

Public Safety Committee Minutes  
January 8, 2020– 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Bill Peck; Committee Members Preston Allen, John Lant, Jack Lawler, Darren O’Conner, Jean Raymond, Mo Wright; Supervisors Tara Gaston, Ed Kinowski and Chairman of the Board Preston Allen; Chad Cooke, County Administrator; Steve Dorsey, County Attorney; Carl Zeilman, Ed Tremblay, Emergency Services; Andrew Blumenberg, Public Defender; Susan Hayes-Masa, Coroner; Michael Zurlo, Sheriff; Karen Heggen, District Attorney; J. Wes Carr, STOP DWI; Penny Heritage, Animal Shelter; Craig Hayner, County Clerk; Barbara Thomas, League of Women Voters.

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

**On a motion made by Mr. Lawler, seconded by Mr. O'Connor, the minutes of the December 10, 2019 meeting were approved unanimously.**

Mr. Peck announced the appointment of Mr. Veitch as the Committee Vice-Chair.

**A motion was made by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Wright, to authorize the acceptance of a grant from the US Department of Transportation, Pipeline Hazardous Materials Safety Administration and the NYS Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services in the amount of \$5,172 and amending the budget in relation thereto. Unanimous.**

Mr. Zeilman said that the funds will be used for the Local Emergency Planning Committee’s annual full county exercise.

**A motion was made by Mrs. Raymond, seconded by Mr. Lant, to authorize the acceptance of a NYS 2019 Statewide Interoperable Communications grant in the amount of \$764,347 and amending the budget in relation thereto. Unanimous.**

Mr. Zeilman said that the funds will be used for the 911 system maintenance, replacement of some of the older generators at the towers, and to help outfit the new PSAP.

**A motion was made by Mr. Lawler, seconded by Mr. O'Connor, to authorize an agreement with Mission Critical Partners in the amount of \$63,200 for maintenance of the County's CAD system. Unanimous.**

Mr. Zeilman said that this agreement is for maintenance on the circuits and servers that provide services to the CAD and E911 system. This has been budgeted for 2020. This agreement alleviates County IT Department of the responsibility of these services. Mr. Lawler confirmed that this is a 24/7/365 response and that is also one of the reasons the County IT department is not used. Mr. Zeilman also said that Albany and Rensselaer Counties are partners on the CAD E911 system and are utilizing the same service.

**A motion was made by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. O'Connor, to authorize acceptance of a Counsel at First Appearance grant from the NYS Office of Indigent Legal Services in the amount of \$346,290.06 for the period from January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2022. Unanimous.**

Mr. Blumenberg said that the grant will cover the cost of two on call attorneys covering off hour arraignments for three years. Mr. Blumenberg said that this covers the cost of the stipend and the mileage but not the hourly rate for the arraignments.

**A motion was made by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Wright, to authorize an amendment to Resolution 286 of 2019 to revise the on-call payment schedule for counsel at first arraignment attorneys. Unanimous.**

Mr. Blumenberg said that the original resolution did not include the 11 Saratoga County holidays. Mr. Blumenberg requested that holidays be treated as weekend days with \$250/day stipend. Mr. Cooke said that ILS has already approved the change.

**A motion was made by Mr. Lant, seconded by Mrs. Raymond, to authorize a renewal agreement with NMS Labs for the period from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020 for postmortem toxicological services. Unanimous.**

Mrs. Hayes-Masa said that NMS labs perform the toxicology testing on all of the coroner cases. The renewal agreement represents an increase of 4%. There is a cap of \$50K on the agreement.

A discussion took place regarding bail reform. Mrs. Heggen said that it is too early yet to compile data regarding numbers of people being issued appearance tickets as opposed to being arraigned. Mr. Peck said that he would like the committee to get a sense of how the first week is going. Mrs. Heggen said that her office has been talking daily with the Sheriff. Many of the local Court Judges are still adapting to the new rules. Mrs. Heggen said that the law did not change that anyone charged with a D or higher felony must be arraigned, if they are arraigned they must be released unless it is a violent felony or otherwise qualifies for bail. Law enforcement is having difficulties arraigning people even though they have to be released. Mrs. Heggen said that her office now has to account for and provide full discovery in every single criminal case in this County. In less than a month, they have opened just shy of 300 new cases which accounts for around 1/3 of the local court cases. They are receiving 150-200 emails daily with information that must be processed back into cases and files. The workload from a paper prospective has dramatically increased for both the District Attorney and Sheriff. Mr. Zurlo said that for every call that comes in that is going to be a criminal or a vehicle and traffic case, a desk sergeant must download each call and listen to every recording from start to finish. Last night there were 28 requests alone. Mrs. Heggen said that her department is also required to handle discovery on vehicle and traffic matters. There were approximately 18K that happened in 2018. This task is currently impossible to handle. District Attorney's priorities at this point are felony cases, misdemeanor cases, cases with victims that have been injured or harmed. Mr. Peck said that he appreciates the cooperative work that is being done by both departments and will continue to monitor this. Mrs. Raymond said that this could prove to be an extremely large mandate with no funding. Eventually at some point all of the warrants will need to be prioritized by danger and will cause people to be taken off law enforcement to

become bounty hunters. Mr. Tremblay thanked Mrs. Heggen for meeting with the Fire Investigation Unit recently to go over the reports that will need to be provided and the timeframe they need to be provided in.

**On a motion made by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. O'Connor, the meeting was adjourned unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Therese Connolly  
Deputy Clerk of the Board