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Onondaga County Legislature

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PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES – MARCH 18, 2025 MARK A. OLSON, CHAIR

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. McCarron, Ms. Fiato, Mr. Bush

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Garland

ALSO ATTENDING: Chairman Burtis, Mr. Romeo, Mr. Brown; also see attached

Chair Olson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m., and the previous meeting's minutes were approved.

- 1. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:** Gerald Payne, Director of Emergency Management - Fire
 - a. Authorizing Execution of an Intermunicipal Agreement with the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services Regarding Flood Mitigation Equipment**

PURPOSE: Enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES) to permit Onondaga County to assume possession of and utilize state-owned flood mitigation equipment.

OBJECTIVE/ WORK PLAN: To enhance flood mitigation efforts in Onondaga County through the use of state-owned equipment in an effort to help protect vulnerable areas and mitigate impacts from disaster.

As a part of the agreement DHSES will transfer possession, but not ownership, of flood mitigation equipment, and will retain oversight to ensure both compliance and operational readiness.

FUNDING SOURCE/BUDGET: Not applicable.

- Not uncommon for state to provide resources to counties to ensure they are quickly and easily able to be deployed
- DEC Spill Trailer parked at EM – handful of state assets that have been through same state process
 - Has underflow dams, booms
 - Have ability to deploy quickly if there is an incident; (i.e.) petroleum leaking into a creek
- State providing counties flood mitigation resources
 - 20 pumps with hoses and strainers
 - Sand bag filler and 10,000 sand bags
 - Chainsaws
 - 20 portable generators
 - Light towers
- Good to be able to quickly deploy to first responders, DPW, DOT, or any flood situation in county

Questions/Comments from the committee:

- When will the equipment be delivered?
 - After the MOU is signed, state will start process of purchasing
 - Will directly deliver to counties; expect will come from manufacturer in couple shipments
 - EM has garage space to store
 - Sand bag filler is a large trailer type piece that will be in the lot

- How will EM get the information out to local municipalities?
 - Attend monthly Fire Department County Chief's meetings; giving updates and sending emails to departments
 - Town and village coordination for DOT and DPW
 - Have 14 Deputy Coordinators
 - Per diem part-time; most have firefighting background experience
 - Trained on all equipment and assets to get them deployed
 - EM will not be using chainsaws and generators, but can provide to the emergency services
 - EM to bring the equipment – county trailer towed by a county vehicle driven by a county employee
 - 24/7 can deploy
- Is this only for Onondaga County, or is it available to other counties?
 - State offering to every county; every county has option to get into MOU or not
 - MOU indicates that if it is needed in another county, Onondaga County can deploy it to them
 - Potential it could go to (i.e.) Sylvan Beach
 - Oneida County may not get the same amount of resources compared to Onondaga County
 - Onondaga County residents will come first; same as any other resources
 - If there is a request for it, not uncommon to go to contiguous counties for mutual aid

A motion was made by Mr. McCarron, seconded by Mr. Bush, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

Chair Olson requested the following be presented at the next meeting:

- Status of the new vehicle – when, where and how it is progressing
- Status of the EMS Study
- Status of County Mutual Aid Plan done by the Fire Advisory Board
- Newly hired special deputies – what they will be doing
- There was an incident with ion batteries that caught cars on fire at a dealership; will the resources be used for things like this, and are the departments trained?
 - Staying on top of it
 - Through Hazard Materials Grant, did purchase (5) 5 gallon containers with filler
 - (i.e.) When there is a damaged, defective or recalled lithium ion battery, there is potential it will continue to burn
 - The 5 gallon containers are available to fire departments if they come across a lithium ion battery
 - Purchased 5 last September, and used 1 so far
 - Much bigger scale and bigger process with the cars, but EM is looking into it

2. SHERIFF: Sheriff Tobias Shelley; Jeffrey Passino, Undersheriff
a. INFORMATIONAL: Update

Work Efficiency Study

- Brought one example in a binder – Jamesville study
- Chief Dell did a study, but did not need to do a book

Questions/Comments from the committee:

- What is in the book?
 - In Jamesville, changed the schedule from 5-2 to a patrol schedule of 4-4-3
 - Tracked overtime and sick leave
 - Had to adjust start times and overlap; able to move the work (inmates, visitation and programs)
 - Doubled work from 70 inmates to 140 inmates for less money
 - Overtime was flat; sick leave went down due to more time off (52 more days off working same hours)
 - Went from 8 hour days to 10 hour days
 - Always work 4 days, then have 4 days off one week and 3 days off the next week
 - Patrol has been doing this type of schedule for 20 years
 - When there is a 5-2 schedule, 2/3 of the people are working at the same time
 - With the 4-4-3 schedule, only 50% work at the same time

- Syracuse Police went to this schedule; but does not work everywhere
- At the jail, the Sheriff was able to move the work to the overlap time
- Shift at 6 am, then another at 2 pm; the overlap of the two shifts is when the work is done (i.e. visitation)
- Who completed this study?
 - All in-house
- When was the study completed?
 - Over the past year
- Does it include the Custody Division, as one Chief was doing similar work over the past few weeks?
 - Did not do this type of study
 - A Feasibility Study was done for Custody
- What is a Feasibility Study?
 - (i.e.) To run one 58-person pod takes 8,790 hours/year – takes 7 people to run the pod (with no problem inmates)
 - Feasibility is how many people it takes to run the jail
 - It looks at all the different pods and different work that has to be done
 - Questions who is the relief, who is the response team, etc.
 - Get total number of hours to run the jail, which is half million hours
- Was the feasibility study done as part of this?
 - Separate study
 - The book will not be provided
- What was being worked on over the past couple weeks?
 - Rare opportunity where the Governor fired 2,300 State Correction's Officers; 49 are inquiring to be hired
 - Grey area of who can be hired (lawsuits in Oneida and Chemung due to certification)
 - Looking at how many of the 49 can be hired and stay under budget
 - Overtime hours in Justice Center were 116,000 in 2023 and 121,000 in 2024
 - Do not know how much it costs for fringe
 - 121,000 hours to dollars at \$52.47/hour overtime rate, divided by \$72,740 top Deputy pay, comes out to 85
 - Does not mean they can hire 85 people, as that is without fringe
 - Correction Officers are on the same retirement system
 - Correction Officers getting fired does not change the work (number of inmates)
 - All the inmates have to go somewhere; if the Governor closes 5 prisons, the inmates will be spread out to Sheriffs
 - 61 inmates currently at the jail waiting to go to state prison
 - Average 10-12/week that go through the criminal process
 - Person is sentenced by the judge to go to state prison
 - State prison not taking inmates
 - Sheriff getting stuck on local dollar to do state work; statewide will not take inmates
 - 10 people in jails activated to National Guard including the Chief at the downtown jail
 - Will have less workers and more work
 - Inmate population peaks in October – did 25 year study
 - Lowest time now, but with weather warming up, (i.e.) stabbings and shootings will continue to rise into summer
 - Population including the state inmates will be ~750 by October; at 570 now
- Has the Sheriff communicated with the State Department of Corrections, or Governor's office, to express the concerns?
 - Called Governor's office through Colleen Deacon (local contact) to express the concerns
 - Cannot have the extra work without the workers; have to take care of inmates
- This is a state issue; glad to see it is being handled; it should not be a county problem
 - Hopefully there will not be an issue hiring these people
 - If the Governor takes the certifications handed out by DCJS, they would have to go back through the 168 hour academy to get certified; would do it to get people hired
 - Next academy for Custody and Corrections will have 4 people on the 5th

- If these Corrections Officers lateral with certification, it is more attractive coming over to a higher pay rate, correct?
 - Higher pay rate is an attraction, but it is \$10K less for the Justice Center; more at Jamesville
 - Hopefully Jamesville gets a reasonable contract to be more competitive
- Is the Sheriff referring to the Correction Officers that were on strike and are no longer working?
 - Yes; have 49 that have applications in
 - Not sure if they will be able to hire all 49 – depends on their certifications
 - If the Correction Officers did not go back to work, the Governor fired them (some arrested); took their certification
 - All Sheriffs across the state are in the same boat
 - If these officers are not going to work at a state correctional facility, they should work for the Sheriff
- Will the Governor take their certification away?
 - She already did; some that applied are working and could come over
 - DCJS holds the certification
- Is there room to handle the inmates?
 - Yes, can hold 1,200 inmates with 570 today; lacking the workers
 - Jamesville easier – 86 employees; peaked with OT there; cannot work them anymore
 - Impossible to combine jails with 570 inmates
 - Extremely expensive holding state inmates
 - When state inmates are at the jail for 10 days, Sheriff can start charging the state \$100/day
 - Not sure how to make the state pay
 - Juvenile is about \$1,200/day
- Chief Hawker was deployed, and there was concern that there was not a Correction Chief; has Diane Dober been promoted to Chief?
 - Diane Dober has been running Jamesville as Chief since July
- Does she have the title Chief?
 - She is the Chief
- How is CEO Star being funded, as it was previously funded under the Chief Deputy Correction line?
 - Drapikowski is in a Chief's position; Chief Executive Officer to Sheriff
- Is the CEO Star a position that was added recently?
 - No
- When was the CEO Star created?
- There was a personnel resolution in February 2023 to create the Deputy Sheriff Chief Investigator and Director of Community Relations that the Legislature approved
 - All the positions have been funded the past two years
- Did not know CEO Star position was funded; Drapikowski moved from the Chief Deputy of Corrections to that position
 - How the Sheriff moves the Chiefs around is not the concern of the committee
- It is a management right; this is about the funding
 - The funding has been there; they have not used more funding
- The question is what line it is coming from
- If the state continues to do this, what can the county do?
 - Can try to join the Oneida County lawsuit
 - Have conversations to find out what Oneida did with their resolution; other Sheriffs will do that
 - This would have come from the Legislature; Sheriff will not sue the Governor

- The Legislature has had discussions to support that for the Sheriff
 - Would help that cause
 - Trying to figure out how to get the state Corrections Officers (those working will burn out)
 - If the Sheriff can hire these people, they will be able to handle the work
 - With normal increase of 100-150 inmates, and the Sheriff gets the 49 officers, they can cover the work
 - Does not end the overtime
- What does the Sheriff need from the Legislature?
 - Pay close attention to the contracts being negotiated for Corrections and Custody
 - Need decent pay raises to be competitive for those people and look at Jmeds
- What would the Sheriff like to change with Jmeds?
 - Hard to administer a jail when they cannot tell people to work
 - When taking 121 hours overtime, divided by 239 people working at jail, that is 10 hours overtime and 50 weeks
 - Downtown jail – some grab the OT, and others do not; cannot order them to work
- Out of the 49 officers, how many are working?
 - Do not have that list; some are working
 - May hire the officers without their certification
 - Started with 75 people from the civil service test; down to 4 starting May 5th (joint academy with Police)
 - Hardest part is getting people through the background check and polygraph

The meeting was adjourned at 9:31 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



JAMIE McNAMARA, Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: **PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **MARCH 18, 2025**

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
MALIN FERGUSON	OCSO
Gerald Payne	Emergency Management
Newton, J. Passaro, Shelley	OCSO
Darcie Lesniak	Leg
John DeSantis	Leg
Jason Dean	Finance
Jim Beebe	Leg.
Joe Fratoschi	Leg.
Carl Hummel	Personnel
Ben Yaus	Law