

**PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

**(REMOTELY)
THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 2021
3:30 P.M.**

PRESENT: Kevin W. Hines, Chairman
Thomas Faggione, **Kevindaryán Luján**, Rob Sassi,
Joel Sierra, Kathy A. Stegenga, John S. Vero

ALSO

PRESENT: L. Stephen Brescia, Chairman
Katie Bonelli, Majority Leader
Leigh J. Benton, Legislator
Barry J. Cheney, Legislator
Paul Ruskiewicz, Legislator
Peter V. Tuohy, Legislator
Betsy N. Abraham, Legislative Counsel
Harold J. Porr, III., Deputy County Executive
Dan Bloomer, Director, Operations and Cost Control
Karen Edelman-Reyes, Senior Assistant County Attorney
Steven M. Gross, Commissioner, Human Resources
Kenneth T. Jones, Undersheriff
Lawrence Catletti, Jail Administrator
Brendan R. Casey, Commissioner, Emergency Services
Vini Tankasali, Deputy Commissioner, Emergency Svcs/Div. of Fire
Deborah Slesinski, Deputy Budget Director
Gretchen Riordan, Budget Analyst
Liz Delaney, Budget Analyst
Dina Sena, Budget Analyst

Chairman Hines opened the meeting at 3:31 p.m. and asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. All committee members were present with the exception of Legislator **Luján** who arrived at 3:37 p.m.

Ms. Stegenga moved to approve the request for confirmation of appointments and reappointments to the Orange County Fire Advisory Board (K. Duggan, M. Hunt, R. Dorrman, C. Sweeney, T. Sullivan, M. Roe, J. Cross, M. Reiser, B. Petrick; term to expire 12/31/2021) (T. Amodio, M. McNamee, J. Connor, R. Vought, J. Hesse, R. Graham, E. Schmick Jr., R. Launt, T. McBride; term to expire 12/31/2022), seconded by Mr. Sierra.

Mr. Porr stated these appointments and reappointments to the Orange County Fire Advisory Board are listed on two sheets (see original minutes). The first list has a term expiration date of December 31, 2021 and the second list has a date of December 31, 2022.

Mr. Tankasali added the reason for the two-year terms is because when getting ready to submit the appointments for 2020 and 2021, he unfortunately fell ill and when he returned, they decided to hold-off and wait until this year.

Motion carried. All in favor with the exception of Legislator **Luján who had not yet arrived.**

Mr. Sassi moved to approve the request resolution authorizing the County Executive to accept HAZMAT equipment totaling \$35,500 as part of the 2018 NYS Division of Homeland Security Emergency and Emergency Services Regional HAZMAT Team of Hazardous Materials Grant from Rockland County Office of Fire and Emergency Services (equipment: metering equipment, all-terrain vehicle, calibration and testing of Scott air packs), seconded by Ms. Stegenga.

Mr. Tankasali explained this grant is a Regional Partnership Grant which means the State divides the HAZMAT funding every year into regions. Orange County operates in a region with Rockland County, Ulster County and Sullivan County and every year we receive \$140,000.00 to split with them. This grant is for 2018 and is the last year it will be administered by Rockland County and beginning this year, which is technically for 2019, Orange County will be taking it over. He added this is a good thing for the county because we will be able to control the grant and allow flexibility to purchase what is needed.

Motion carried. All in favor with the exception of Legislator **Luján who had not yet arrived.**

Mr. Sassi moved to approve the request for supplemental appropriation of \$26,799 from the Department of Justice for the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (Federal Funds) for county-wide Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL) Police Dispatching system, seconded by Ms. Stegenga.

Mr. Casey stated this is a reoccurring federal grant and the funds are used for the Automatic Vehicle Locator System.

Motion carried. All in favor with the exception of Legislator **Luján who had not yet arrived.**

Mr. Sassi moved to approve the request for supplemental appropriation to restore \$3,466.21 of Alive @ 25 unexpected revenues that were rolled into the General Fund at the end of 2020, seconded by Ms. Stegenga.

Mr. Casey explained this is an administrative adjustment to enable to the department to roll over funds from last year into this year.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Sassi moved to approve the request for supplemental appropriation of additional funds from the State of New York Governor's Traffic Safety Committee through NYS STOP-DWI Foundation as a sub-recipient of the 2020-2021 STOP-DWI Crackdown Enforcement Grant in the amount of \$14,000 which will be allocated to the municipalities for STOP-DWI enforcement patrols/checkpoints during designated crackdown periods, seconded by Ms. Stegenga.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Mr. Sassi moved to approve the request to accept and appropriate funds for the fiscal year 2021 for the Criminal Justice Discovery Reform Grant from the Department of Criminal Justice Services for the Orange County District Attorney, \$1,685,928.00, seconded by Ms. Stegenga.

Mr. Hoovler stated this is funds that were taken from the Manhattan District Attorney's Office by the State and \$40 million dollars was given to the upstate communities. Orange County received \$1.6 million which will be used for Discovery Reform to get a new records management system to replace the impact system for all the local municipalities purchased through a company called Niche. This will allow uniformity for all police departments to receive the same records and reports. He added this will be a multi-year project so in the future the county will have to spend additional funds to complete the system.

Mr. Hines asked what the anticipated total cost of the project will be.

Mr. Hoovler replied initially \$1.6 million and \$1.4 million to follow.

Mr. Hines clarified that there will be no cost to municipalities.

Mr. Hoovler stated there is a small fee that they will pay back to the county. It is a single license which means the county will be the purveyor of the project and the data, the towns will retain their right to their own data, but the county oversees all of it. His understanding is that the IT Department will have an outside company manage it. The towns currently pay a small maintenance fee every year to the Impact System so the Niche System will be a lower cost to them. He pointed out that the real savings for everyone is the fact that \$1.6 million will be funded by the State. When the plan is submitted at the end of this month and the State pays the money, the State will give the county \$1.6 million.

Mr. Hines asked if cities and villages are eligible.

Mr. Hoovler replied it is a Record Management System that all police departments in Orange County (towns, villages, and cities) will be part of it. He stated it will be a cloud-based system, so everyone is on the same page. This is the first step in the right direction.

Mr. Hines mentioned that there will be a Special Legislative on March 30, 2021 so these funds can be collected in a timely fashion.

Motion carried. All in favor.

Ms. Stegenga moved to discuss the Corrections Report, seconded by Mr. Sassi.

Mr. Catletti stated that as of this morning the facility headcount is 421, of that 72 are ICE detainees and 90 are Marshals. He added the total boarder revenue through January is \$1,308,617.00.

Mr. Vero moved to discuss the Sheriff's Report, seconded by Mr. Sassi.

Undersheriff Jones stated that February was a quiet month, operations are running as normal and pistol permits continue to be astronomical. The current booking dates are October.

Mr. Hines asked if there are is an update regarding body cameras for police officers.

Undersheriff Jones replied there are meetings set-up to discuss them and most importantly, find out the cost for cloud storage. He stated they are doing this in conjunction with the Department of General Services.

Regarding the last agenda item, Mr. Hines asked Legislator Vero to clarify that the Personnel and Compensation Committee has tabled this request.

Mr. Vero stated that is correct, they are waiting on further information.

Mr. Hines stated it is his intention to not vote on this request, but leave it open for discussion.

Mr. Sassi moved to discuss the request to abolish position of Deputy Sheriff and Captain currently funded at \$144,978 (salary) \$51,914 (personal services & benefits) for total of \$196,892 and create Deputy Sheriff and Lieutenant position to be funded at \$85,900 (salary), \$41,730 (estimated personal services and benefits) for total of \$127,630, estimated savings of \$69,262 for remainder of 2021 (in 2022 salary, personal services and benefits would be funded for an entire year, estimated at \$191,764), seconded by Mr. Vero.

Undersheriff Jones highlighted the request by stating part of their internal look during the Police Reform and Reinvention Act are the current operations. Traditionally, there has been a captain who oversees supervising three lieutenants, acted as the FOIL Officer and were the Public Information Officer. From review of the Police Reform and Reinvention Act, they took on a host of new duties that are commitments of a variety of new meetings that they would attend monthly. He stated that when they internally reviewed what they were going to do, they looked at how it would get done. Another issue that arose was there are currently no commissioned officer coverage on the weekends and all the three lieutenants, and the captain are Monday through Friday because they cannot cover seven days with three. After discussing this, they would like to do two things; one is to move out the PIO and the other move away from the FOIL Officer because it has become a different animal due to Section 50A of the Civil Service Law. They have decided to shift the FOIL Officer down to a Sergeant since there are eleven and they work on big projects and/or FOILS. At the end of the day the best way to fix this is have four lieutenants supervised by the chief

which will keep with the standards in Orange County. There are no other agencies that have a captain, all the chiefs have lieutenants, so they would like to follow that model. He added there are more positives with having more lieutenants than what they currently have and when they moved this forward, he did not think it would be as difficult as it is. They thought this request would be a housekeeping measure. He further explained to the committee that as he told the County Executive, this would be a significant savings this year and an even smaller savings each year after and at the same time, it will be produce a better product for the Sheriff's Office, for the taxpayers and police services.

Mr. Hines asked if the Superior Officer's Union (SOA) will take issue with this and if so, is it something that is subject to a Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Undersheriff Jones replied they have an open door with all the unions, and he does not believe the SOA is concerned because they are not losing any positions, they are having one go from captain to lieutenant. He stated it is not subject to collective bargaining because they are asking to reshape the police force management.

Mr. Gross stated the process for this change is much the same as it is with any other competitive position. The exam has been advertised, candidates could take the exam, a list is then created with respect to those who passed the exam, and a civil service list is generated. He added it is no different than other civil service aspect or list creation for any position in the county, and referred to the salary information that was sent to all legislators (see original minutes).

Mr. Hines asked if the assignments given to a captain would cause an issue because it would now be given to a lieutenant.

Mr. Gross replied he does not necessarily know that is how the entire situation will be. He thinks some of the responsibilities can move to the chief, but most of the scope of a lieutenant is a high-ranking police officer and a member of the Superior Officer's Union.

Mr. Hines then asked if there is an active list.

Mr. Gross replied yes, there is an active list.

Mr. Hines asked Undersheriff Jones if it is his intent to have a senior lieutenant or will it be four individuals.

Undersheriff Jones replied there can be four lieutenants. He knows the Sheriff has approached the subject with staff as to whether to be an administrative lieutenant, but it is still under discussion.

Mr. Hines stated that executive session will not be necessary unless someone has a specific question and reiterated that this was for discussion only and will be coming back to this committee as well as the Personnel and Compensation Committee next month.

Chairman Brescia asked that the committee enter into a short executive session with Legislative Counsel and Commissioner Gross because he has a few questions.

Chairman Brescia moved to enter executive session under attorney client privilege to further discuss the request, seconded by Ms. Stegenga.
Committee entered into executive session at 4:12 p.m.

Mr. Sierra moved to leave executive session, seconded by Mr. Sassi.

Committee left executive session at 4:42 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 4:42 p.m.