

**PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

**THURSDAY, JULY 20, 2023  
3:30 P.M.**

PRESENT: Kevin W. Hines, Chairman  
Janet Sutherland, Robert C. Sassi, Genesis Ramos

ALSO

PRESENT: Katie Bonelli, Chairwoman  
Christopher Borek, Chief Assistant District Attorney  
Kelly Lagitch, Chief Assistant County Attorney  
Kerry Gallagher, Commissioner of Finance  
Evelyn Mallard, Undersheriff  
Meredith McGovern, Chief, Sheriff's Office  
Lawrence Cottone, Captain, Sheriff's Office  
Gretchen Riordan, Deputy Budget Director  
Erin Sztendor, Budget Analyst

Chairman Hines opened the meeting at 3:36 p.m. and asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. All committee members were present with the exception of Legislator Sierra who was excused and Legislators Ehlers and Stegenga who were absent.

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

Undersheriff Mallard reported that the inmate population for the month of June is 305 and the average daily population is 333. They went through re-accreditation for the American Correction Association (ACA) and received 100% compliance. As a result, from that, they were reaccredited and the revenue for the month of June is \$506,996.00.

With respect to ICE detainees, Mr. Hines asked if the number is trending up or down.

Undersheriff Mallard replied the population is up and down, but more on the downside.

Mr. Hines then asked if there is any progress with the test for those who can go in the academy.

Undersheriff Mallard replied they are starting academy class Monday, July 24<sup>th</sup> and there are 33 coming in, but the vacancies are around 40. She stated they are making progress.

Ms. Ramos moved to discuss the Sheriff's Report,  
seconded by Ms. Sutherland.

Chief McGovern stated the largest event they had for the month of June was the Air Show which went off without a hitch and they egressed over 2,000 cars without an incident. They also had a K-9 graduation.

Mr. Hines mentioned that there has been a lot of talk about speed limits on Angola Road in the Town of Cornwall and asked Chief McGovern to speak on the issue.

Chief McGovern responded that they received a lot of complaints from citizens that live in that area, so they sent out directed patrols to enforce vehicle and traffic law. People were aware that efforts were being put forth and a lot of positive feedback was received. The captain is currently working with the Cornwall Police Department to put together a dual enforcement action.

Ms. Ramos moved to approve the request to create two (2) Criminal Investigator positions and one (1) Assistant District Attorney position, Grade 24, for the Gun Involved Violence Elimination (GIVE) Initiative. These will be stipulated positions contingent on grant funding and shall be automatically abolished upon cancellation of such funding, seconded by Ms. Sutherland.

Mr. Borek stated the GIVE Program is a DCJS grant to primarily look at non-fatal shootings. The District Attorney's Office has been doing this for ten years along with the City of Newburgh Police Department. He added there is also money that goes to the City of Middletown and the Sheriff's Office. They have also been considered, along with Utica, one of the big success stories, so District Attorney Hoovler has put a lot of effort into this. Furthermore, there is literature concerning this (on file in Clerk, Legislative Office) including a report showing the GIVE Initiative clearance rate of 14% for non-fatal shootings before the project which went up to 40% clearance rate after the project. This involves getting District Attorney's involved earlier in the case, having DA investigators work along with the city police, and the idea is in some neighborhoods, it is difficult to get people to cooperate with law enforcement, so they prosecute on evidence-based prosecutions which aren't necessarily dependent on eyewitness testimony. The request is to create (2) Criminal Investigator positions and one (1) Assistant District Attorney position, Grade 24, which would be contingent on the 100% grant funding and would be abolished upon the cancellation of that funding.

Mr. Hines clarified that "success" means prosecution, not deterrence or taking guns off the street.

Mr. Borek stated he believes what they measured in the 14% to 40% clearance rate, they were measuring the arrests, however, the conviction rate is in the high 90's. He then mentioned that Orange County has recently been recognized by DCJS for getting longer sentences of incarceration on weapon possession cases than a lot of other jurisdictions.

Mr. Hines asked if the City of Newburgh was in support of this.

Mr. Borek replied yes and referred the committee to the literature from the District Attorney (on file in Clerk, Legislative Office) because they also get a significant amount of money out of this to fund their own personnel. The grant is contingent on the police working with the District Attorney's Office because the literature shows that is what it was designed for. He stated the whole idea of GIVE is to have the prosecutors work collaboratively with the police including the DA Investigators.

Mr. Hines then confirmed that there is one full-time investigator in the City of Newburgh.

Mr. Borek replied that they currently have three full-time investigators in the City of Newburgh Office, not 100% dedicated to GIVE. Being that a lot of their work is in the City of Newburgh, a lot of the time is spent investing and serving subpoenas to people. There is a population there that has difficulty getting to court, so very often the investigators will transport victims and witnesses from the City of Newburgh to Goshen for grand jury then bring them back. They do not have two dedicated investigators assigned to the non-fatal shootings.

Mr. Hines asked if the City of Newburgh Police do their own shootings or if they bring in the State Police for the fatal ones.

Mr. Borek replied they investigate their own shootings and frequently bring in the State Police for major finds to help (homicides) and the District Attorney's Office is involved in every case.

Ms. Ramos commented that she had several conversations with the District Attorney and the relationship with the City of Newburgh, the City Manager, and the Police Department is good. Everyone is on the same page and ready to move forward in a positive direction. She stated that she is looking forward to this being implemented.

Motion carried. All in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.