution of appreciation.

RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION TO THE ELIZABETHTOWN COMMUNITY HOSPITAL AND CHIEF NURSING OFFICER, JULIE TROMBLEE FOR YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE AND PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ESSEX COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE. Harrington, unanimous

REYNOLDS: And the last thing, May 2, at the full board meeting I would just like everybody to know that the New York State Sheriff's Association is going to be here to present the Sheriff's Office/Correctional Facility our accreditation certificate and plaque. Essex County has never been an accredited facility, any of the guys that have worked in a correctional facility know how complicated that is. That's a huge feather in our cap so they want to come up from Albany and present us with that award I just want to let you guys know that that's going to be here and get that on the agenda.

McNALLY: Wonderful.

HUGHES: Congratulations.

MONTY: Congratulations.

McNALLY: Anybody else?

PALMER: Is it still true that if you get put in jail and you have private health insurance it doesn't get – we still have to pay?

REYNOLDS: So, it's my understanding private health insurance will still pay for the inmate. Medicaid, Medicare is only for the first 30 days so once, if you're on Medicare/Medicaid after the first 30 days we can no longer bill them and it falls back on us and we pay cash. We pay the Medicare/Medicaid rates.

PALMER: But we still have to pay it. Jails have become medical and mental health facilities and it's the reality of what we have to deal with. Honestly, we are going to have mental health in here probably next week, looking for more therapists because they are receiving six or seven mental health referrals a day right now. The only saving grace about the mental health facility is that we get the bill for that service even if we have to hire somebody we at least can put in billable hours for that time but with the jail there just no billable hours really to get at so we are left holding the bag for some of these costs you wouldn't normally have to do.

McNALLY: This is just for Essex County?

REYNOLDS: Just for the local inmates so if you're a Federal inmate or housing for somebody else they pay the bills no matter what it is.

SCOZZAFAVA: Dan, I was reading over the weekend so the aide that goes back to the counties,

the counties are no longer going to have to pay that?

PALMER: Yeah, the AIM payments but we're still going to have to pay the hospital fund.

GILLILLAND: No that was cut.

PALMER: Did they cut that because that was in right up until –

GILLILLAND: Yes, I looked on the Empire Report and that was cut so we don't have to pay that.

SCOZZAFAVA: So the AIM payment that was significant.

PALMER: Yeah, that was like \$368,000.

SCOZZAFAVA: So, could that money that we budgeted for be used for some of these positions?

PALMER: Well, certainly it's all within the context of the overall budget whatever our, if we get more sales tax then we would have more sales tax to apply towards these kinds of things.

SCOZZAFAVA: Thank you.

McNALLY: Anything else?

TYLER: I'd like to move a resolution of congratulations for the Essex County Sheriff and the Department getting accredited. It's a heck of an achievement that's for sure.

RESOLUTION OF CONGRATULATIONS TO THE ESSEX COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE AND STAFF ON THEIR ACCREDITATION FROM THE NEW YORK STATE SHERIFF'S ASSOCIATION. Tyler, unanimous

REYNOLDS: So I plan at full board, there was a group of four people who did all the work, the entire jail does an amazing job.

PALMER: You didn't do anything? *(laughter)*

REYNOLDS: Everybody that works in the jail make sure we are accredited but there was a group of about four people who have to document everything and that's the hardest part is documentation. So we've been really good about being a really good correctional facility. We do everything we're supposed to do; we do it the right way. The hardest part is documenting it and showing, proving to the assessors that if there's a policy about medication, that you're following those policies and they came for a two-day period, seven of them and we did a good job.

MONTY: It is quite a process, a huge process.

McNALLY: Okay, thank you very much.

REYNOLDS: Thank you.

McNALLY: Public Defender is not here. Conflict Defender, Miriam Hadden.

HADDEN: Good morning. I do not have a report today but I am here if anyone has any questions.

McNALLY: Does anyone have anything for Miriam? If not, thank you. Anything else in front of the public safety committee?

MONTY: I'm just, I'm wondering, I was reading a report that came out from the Auditors office, it seems like we, our District Attorney we don't prosecute many it seems like a lot of those are being farmed out to others bringing a lot of people, when we do go to trial it seems like there's a lot more that we're paying out to people to come in and prosecute those and I noticed also I can't think of what his position is Justin Meyer?

PALMER: Yeah, the Assigned Counsel Coordinator.

MONTY: What exactly has he been doing?

PALMER: Well, supposedly he is going to be reviewing applications and determining eligibility but it's clearly not working real well right now those applications are for whatever reason are not getting to him. Typically what happens there is so much pressure on a Judge when, you can't hold an arraignment without an attorney so if an attorney is in the room that Judge is going to assign that to them and then the application is supposed to go in after because you're supposed to make that determination, after you've provided the individual with an attorney at the arraignment that individual then is supposed to fill out an application and get approved for any further court appearances that may occur and I'm not sure that's getting done. I think what's happening is they're getting an assigned Judge for the arraignment and it kind of just continues so you know, again I'm not sure but I think, I know they started that discussion with Justin so hopefully they will get this process down better.

GILLILLAND: The Assigned Counsel Administrator that position is being paid for through the State right?

PALMER: Yeah, it is paid through the grant.

GILLILLAND: And that is a requirement from the State to have Assigned Counsel so it's another one of those top down from the State saying you've got to have one for a system that they haven't figured out whether it works or not.

PALMER: Yeah.

MONTY: My concern is that we're paying him to do the job, he should be the one doing the job and not others. Still if somebody else is paying him, he's got to work for somebody.

GILLILLAND: I understand. I think we went out to bid for that? Dan did we go out to bid for that?

PALMER: We did.

GILLILLAND: He was the only one if I remember correctly.

PALMER: Yeah, it is and I think hopefully it's more of a communication thing than it is just not doing it but I think we need to kind of get that message out to courts that they need to get those applications up to him.

McNALLY: Alright, Board of Elections – Sue, did you have something to add?

MONTGOMERY-COREY: I did. I was able to look at the State Board of Elections political calendar for the year and the deadline for the petitions is August 8, three months before the General election.

McNALLY: Thank you Sue. Anybody else? If not, we are adjourned.

As there was no further discussion to come before this Public Safety committee it was adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Garrison, Clerk
Board of Supervisors