PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
Monday, August 10, 2026 - 9:30 AM

Kenneth Hughes, Chairperson
Davina Thurston, Vice-Chairperson

Chairperson Hughes called this Public Safety Committee to order at 9:30 am with the following Supervisors in attendance: Clayton Barber, Chris Clark, Kenneth Hughes, Mary Lamphear, Tracie McGill, Steve McNally, Clayton Menser, James O'Bryan, Timothy Pierce, Richard Preston, Cathleen Reusser, Matthew Stanley, Davina Thurston and Michael Tyler. Matthew Brassard was absent. Timothy Follos, Joe Pete Wilson and Meg Wood were excused.

Department Heads present: Jim Dougan, Josh Favro, Judy Garrison, Mary McGowan Mike Mascarenas, Heather Sheehan and David Reynolds. Miriam Hadden, Eric Weyand and Dan Woods were excused.

Also present: Michael LaVallie, Jen Fifield and Shannon Doyle.

HUGHES: Good morning everyone. The time is 9:31, I would like to call this public safety meeting to order, please rise to salute the flag. Good morning welcome to the public safety committee and guests welcome to the committee meeting. We are going to start the morning off with the Veterans' affairs Supervisor Pierce, Supervisor Menser comments on your report this morning to the committee? Anything you would like to add?

PIERCE: Nothing new to report, not much going on. I noted there was a shortage of coupons for the Farmer's Markets but they expect to have some more to come in and they have a list of people who are requesting them.

HUGHES: Okay thank you for that. Mr. Menser anything?

MENSER: No I went over and talked to them this morning and it's been a quieter month.

HUGHES: Okay again, I think I've said this before it's been really nice to have a report some data in front of us, it gives us a heads up on what's going on with a really important department in this county so thank you very much I appreciate you both.
Moving on now to Mr. Woods County Sealer. He is excused today and so we will go right into Board of Elections, Mary McGowan and Roy Holzer.

MCGOWAN: Good morning everyone. You have our report and highlights really would be June election we did an audit and everything was done perfectly. We are preparing for a cyber security workshop that's coming up and that will include technology, misinformation, mail handling and threats.
Next is we are preparing for the State board of Elections conference and that's at the end of the month. We are searching for new poll sites in Ticonderoga and Saranac Lake. We did find one in Ticonderoga at the North Country Community College that's an excellent location and in Saranac Lake we are doing the same thing at the college but the facility they gave us the gymnasium will be having basketball games going on while we are trying to do elections so that's not quite ideal so we're trying to finetune that application.
Poll worker training is coming up. We haven't set the date yet but that looks like it will be happening in September. If you have any people that are interested in being poll workers please have them

each out to us and last but not least is the voter registration issue that happened in New Jersey I just wanted to let you all know it does not happen here so if you have any questions on that.

TYLER: I'm just curious, are you aware if New York City gets the same kind of training on the security of elections?

MCGOWAN: Can you repeat the question I'm sorry.

TYLER: The people that run elections in New York City do they get the same kind of training?

MCGOWAN: Each little area is a little different.

TYLER: I'm sure they are.

MCGOWAN: The State wants to have mandated training that we have to follow. We have guidelines and all of that but actually how it is presented is up to us so we're looking at state mandated training is on the horizon and it is coming.

TYLER: Thank you.

MENSER: Is New York State a voter ID mandated state or not?

MCGOWAN: That's a good question. When a person registers to vote we don't necessarily look at identification they sign a statement stating that they know that it's a felony that if they misrepresent themselves and that is perjury is what it is.

MENSER: But they don't have to show ID every time they vote or anything like that?

MCGOWAN: Not at all. When they come into vote you have those poll pads, on the poll pad I would say, show identification that we need to see it then we'll need to see it but if they've been voting for the last whatever it's not going to ask to show their identification a lot of times being in small towns like this everybody knows everybody and so when somebody comes in oh, hey Joe come on in and vote whether you have his name on their practically, they know where they live, they know –

MENSER: I'm not concerned in Crown Point because the poll workers, if they don't know it is because you just moved into town but for statewide I was curious because it could get real bizarre.

MCGOWAN: No it's just they sign that statement saying that it is and it's perjury if they are misrepresenting themselves. We also verify their signature on that poll pad when they do sign into vote it has to match what's there if it doesn't they have to sign it again and if it doesn't match the second time, then they will be given an affidavit ballot that's when we can prove who they are and that is really them. When you register to vote you are probably 18, you sign it in your 18-year-old signature well, now they are turning a little bit older your signature may not match, maybe you had a stroke or something like that we can see progression of signature changes but we can't if it's that crackly we don't allow a person to vote they have to do an affidavit.

TYLER: Just real quick, is there any statistics on anybody who actually went to court on falsifying their documents and voted?

MCGOWAN: That I don't know. I haven't witnessed that here in this area but I'm not sure. Jen? Do you have the history on that?

FIFIELD: No I know it has happened in other counties where people have gone to court but not here. We have investigated a few people here but it hasn't gone anywhere.

TYLER: Again I'm not concerned about our county.

HUGHES: Mary I have a quick question about the two topics you brought up the cyber security and poll worker training. The cyber security workshop you are planning on attending in Queensbury is the information that you received from that, is that for staff and you to be smarter or is that for you to turnkey information out to the public to let the public know what you're learning and doing?

MCGOWAN: It could be both ways. It's mostly for us internal training to make sure that our systems are up to date and IT is also coming with us.

HUGHES: Perfect, that's great to know as well and then the second thing you brought up was the poll worker training certainly I know Davina is probably going to ask this question too but anything we can use to help disseminate that information with an image or infographic or something like that on our social media feeds or posters just so we could push that out that would be great.

MCGOWAN: We can do that.

HUGHES: Any other questions for Mary this morning on the board of elections report? Thank you so much. Have a great day.
The District Attorney is excused. I do not see him in the room so we'll now move onto Josh Favro and Emergency Services.

FAVRO: You have our monthly report are there any questions on that I can help you with?

HUGHES: Any questions for Mr. Favro this morning on his monthly report? Not right yet.

FAVRO: On the back side of the report you'll see a vehicle replacement plan just to take note that's put together so we can more efficiently start replacing our vehicles, plan a little bit better for that. If anybody has any questions feel free ask or email and I will be more than happy to answer. I don't have any resolutions this month believe it or not.

HUGHES: Any questions on the vehicle replacement plan or any other part of the report that Josh and his department put together for today? There's a lot there so probably need some time to digest and certainly connect with him. Mr. Stanley you had something this morning as part of the committee?

STANLEY: I do. While Mr. Favro is up there if we could get a resolution of appreciation for a long time Jay resident and Emergency Services employee Lee Torrance for his dedication and professional services to the residents of Essex County as Fire and EMS Coordinator, Fire Investigator with the Office of Emergency Services. Lee has faithfully served Essex County since 2005.

RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION TO LEE TORRANCE FOR HIS DEDICATION AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES TO THE RESIDENTS OF ESSEX COUNTY AS FIRE AND EMS COORDINATOR AND FIRE INVESTIGATOR WITH THE OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES. Stanley, unanimous

HUGHES: Thank you very much for bringing that forward Mr. Stanley.

FAVRO: Thank you.

HUGHES: Anything else for Mr. Favro this morning and his comprehensive report? Thank you sir have a great day. Moving onto Sheriff Reynolds.

SHERIFF REYNOLDS: So you have my report, if you have any questions I can answer anything on that.

HUGHES: Any questions for the Sheriff this morning on his report?

SHERIFF REYNOLDS: One thing that I do want to point out is our revenue has increased and that's based solely off how many Feds we can house in our local population is down a little bit so we are able to house in a few more Feds and it's not reflected in this number right now but Mike helped me I don't want to say pushed through the new contract with the Feds but it's basically a $30 dollar a day raise so going forward instead of $58,000 it will be an additional $18,000 so we should be in good shape as long as our local population stays low.

HUGHES: Sheriff I have a question, what would happen if our local population did rise back up again would we move the Feds out those Federal inmates out and they would chose another location or we would say you have to leave?

SHERIFF REYNOLDS: Yes. We need to have what we can manage safely.

HUGHES: Understood.

SHERIFF REYNOLDS: So if that means getting rid of Feds we call and they would come and get them or we would bring them the next day.

HUGHES: Okay to some other location?

SHERIFF REYNOLDS: Yes.

HUGHES: Great, thank you.

PIERCE: Who sets that limit? Is that set by the State?

SHERIFF REYNOLDS: It is set by what we can comfortable do, so six months ago we had a lot of mental health patients in our facility so it limited how many people we could hold so it's a population if we're under 70 that is manageable once we get above that you're crowding people into spaces because you have to classify everybody, they can't be together so there's the supervisors that have come through have seen where one person may take up between four or six cells so we're in a good spot right now where that's not the case. We still have some issues but we manage that number. It changes tomorrow it could be different.

So I have a couple resolutions. The first one is to go out to bid for an electronic health program for the medical department.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZNG THE PURCHASING AGENT TO GO OUT TO BID FOR AN ELECTRIC HEALTH RECORDS PROGRAM FOR THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT. Menser, Thurston

HUGHES: Questions or concerns on this resolution? All in favor aye, opposed – carried.

SHERIFF REYNOLDS: And the second item I didn't actually submit a request but I spoke with Linda and Mike. We budgeted for two patrol vehicles and it came in about $8500 above what I budgeted so I'm going to need to transfer money from somewhere else.

MASCARENAS: Yeah, this is more of a housekeeping item. My authority stops at $5,000 to be able to sign off on so anything over five, this is eight I'm guessing probably the upfit much like we dealt with in Emergency Services we'll take that into account for next year's budget cycle but it will be budgeted funds still it will just be transferred from a different line item that we'll either not be able to do or find money somewhere else to do it from so it's not an addition to the budget it's simply moving a budget line item to cover the costs of the bidded vehicle.

SHERIFF REYNOLDS: Two vehicles.

HUGHES; Okay we'll have more details than that at ways and means can I get a motion here.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A BUDGET TRANSFER IN THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE IN THE AMOUNT OF $8,500.00, TO COVER UPFITTING COSTS OF TWO NEW VEHICLES. Thurston, Menser

HUGHES: Any questions or concerns on this resolution?

PIERCE: I just wanted to clarify that is two vehicles or it would be $8500 each?

MASCARENAS: Yeah, it's both vehicles totally $8500 above the $150,000 so it's $158,000 something it will be specifically written in the resolution for ways and means but it is both vehicles totally one-fifty-eight and some change he had one-hundred fifty budgeted we've got to move it from a different line item.

HUGHES: Any other questions on this resolution? All in favor aye, opposed – carried.

THURSTON: Can you tell us what's going on, is the big murder trial still happening? Has it been finalized?

SHERIFF REYNOLDS: It's still going on. The prosecution has rested their case I believe so it started at 9:00 he's either going to testify or they'll rest their case and go deliberations so I don't know.

THURSTON: So that should be wrapped up soon then?

SHERIFF REYNOLDS: I would say in the next day or two.

THURSTON: Thank you.

MENSER: I spoke to Sheriff Reynolds about this and I think it's something the entire board should understand side by sides, 4-wheelers driving on the main roads in different towns I don't know how it is affecting the other towns but I'm seeing a great deal in Crown Point it's like people instead of buying a car are buying a side by sides and treating it as if it is a car and they are not insured, they are not registered, they don't have turn signals they don't have some cases break lights anything I think it's a problem.

HUGHES: Yeah this comment came up in prior years to the Sheriff and to this committee about the concerns I think it was in Willsboro and Chesterfield there was questions and concerns that were brought up.

SHERIFF REYNOLDS: Like I mentioned to Mr. Menser, it's very complicated you know we talked about this before just because you put a triangle on your side by side doesn't make it road legal it can't be on the road period. As far as enforcement it becomes very complicated when it's a juvenile or if somebody wants to run our policy is we are not going to chance because if something happens bad I'm the one that's getting sued the county is not getting sued so I don't want to put it out there but if people are going to run we are not going to chase you. If we catch you, if you're being respectful I think most people are probably not going to get a ticket they will get a warning. It's the kids that go by on their dirt bikes popping a wheelie and giving the middle finger but then again, we can't chase them if they are wearing a helmet it's hard to prove who they were and if they are underage then they can't receive a ticket then you have lawn mowers that are riding on the road and golf carts.

REUSSER: Sounds like my town.

SHERIFF REYNOLDS: It's every town that's the problem.

STANLEY: I'm going to beat Mr. Tyler to this but I'm surprised New York State hasn't made a class to register them just to get extra money at those rates if people had to register them it would cut down on 90% of these because they are technically road legal, correct? Like, there is no class to register them in because you brought us that whole form about what is an ATV, what is a Side by Side and all those things.

MCNALLY: I believe all of these are registered and they can get all registered in Vermont because there is a restriction on them that make people wait so what people do is they register them in Vermont so if you see a Side by Side –

SHERIFF REYNOLDS: It doesn't make them legal in New York State though.

MCNALLY: No.

CLARK: I know I'm not on this committee but would it be possible for the Sheriff to send us out the packet he gave us before on the Side by Sides? I printed up a bunch of those and put them all over and I'd like to do it again it doesn't help but it makes me feel better.

BARBER: So again in Chesterfield now they are starting to – even the State which the State Police are starting to give out tickets in Chesterfield so I'm wondering if the county is even considering about posting certain roads for ATV you can use classification? I went to Loon Lake probably a month ago stayed at a camp, we had state police actually go by us and we were on roads that were designated where you can use ATV's and there was quite a few there where they didn't bother us, we were going one way, they were coming the other way didn't stop us so I know Clinton County, Franklin County has a bunch of roads that are classified as you can use ATV's.

MASCARENAS: We haven't we'll get with Jimmy we can only certainly classify our own roads a lot of roads in towns are town owned. We certainly can't touch state roads but we can certainly have that conversation and try to clarify that. I think another issue is the E-bikes which are relatively a new phenomenon where you're seeing people utilize those as vehicles and they fly some of them, some of them go quite fast.

BARBER: We see more youths going with E-bikes and not abiding by the laws.

MASCARENAS: Yeah I've saw less motorbikes this summer and more E-bikes than I did last summer.

O'BRYAN: I think over the last few days there was young person killed in Plattsburgh on an E-bike.

SHERIFF REYNOLDS: I haven't' educated myself on those totally but there are laws in place but they are more for bigger cities. The laws haven't caught up with the technology.

HUGHES: That usually happens.

MCNALLY: I know a lot of stations confiscate bikes and then they have auctions. I know Albany confiscate bikes they just take the dirt bikes.

BARBER: The one person that got a ticket actually came into my office and said that the state is just trying to generate revenue by giving them tickets and they just classify it as no registration, being on the highway illegally and charging them $135, $185 was the fine that this person got.

REUSSER: I had the pleasure of information from the Sheriff on several occasions this topic and we still got confusion. There's a lot of parents out there with children that have no idea that these are the rules and so public education is valuable and that may curb some problems.

MENSER: I've got a State Trooper who is doing it.

HUGHES: Any other questions for the Sheriff this morning? Sheriff, thank you have a great day. Coroners – no report from them. We'll move onto Heather Sheehan and the Probation Department.

SHEEHAN: Happy Monday everybody. You have my report. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have and I don't have any resolutions for today.

HUGHES: Any questions for Heather on her report or Probation office? I guess not, you're all set. Have a good month, thank you. Public Defender is excused they did provide a report which is much appreciated thanks to them and also the Conflict Defender is also excused I don't see a report here provided if you have questions for either of those individuals or their departments please contact them directly. Is there anything else for this committee this morning? We're adjourned.

As there was no further discussion to come before this Public Safety Committee it was adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Garrison, Clerk
Board of Supervisors