

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 31, 2023

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

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Hicks, Clary, Rozell

SUPERVISORS: Henke, Fedler, Shaw, Nolan, Skellie

Debra Prehoda, Clerk of the Board

Al Nolette, County Treasurer

Melissa Fitch, County Administrator

AGENDA AS PRESENTED IN COMMITTEE NOTICE:

1. Call to Order
2. Accept Minutes – August 1, 2023
3. Department Reports/Requests:
 - A. Probation
 - a. WC Fair/Department Update
 - B. District Attorney
 - a. Employee Vacation Adjustment
4. Other Business
5. Adjournment

Chairman Wilson called the meeting to order at 10:53 A.M. in the Supervisors' Classroom Room B214, Municipal Center, Fort Edward, New York.

A motion to accept the minutes of the August 1, 2023 meeting was moved by Mr. O'Brien, seconded by Mr. Hogan and adopted.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS /REQUESTS:

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

- Renovations – Half of the office has been carpeted, sheetrock is up and painted. The hallways still need to be carpeted and are now working on the front part of the office that was not damaged, doing some updating. The office is still functioning and making it work with all the construction.
- Washington County Fair/Department Update:
 - The department's roll at the fair is to work mostly at the gate or high children's areas to make sure our sex offenders are not on the property. Sex offenders are told not to go to the fair but that does not always keep them away. Being on site has deterred that activity and it works out well. It's a good function that he would like to continue in the future. They are also out checking on the night before Halloween to ensure sex offenders don't have their lights on or decoration up and have curfews.

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

- Employee Vacation Adjustment – He has a member of his team, Senior Crime Victim Specialist, Robin McNeil who had worked for the County for twelve years and left for ten months to go to the State and came back to the County. She has been with the DA's office for seven years and the problem is that gap of service under our policy impacts her vacation time. Retaining quality experienced employees is harder today than ever. Ms. McNeil has twenty-one years of experience in direct services to people and that is irreplaceable. Discussed all her duties and she is the point person on the most serious crimes, i.e., violent sex crimes and sexual assaults on kids. She also manages the funding for the Crime Victim grant which is \$140,000 per year. She makes herself available on days off and holidays if needed. Asking for purposes of vacation time only that it be based on her initial start date with the County on August 12, 2002. The County Administrator stated she left June 1, 2015 and came back April 25, 2016. The County Administrator stated that section 3.006 of the handbook was recently changed to if an employee returns to the same Department that

they left within eighteen months they come back to that step and longevity where they were. It is stated in the handbook that the employee's anniversary date will be the latest date of hire and benefit and leave time will accrue as it would for a new employee. The District Attorney is not requesting a handbook change but a change for this instance and the effect is five extra days of vacation. Chairman Wilson stated the District Attorney is not looking for a policy change but as an incentive. The District Attorney stated to reward and retain her and it is something that he should have done when they were recruiting her. The County Administrator stated if this request is approved then expect to see other requests coming forward. Motion to move request forward to the Personnel Committee was moved by Mr. Hogan and seconded by Mr. O'Brien. Discussion. Mr. O'Brien is not entirely in favor of doing exceptions for one person and also that this committee is not the one to make the decision, it should go to Personnel and the County Administrator should look at any potential changes or if she wants to make any changes to the policy. Mr. Henke does not like the one off business and would like to address as a policy change. Mr. O'Brien stated recruitment is getting tougher and tougher and the retirement system has changed. Training costs are tremendous. Mr. O'Brien stated the move to the Personnel Committee is about changing the policy so there are more people involved. The motion to move request forward to the Personnel Committee was defeated. Mr. Haff opposed. The District Attorney asked that this be put on the Personnel agenda.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Public Safety – Glen Gosnell, Director, requesting overnight for one member to go to the Empire State Safety Association meeting in Oswego. He has money in the budget. Motion to approve overnight for one member to attend the Empire State Safety Association meeting in Oswego was moved by Mr. Hogan, seconded by Mr. O'Brien, and adopted.

Chairman Wilson thanked everyone in public safety and anybody involved in the Fair, it is an excellent event, and he really appreciates everybody putting forth that effort and making the County proud actually so thank you for that.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 A.M.

Debra Prehoda, Clerk
Washington County Board of Supervisors