

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

April 11, 2006 – 3:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Chairman Lawler; Supervisors Grattidge, Janik, M. Johnson, Trottier, Gutheil; Wood; Spencer Hellwig, Mgmt. Analyst; Paul Lent, Ed Tremblay, Emergency Services; Jim Murphy, D.A.; Bob Murphy, STOP-DWI Coordinator; Wes Carr, Youth Bureau; Paul Viscusi, Probation; Tom McCabe, Capital Digitronics; Craig Coon, Nuisance Wildlife Specialist; Press

Chairman Lawler called the meeting to order.

Mr. Grattidge moved to approve the minutes of the March 14th meeting. Mr. Janik seconded. Unanimous.

Copies of the Sheriff's Report for March were distributed to the Committee.

Mr. J. Murphy stated a number of Supervisors have called his office looking for the agenda for the Crime Victims' Rights Week and what we are doing in Saratoga County. He said he will put the list of activities in each Supervisor's mailbox, and he distributed copies to the Committee. He said they will be awarding the Public Service Award to Vicki Merola who has retired from his office and whose daughter was killed recently on Route 9. He mentioned this is the 25th anniversary of Crime Victims' Rights Week. You are all invited to the events. There will be a Candlelight Vigil on Sunday, April 23rd at 2:00 p.m. at the Presbyterian New England Congregation Church in Saratoga Springs.

Mr. Carr said each year, the Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives requests us to send in an Alternative To Incarceration Service Plan Update. He distributed copies to the Committee and stated this plan was approved by the Criminal Justice Advisory Council. He requested **approval of this plan and to accept State funds in the amount of \$37,500 for the Community Work Order Program and the Pre-Trial Services Program.** Mr. Carr said this State aid will offset the costs of the programs, and it is included in the 2006 budget. **Mrs. Johnson moved to approve the Plan and acceptance of \$37,500. Mr. Grattidge seconded. Unanimous.**

Mr. B. Murphy distributed copies of the 2006 STOP DWI Program Budget in the amount of \$391,867. He said last fall, we got our budget accepted, and then we send a narrative to the State, and then they approve it. The reason we wait until April for a resolution is because all of our revenue does not come in to us until the middle to the end of March. He said in 2005, our revenue was the best we've had in the last 10 years due to the extreme cooperation of our Traffic Safety Board. We are very proactive, he said. He said that Board meets the first Monday of each month. We are now going into an extremely proactive season for DWI with proms, graduations, etc.

Chairman Lawler said the money that is directed towards individual agencies has to be used for additional DWI enforcement. It is not used to supplement operating expenses. Mr. B. Murphy said in addition to this, we give an additional 16 hours of overtime money to the police agencies that goes towards DWI patrols.

Mr. B. Murphy stated on March 17th, there was a Safe Spring program at Skidmore College. He said this was attended by 400 kids from all of our high schools.

Mr. Janik moved to accept the 2006 STOP DWI Program Budget. Mrs. Johnson seconded. Unanimous.

Mr. Lent distributed copies of his monthly report. He said with regard to radio parts, all items have been requested, and P.O.'s have been cut. We anticipate they will be here shortly, he said. He stated the contractor has begun tower work at both Spruce Mountain and Providence. Some of the things we found were not as bad as we first thought. We are on track to get this done the middle of next week, but that is weather dependent, he stated.

Mr. Lent said he was requested to put together a preventative maintenance package as an addendum to a current program we have. He said he attached a copy of that to his report. He said he has reviewed that with Capital Digitronics, and we will make that an addendum to our current contract which will cost \$400 per quarter. He said this will provide a snapshot of the performance of the system and also provide a track of the performance of the system. It encompasses all parts of our system that really can be checked for preventative maintenance, he said. He said the benefit of this is that we will now have a series of factual events we can look at as they are logged in relative to the performance of the system.

Chairman Lawler requested Mr. Lent to come back in 4 to 5 months from now to let the Committee know if the program needs any fine tuning, to make sure we are getting the data we need, or if it identifies any parts or equipment that may have fallen between the cracks.

Mr. Grattidge asked about access to Spruce Mountain in the winter time. Does the County have a plan other than using the Sheriff's snowmobile? Mr. McCabe stated they have their own snowmobile, but the biggest issue is getting the test equipment up there without it bouncing all over. Mr. Lent said we talked about the County obtaining its own test equipment that Capital Digitronics would use up at Spruce Mountain so that it would not be banging around on the snowmobile. He said the testing equipment could cost around \$5,000. Chairman Lawler requested Mr. Lent to get an estimate on that for the Committee to vote on.

Mr. Grattidge asked if the Providence tower was accessible year round. Mr. Lent said yes, but we may have to look at limiting access on that road. There seems to be an enormous amount of activity up there that should be looked at, and that is a concern to him. He said neighbors across the street usually let them know when activity is going on. Mr. Trottier asked what additional measures could be taken. Mr. Lent said he has been talking to Rick Gardner about it. Chairman Lawler requested Mr. Lent to find out what needs to be done to adequately secure that site.

Mr. Lent stated last month, the Committee extended the services of Blue Wing. They have been very active here in the past, he said. We have had an additional meeting with the APA people, and it went well. We are looking to put together a package that the APA will find acceptable and will work, he said. We have hit upon common threads and goals, he added. Chairman Lawler said our objective is to come back here no later than June with what we will place before the APA for their consideration. That work is moving forward very aggressively, he said.

Mr. Lent said he will be approaching the Committee within the next month with a request from FEMA and the State Emergency Management Office to look at a resolution on the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and adoption of a policy we would embrace. He said the reason is, we believe at the next federal fiscal year, in order to continue to get Homeland Security, we would have to be on board with that resolution. He stated it is a housekeeping measure more than anything, and he will bring it forward next month.

Chairman Lawler requested Mr. Lent to give a copy of that to the Committee members as soon as possible.

Chairman Lawler said Mr. Lent, Mr. Tremblay and he met with the Fire Advisory Board to give them a synopsis of where we are. Mrs. Johnson said she attended their meetings last year, and they do sometimes feel they are being left out. Chairman Lawler said we are going to do what they need us to do. Mr. Tremblay said they were very happy with the information they got.

Mr. Trottier asked Mr. Lent if he had a minimum or maximum timeframe in between seasons for preventative maintenance. Mr. Lent said the typical preventative maintenance is done annually. I decided to get a little more aggressive with it, he said. He stated he believes quarterly is reasonable. Maybe when we get a history behind us, we will have more factual basis to bring forward a recommendation, he added. Mr. McCabe mentioned if you start doing tests too often, Dispatch does not like it. We have to work around them, he said.

Mr. Tremblay distributed copies of and reviewed the March Fire Services Report.

Mrs. Johnson asked how many bidders there were for the specs on the burn building. Mr. Tremblay stated one bidder showed up. There were 9 spec packages requested, he said. Three different companies were very interested. I am sure we will be expecting something from them, he said.

Mr. Viscusi stated they were awarded a grant of \$21,100 from the Division of Criminal Justice Services, as they made application to defray expenses for a Management Information System known as Prober-Web software, and necessary hardware and personal computers for the Probation staff. This upgrade will improve efficiency, productivity and data management. He said the State Division of Probation is recommending all counties have it. He said 22 counties have it now. He said the whole system is \$51,000+. The main reason we want this is because we are swimming in paperwork, and we are not very automated at all, he said. This system helps make life easier for the Probation Officer. We are supervising 1,200 people. Every three months, they have to write a report on them, and they hand write them. When they do an investigative on people, they did 1,100 reports for the courts in this County that were hand written. This system will save some steps, he said. He stated they collected \$160,914 in restitution last year. All of that is done typing the check

face and recording it. This system is supposed to take care of all of that. He said he has checked with people who have this system. It is labor intensive, but once you get the hang of it, it saves time.

Mrs. Johnson asked if this was a totally new system, and Mr. Viscusi said yes. Mr. Trottier asked what the annual maintenance fee is, and Mr. Viscusi said \$5,500/yr. Chairman Lawler asked how many computers would have access to this. Mr. Viscusi said now, they have 10. This price includes computers for everyone, he said. He said this will give them the capacity to put a client's photo on the report for the judge.

Chairman Lawler asked if the Auditor was in the loop on this. Mr. Viscusi said they handle reports themselves. Mr. Hellwig said the Treasurer's Office monitors those departments that handle cash. Mr. Viscusi said the actual records will be in a server the company has. Chairman Lawler said because they are handling secure documents, have we looked at their security procedures? He said there is a SAS70 standard accounting adopted by CPA's. He advised Mr. Viscusi to ask them if they have one. If we are submitting confidential information to an outside party, we want to be comfortable they are handling this professionally, he said. Mr. Viscusi said this is the only one the Division of Probation is sanctioning. He said he would mention it to the consultant. **Mrs. Johnson moved to accept this grant of \$21,100. Mr. Trottier seconded. Unanimous.**

Craig Coon, aka, Adirondack Dundee, wanted to inform the Committee that the Animal Shelter is going to be obtaining nuisance wildlife control licenses for the purpose of retrieving sick, injured, orphaned, and nuisance wildlife from taxpayers' private properties and possible from inside their homes. This raises some concerns as to the County's liability when it comes to such actions, he said. He pointed out the original resolution (Res. 439 of 1977) that created the Shelter mentions that the Shelter is to handle dogs and cats. He believes the spirit of the resolution would include all domestics and not wildlife. This resolution, since 1977, has never been amended by the Board of Supervisors to include wildlife, he said.

Mr. Coon stated there is not a public need for this. There are many options for the handling and treatment of nuisance wildlife. There is a group of individuals out there who are rehabbers to handle sick, orphaned, injured wildlife. One of these groups is north country wild care who are a group of licensed rehabbers that have an entire network to handle these issues with wildlife, he said. He stated he

was informed that the Shelter has their number but has never been in contact with them for any reason. He pointed out there are other options for nuisance wildlife -- Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators (NWCO), which is he one, who are trained, experienced, and licensed by the State.

Chairman Lawler said do we want to get into the wildlife animal control business? There are concerns we need to talk about before we go ahead and get into that business, he said. Mr. Hellwig said Mr. Wickerham informed Mr. Coon that he would receive a written response to his letter. That is what we are working on with the County Attorney, he said. I will share this information with the Committee before the next meeting, he said.

Mrs. Johnson asked where this interest is coming from. Mr. Hellwig stated the Shelter went out and picked up an animal. The County is interested in public safety, but this will have to be a policy decision, he said. Chairman Lawler said we need to ask questions and get some answers.

Mr. Coon said most county governments rely on their ACO's. Mr. Lawler said he wouldn't want his ACO going into somebody's house in search of a rabid animal.

Mr. Grattidge said he talked to NYS DOT concerning traffic lights especially during power outages. He said DOT has a program where they will work with a municipality with a generator at the State's expense. They are trying a new battery back-up system, and our light will be the first the State will try, he said. He said it is supposed to run the light for 12 hours. I will get this information together for each Supervisor, he said.

On a motion by Mr. Trottier, seconded by Mr. Janik, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine M. Sodemann