

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 29, 2022

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Wilson, Hogan, Haff, Hicks, O'Brien, Clary, Rozell

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

SUPERVISORS: Hall, Henke, Fedler, Nolan, Campbell, Skellie, Griffith

Debra Prehoda, Clerk

Roger Wickes, County Attorney

Melissa Fitch, County Administrator

AGENDA AS PRESENTED IN COMMITTEE NOTICE:

1. Call to Order
2. Accept Minutes – March 1, 2022
3. Department Reports/Requests:
 - A. Probation
 - 1) NYS Parole Rent
 - 2) Request for Intern/Job Shadow
 - 3) Request to Backfill – Probation Assistant
 - B. Code Enforcement
 - 1) Software Update
 - 2) Staffing Update
 - C. Alternative Sentencing
 - 1) Alternative to Incarceration Plan Update
 - 2) Permission to Contract with Warren County – Raise the Age Services
 - D. Public Defender
 - 1) 2021 Report on Hurrell-Herring Caseload Standards
 - E. District Attorney
 - 1) American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Update
 - F. Public Safety
 - 1) Grant Project Updates
 - 2) Vehicle Bid Review
 - 3) Travel Request
 - 4) Staffing Updates
 - 5) National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week
4. Other Business
5. Adjournment

Chairman Wilson called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M. in the Supervisors' Chamber and via zoom.

A motion to accept the minutes of the March 1, 2022 meeting was moved by Mr. Rozell, seconded by Mr. Hogan, and adopted.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS /REQUESTS:

PROBATION – Daniel Boucher, Director, addressed the following items with the committee:

- Intern/Job Shadow – The Director stated he had a request for an internship from a Siena student (Washington County resident) but the student plans changed due to summer employment and withdrew the request. He mentioned only seven people took the exam for Probation Officer and an internship might be useful in the future to help recruit people. Public Health received State funding to hire fellowship positions. An unpaid internship has to be associated with an academic program. Need to work on recruitment in general. Mr. Nolan stated he is a long term member of and Director of the Internship Program at Siena College and an internship offers many positives for a student providing experience in their field of interest and possibly lead to employment at agency offering the internship.
- NYS Parole Rent – The NYS Division of Parole/Department of Corrections rents space from the Probation Department on a month to month basis at \$750 for one room, no formal contract. They

are interested in continuing that contract. The space is used sparingly with a low impact to the Probation office. This has been going on for four or five years and he plans to continue this arrangement.

- Backfill – Probation Assistant – A twenty-eight year employee with the title of Probation Assistant is retiring. She has been a great employee for the department and has done a little bit of everything including the State reporting. Requesting to backfill this position with a one pay period overlap so the new employee can do some reports and other duties while the employee is still there. This Probation Assistant is the only employee that does some of these tasks. The difference in salary between the employee retiring and the new employee is \$9,000 and the one pay period, two week overlap, cost is \$1,684 which they can cover within their budget. A motion to approve backfill, Probation Assistant, and approve one pay period, two-week, overlap was moved by Mr. Hogan and seconded by Mr. O'Brien and Mrs. Clary. Discussion. Mr. Campbell stated he would like the opportunity to bring the employee back in if needed because he feels it would be beneficial to the department. The Director stated he will come back to the committee if any more time is needed than the one pay period overlap. A motion to approve backfill, Probation Assistant, and approve one pay period, two-week, overlap was moved by Mr. Hogan, seconded by Mr. O'Brien and Mrs. Clary, and adopted.

CODE ENFORCEMENT – John Graham, Director, addressed the following items with the committee:

- Staffing Update – Hired Steve Reynolds to replace employee, Steve Smith, who is retiring. The new employee has experience in roofing and construction in general and will start his training tomorrow. He will be covering the towns of Hartford and Argyle. Eventually everyone will get septic training but at this time he will be handling buildings and complaints/violations.
- Software Update – Went live yesterday with the new software. Fine tuning the procedures and thinks it will be beneficial. Still getting assistance from the vendor for another three weeks. Everything is going along well.
- Floodplain Management – Mr. Haff stated all towns have been contacted by DEC regarding flood plain management. He believes what they are requesting is out of the scope of what a town can provide. He believes it would make sense for towns that use Washington County Code Enforcement to contract with them to do floodplain management and proposed fifty dollars per parcel per year to be floodplain manager. Mr. Graham stated this involves things that code enforcement has nothing to do with. He feels this is something that needs further discussion. Mr. Haff stated there is a lot of turnover in towns as a reason he was looking to the County for this service, continuity at a county level. Mr. Graham stated DEC is saying that it should be in the local town ordinance or local town laws as to who the manager is for that town. Not all town Supervisors have met with DEC yet and Mr. Graham suggested meeting after that has taken place, go over all the information and then discuss how to move forward.

ALTERNATIVE SENTENCING – Mike Gray, Director, addressed the following items with the committee:

- Alternative to Incarceration Plan Update – Met with various County Department Heads, District Attorney, Mental Health Director and Fort Ann Judge Clark on March 17th and approved the ATI Plan (Alternative to Incarceration Plan) as required by the State. The only change was that they had to change the program models to a performance based contact.
- Permission to Contract with Warren County – Raise the Age Services – The Warren County Probation Department reached out to Alternative Sentencing to have them provide Warren County with some of our services that we offer on a limited basis. Some activities could be done jointly and be reimbursed by Warren County about \$10,000. These are program services that they currently

provide. A motion to allow Alternative Sentencing to enter into an MOU with Warren County/Probation Department to provide program services was moved by Mr. Rozell and seconded by Messrs. O'Brien and by Mr. Hogan. Discussion. No additional personnel is required. He anticipates less than five to six youth from Warren County. The motion to allow Alternative Sentencing to enter into an MOU with Warren County/Probation Department to provide program services was moved by Mr. Rozell, seconded by Messrs. O'Brien and Mr. Hogan, and adopted.

- March 18th awarded a grant which is a bi-county collaboration with Warren County in the amount of \$74,940 to provide restorative practices and youth employment incentives. A motion to accept Warren Washington Rural Communities of Practice grant in the amount of \$74,940, 100% State funds, was moved by Mr. Hogan, seconded by Mr. Rozell, and adopted.

PUBLIC DEFENDER – Mike Mercure, Director, addressed the following item with the committee:

- 2021 Report on Hurrell-Herring Caseload Standards – The Public Defender's Office is subject to the Hurrell-Herring settlement implementation through 2023 and as part of that there are caseload standards. The attached handout details their weighted caseload and shows their compliance. The Office of Indigent Legal Services requires that they stay under the caseload standard. Through the pandemic the caseload went down. The caseload standard is only for criminal matters and does not include Family Court. Criminal caseload flow does seem to be remaining at its lower levels as it was during the pandemic but Family Court has returned to normal levels. The numbers on the handout do not include Family Court caseload. The Public Defender's Office is in compliance with Hurrell-Herring implementation.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY – Tony Jordan, District Attorney, addressed the following item with the committee:

- Grant for Certain Domestic Violence Victims through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 – This is funding for certain domestic violence victims and is very different from what they deal with on the criminal side. They are being asked to promote this grant funding and he will be providing information to all Supervisors to make the community aware. This funding is only available through the end of May and to qualify you have to be a domestic violence survivor but that does not mean that they had to have a criminal case brought or pending. If the survivor has a child or pregnant and receiving SNAP or public assistance or have someone in the household receiving Medicaid benefits, emergency funding can be available for rent, clothing security deposit, food, clothing, and other items, an expansive list. Looking for assistance in making the community aware of this funding and reach out to him with any questions.

PUBLIC SAFETY – Glen Gosnell, Director, addressed the following item with the committee:

- Grant Project Updates:
 - Communication Grant – Working toward the roll out of the new console system. Started transition with two systems and two positions are training on the new radio console. The roll outs will continue and expect the project to be completed within about a month.
 - Radio System – Kickoff meeting with the vendor was held today. This project will bring two additional tower sites, Grafton, Rensselaer County, and Prospect Mountain, Lake George, for transmitting and receiving purposes within their simulcast system. Anticipating six months to complete and will help improve our radio communications along the eastern shore of Lake George towards the West Fort Ann wilderness area and in the southern part of the County along the Hoosick River.

Tim Hardy, Deputy Director, addressed the following items with the committee:

- Vehicle Bid Review – They are continuing their grant funded vehicle replacement projects and looking to replace their 2013 Ford Expedition. Worked with DPW on a mini-bid for a large SUV but the bid returned met the technical specifications but does not have adequate storage space for all the equipment that is kept in the vehicle; electric equipment that needs to be under cover. Requesting to reject the bid and work with DPW to adequately identify the vehicle they are looking for to meet their needs, large SUV. A motion to reject bid was moved by Mr. Hogan, seconded by Mr. O'Brien, and adopted.
- Travel Request – Fire Investigators – Looking for authorization to two members of the Fire Investigation team to attend the International Association of Arson Investigators Fire Investigation Involving Fatalities Training held in Buffalo on August 9th with travel August 8th through August 10th. The course cost is \$285 per person and funds budgeted in the Fire travel and training lines to cover this expense. A motion to accept the travel request for two Fire Investigators to attend Arson Investigators Fire Investigation training in Buffalo August 8th – August 10th was moved by Mr. Rozell, seconded by Mr. O'Brien, and adopted. The Deputy Director stated the majority of their travel is outlined in the budget information but this was not included so that is why it is coming before the committee today.
- Staffing Updates – Short staffed one full-time Communications Officer and multiple per diems in 911 Center. Waiting results of latest Communications Officer civil service test. Continue to struggle to move trainees out of training and since 2020 have been through a total of eleven trainees and one of them remains with the department. The work hours, difficulties dealing with the cases and calls and struggle with multi-tasking are some of reason for not working out. He is thankful for the staff recognizing them for stepping up during the pandemic and for covering for each other so they can get their time off. Started a few new initiatives: outreach program they are going to offer to high school seniors and BOCES and doing an overview of what they do with SUNY Adirondack students for possible applicants.
- National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week – April 10th – 16th. Contact the Deputy Director to schedule a tour of the center. Appreciate all they do for our communities.
- Countywide Emergency Medical Survey – Met with the EMS Advisory Board and two out of the eight county agencies did not complete the survey. Issued letters to the Town Supervisors that those squads cover asking for their assistance in getting the squads to complete the survey and he has since been contact by those squad who are now going to complete the survey. Hope to present data next month and a suggested path to move forward.

OTHER BUSINESS:

- Update on Coroners' Office Move – The Coroners' Office is now located in the basement of Building B providing office space and secured storage. Public Safety will provide office support and assistance with supplies. They still report directly to the committee and the Clerk of the Board's Office continues to do their vouchers and other items. Planning to restart their quarterly meetings.
- County Administrator stated throughout this meeting there has been a few items that she thinks probably warrant some additional discussion later: internships, Public Safety's need for Communication Officers, some specific funding available through DSS and District Attorney and public employment and recruitment and the need to improve on our public outreach. She will work on ways to improve public outreach.

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 P.M.

Debra Prehoda, Clerk

Washington County Board of Supervisors

**PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE
WEIGHTED CASELOAD SUMMARY**
January 1, 2018, through March 24, 2022

	<u>Weighted Caseload Standard</u>	<u>Caseload</u>
2018	1,975.00	2,069.75
2019	1,820.00	1,646.50
2020	1,648.00	1,344.25
2021	1,701.00	1,349.50
2022	1,656.00	281.75 (through March 24)

Weighted Caseload Point Values

Violent Felonies	6
Felony	3
Post Dispositions	1.5
VOP	
SORA	
Parole Revocations	
Misdemeanor	1
Other	0
Fugitive Warrant	
Extradition	
Parole Appeal	

Unweighted Caseload January 2018, through December 2021

2018	2,420
2019	2,102
2020	1,607
2021	1,628