

Public Safety Committee Minutes
November 12, 2019 – 3:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Bill Peck; Committee Members, Phil Barrett, Darren O'Connor, Scott Ostrander, Tim Szczepaniak, Tom Wood; Supervisors Tara Gaston, Alan Grattidge, Ed Kinowski, Jean Raymond; Spencer Hellwig, County Administrator; Steve Dorsey, County Attorney; Rick Castle, Sheriff; Karen Heggen, District Attorney; Steve Bayle, Probation; Ed Tremblay, Emergency Services; Andrew Blumenberg, Public Defender; J. Wes Carr, STOP DWI; Craig Hayner, County Clerk.

Chairman Peck called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

On a motion made by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Ostrander, the minutes of the October 8, 2019 meeting were approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Barrett, seconded by Mr. O'Connor, to authorize a contract with Xybix in the amount of \$27,960 for installation of 911 consoles. Unanimous.

Mr. Castle said that this is for the 911 consoles in the new Public Safety Facility.

A motion was made by Mr. Barrett, seconded by Mr. Ostrander, to authorize the acceptance of a Crimes Against Revenue Program grant from the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services in the amount of \$118,900 to offset salaries in the DA's office. Unanimous.

Mrs. Heggen said that this is a renewal of a grant that her office has received for the past 4 years. The funds will be used to offset the salary cost of the equivalent of one full time prosecutor. Mrs. Heggen said that this is split between two attorneys who work on cases where people have obtained funds from government entities that they are not entitled to. Those entities include the Department of Tax & Finance, Social Services and the Department of Labor. Last year a little under \$200K was ordered in restitution to these entities. They also work with the fraud unit at the County Department of Social Services. Last year they identified 53 cases for disqualification of future benefits due to abuse of the system.

A motion was made by Mr. Barrett, seconded by Mr. O'Connor, to implore the State to amend or delay the implementation of bail and discovery reform laws. Unanimous.

Mrs. Heggen distributed a draft resolution which was initially drafted by Warren County. Mrs. Heggen said that this is regarding the criminal justice reforms that are scheduled to become part of legislation on January 1st. Mrs. Heggen said that the stakeholders in the criminal justice system at large were not consulted before this was passed by the NYS Legislature. There has been an enhanced look in the past few weeks about the types of crimes where bail will not be able to be set. Bail reform laws have taken away the discretion of the judges as to which types of crimes bail can be set for. There is a list for those which they can and cannot be set. All misdemeanors that are not domestic violence or sexually related are the types of crimes for which bail cannot be sought or set. The cases that can be included are violent felony crimes. The ramifications are the

risks that are enhanced towards victims of crime. There are several resolves in the draft resolution for the Board to consider. One is to give Judges the ability to impose bail when they believe it is important, another is to increase the discovery time frames from 15 days to a minimum of 45 days. Mr. Barrett said that he has heard that this is a bipartisan issue. Mr. Barrett said that this is part of the continued decriminalization effort that is occurring in NYS. The stated goal is to eradicate the prison system altogether. The monetary and physical cost is borne by the local taxpayers having more criminals on the streets. Mrs. Heggen said that she participated in a press conference today with Sheriff Zurlo, Senator Tedisco, Assemblywoman Walsh, and Michael & Regina Stewart who are the parents of one of the two individuals killed on the Northway 6-7 years ago. The defendant's name is Dennis Drue. Mrs. Heggen said that under the current reform statutes, the charges for which Mr. Drue was charged and convicted would not qualify for bail. Mrs. Heggen said that the District Attorney's association and law enforcement do not deny that some changes are needed in the criminal justice system, however the speed at which this is trying to take place will have collateral consequences. Mrs. Heggen said that Senator Tedisco indicated it is possible that they will go back into session at the end of this year for other issues. Mr. Barrett said that he has been pushing out a lot of this information to Clifton Park residents and is finding out that a lot of people are not aware of these changes.

A motion was made by Mr. Szczepaniak, seconded by Mr. Ostrander, to authorize acceptance of a NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services grant for the Ignition Interlock Device Monitoring program in the amount of \$21,331.82. Unanimous.

Mr. Bayle said that the funds will be used to offset personnel costs to monitor these cases. There are approximately 65-70 interlock devices out for those on probation and between 325-350 for conditional discharge. The equipment itself and installation costs are paid for by the defendants.

A motion was made by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Ostrander, to authorize an agreement with Verizon to allow for the installation and maintenance of wireless equipment on the County's tower located in the Town of Providence. Unanimous.

Mr. Dorsey said that this is to improve cell phone service in the area. This is a 5 year license agreement with the option of renewal for 8 additional 5 year agreements with a 10% increase for each renewal period. The license fee is \$26,400 per year. Verizon would be responsible for getting all the required approvals from the Adirondack Park Agency.

A motion was made by Mr. Szczepaniak, seconded by Mr. O'Connor, to accept technology donations consisting of 3 tablets and 2 laptops from the New York State Association of Counties and the New York State Department of Health for use by the Coroner's Office. Unanimous.

Mr. Dorsey said that this is a joint project between the Center for Disease Control and NYS DOH. They are looking to upgrade the ability of County Coroners to electronically report deaths and are particularly looking to focus on recording opioid related deaths. They will also be used to report violent deaths and fatal vehicle accidents.

On a motion made by Mr. Szczepaniak, seconded by Mr. Barrett, the meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Therese Connolly
Deputy Clerk of the Board