

**POLICE SERVICES STEERING COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday November 1, 2006**

4:30pm – 6:00pm

110 North Fourth Avenue

**Members Present:**

Paul Bunten	Chief of Police, Saline
Jeff Irwin	County Commissioner
Pat Kelly	Dexter Township
William McFarlane	Superior Township
Michael Moran	Ann Arbor Township
Mark Ouimet	County Commissioner
Wes Prater	County Commissioner, Chair of Board
Steve Solowczuk	County Commissioner
Kenneth Unterbrink	Lima Township
Patricia Vaillencourt	Village of Manchester

**Members Absent:** Ruth Ann Jannick, Daniel Minzey/Herb Mahony, Brenda Stumbo

**Staff Present:** Mary O’Hare (Facilitator), Robert Guenzel, Kerry Sheldon, Linda Wicks (Recording Secretary)

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Facilitator O’Hare, 4:35pm, at the Washtenaw County Annex Building, 110 N. Fourth Ave, first floor large conference room.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

Prater moved for approval of the October 4, 2006, Police Services Steering Committee meeting minutes, Bunten seconded; all in favor.

**3. Citizen Participation**

None.

**4. Committee Member Check-In**

- Moran reported that Scio Township has also formed a committee to explore police services options. He indicated that he had informed one of these committee members of the *PSSC* meetings, noting that the *PSSC* meetings are open to public participation.
- McFarlane reported that six townships and one city are now meeting together to look at the feasibility of forming a regional police service. He expressed thanks to Guenzel and O’Hare for O’Hare’s support and work with this “Blue Ribbon Committee” as they prepared a Request for Information for feasibility study consultants. McFarlane noted that this RFI is planned for release on November 10, 2006, with a time schedule incorporated providing for a December 15, 2006, deadline for RFI responses. This time schedule is targeting March 6, 2007, for the Request for

Proposal release with proposals due March 26, 2007. McFarlane shared copies of this **“Regional Police Authority Feasibility Study Request for Information and Qualifications”** document with *PSSC* members. McFarlane noted that neither Pittsfield nor Ypsilanti Township is participating in this collaborative RFP effort. He noted that at this time both York Township and Augusta Township have indicated interest in being involved. It was noted that the listing of consulting firms to receive the RFI release will be available through O’Hare.

- Guenzel provided an update on the court cases, noting that the judge had indicated he would be announcing a decision November 2<sup>nd</sup> regarding the Sheriff’s request for a temporary injunction against the County withdrawing services from the three townships not signing contracts, subsequent to the two day evidentiary hearing held October 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. He further noted that the attorneys have indicated that the Judge may not be ready to announce his decision tomorrow. Guenzel reminded *PSSC* members that there are two separate cases, being heard by the same judge: one brought by the three townships not signing contracts; and the other by the Sheriff. However, he noted that some of the evidentiary issues are the same (i.e., testimony regarding how the County had come to the rates developed and negotiated in good faith). Guenzel noted that the Townships had filed three new causes of action including an alleged violation of the Hedley Amendment. He noted that Judge Costello has refused to issue an injunction in the township case barring the County from withdrawing services to the three townships, further noting that there is a stipulated order in the Sheriff’s case, pending the recent evidentiary hearings, that the County not withdraw services. Guenzel noted that the County could soon be back in the position of needing to make a decision regarding the three townships.
- Moran noted the difficulties involved should deputies need to be let go and then re-hired back. He inquired if there had been any suggestion of having the three townships pay the same rate that the other townships are currently paying now; with the caveat that if they lose the court case they would then pay the higher rate. Guenzel noted that this suggestion had been made and put on the table; that these townships could pay at the same rate and await the Judge’s decision.
- O’Hare inquired regarding what would happen to the change in overtime costs in 2007, if the contract is not yet settled. Guenzel indicated that he believed the townships would pay the \$10,000 overtime cost.
- McFarlane expressed his concern regarding current overtime hours because there is not enough personnel, noting that he had met with the Sheriff to discuss these internal operational issues. He expressed his greater concern regarding the negative impact on his community if there is a contingent of deputies that will be responding to emergency requests for services in the three non-contracting townships. He indicated that “they had played by the rules and signed the contract and are tired of not getting what they are paying for.”

- Guenzel shared that this is a problem, noting that the Sheriff deploys the deputies. He noted that if the County cuts back services and the number of deputies it can't stop the Sheriff from patrolling the non-contracting townships.
- McFarlane expressed his concern that his community is being caught in the middle between the Townships and the Sheriff. He noted his major concern about further depleting his community's police services; noting that they may be forced to seek litigation.
- Kelly concurred that there are too many deputies serving that are pulling double shifts, impacting service to her community. She inquired why the Sheriff is not hiring to fill these currently vacant positions. She noted that it does not make sense for the Sheriff to sue the County to keep deputies, and then not hire them.
- Vaillencourt further agreed that the contracting communities are in a position where they are providing deputies for non-contracting areas; noting that the overtime costs by 2008 would be prohibitive if this is not resolved.
- Prater suggested that the contracting communities may wish to look at what they can legally do to force the Sheriff to fulfill his obligations.
- Moran shared that the only solution may be for the County to give in regarding the question of how much will be paid while the lawsuit is litigated, trying to get the trial advanced as early as possible; noting that this is unfortunate.
- Guenzel inquired if there was a possibility of some of the other townships brokering a settlement with the three non-contracting townships to come to an interim agreement which would allow for services not to be withdrawn. Kelly suggested that all the townships with contracts sit down with the Sheriff to discuss.
- Ouimet suggested that the contracting units meet with Ypsilanti Township and "plead their case" regarding the impact of the non-contracting townships. He noted it is worth the effort anytime you can work toward negotiating.
- Moran suggested that the contracting (signing) townships may need to take a public position or join a lawsuit to enforce their position.
- McFarlane requested that Kelly setup a meeting with the contracting communities, inviting the non-signing contract townships (Ypsilanti, Augusta and Salem) and the Sheriff. Representatives from non-contracting townships not getting services should also be invited. Kelly noted that the Township CEO meeting would be taking place November 2, and this joint meeting can be discussed further there. O'Hare suggested that the key messages for this multi-township/Sheriff meeting be discussed, with *PSSC* members noting: 1) Use of fill-in shifts with overtime – especially those that have already worked an eight hour shift (quality of service issue) 2) Why current deputy vacancies are not being filled.

- Guenzel noted that the County does not do the hiring for the Sheriff Dept; the Sheriff Dept has its own Human Resources department. He indicated that the budget currently authorizes a full compliment of deputies. It was noted that there are about 17 total vacancies at this time, inclusive of some on leave. He noted that if the County is authorized to begin withdrawal of deputies, the budget would be taken back to the BOC for adjustment.

##### **5. Goal Setting for 2007 Agenda**

O'Hare noted that the 2007 Goal Setting discussion will continue at the January *PSSC* meeting, with a full process of exploring what the *PSSC* role is in all of these pieces; and what the committee wants to move forward with.

Irwin suggested tackling the deployment issue for the Sheriff Department, to have deployment plans for every unit.

Guenzel suggested the issue of combined services; cooperation with the idea of reducing costs, noting that he would be providing *PSSC* members with a report on Dispatch and SWAT.

McFarlane indicated that he would like to compare costs from Washtenaw County to Oakland County and/or other counties not yet discussed.

Moran inquired if there was a trial date set yet; with Guenzel indicating March or April 2007 for the Townships and no date yet for the Sheriff; further noting that much may be decided on the motions. Moran inquired if it might be counterproductive to make any decisions regarding the Space Plan prior to resolution of this litigation.

##### **6. Other**

O'Hare stated that the December 6, 2006, *PSSC* meeting is canceled, indicating that *PSSC* members are invited to attend the BOC Holiday Party that day. She noted that if there is specific *PSSC* business necessitating a meeting before January, a special meeting will be called. O'Hare indicated that the 2007 *PSSC* meeting dates, per the Committee charter, will be scheduled for the first Wednesday of each month; with the exception of January when it will be scheduled for January 17 (third Wednesday).

O'Hare noted that the *PSSC* Charter provides for a two-year membership appointment, coinciding with the BOC cycle. She indicated that all current members are invited to remain on the *PSSC* for another term; requesting any not wishing to do so to contact her. Official *PSSC* appointments will then be made for 2007/2008.

##### **7. Presentation on the County Administrator's Space Plan Recommendation**

O'Hare noted that hard copies of the updated *Space Plan with Recommendations* and accompanying Powerpoint presentation were distributed to *PSSC* members at this meeting, and may be accessed on the County Website.

Guenzel provided a presentation of the *Space Plan Recommendations*, noting that this was presented to community partners on October 30, and will be presented to the BOC Ways and Means at tonight's meeting and at Friday's CJCC meeting. He noted that Mary O'Hare and consultant Joe Ohren had met with about 20 groups throughout July and August to gather community and partner/stakeholder input, and that the BOC had discussed this issue during September with presentations provided by Judges Brown and Simpson. He noted that the Space Plan was developed to meet both current needs and with a vision toward future needs. Guenzel indicated that the BOC Ways and Means will be voting on a corresponding bond resolution authorizing \$21 million at their meeting tonight. If approved it would go to the BOC for approval at their November 15 meeting and the bond issue would be subject to referendum for a 45 day period.

Moran inquired if there might perhaps be a cost between the \$447,767 captured in this proposal and the original \$1,000,000+ in the 2005 recommendation that might be appropriate for non-residential treatment services ("Sequential Intercept Team" / "Assertive Community Treatment Team"). Guenzel noted that while this CSTS/Assertive Team funding may not be as comprehensive as in the original recommendation, it is based on recent work by current limited CSTS staff addressing these non-residential needs, which resulted in over 5,000 days of saved jail beds.

McFarlane, Bunten and Moran all stressed the need for the Jail issues to be addressed; noting that felons have been turned away, without booking, because of the overcrowding.

Guenzel stressed that the BOC is only acting on the Jail issues in Phase One at this time, noting that the subsequent phases are only recommendations for the future, to be addressed by future Boards.

*PSSC* members discussed the possible desirability of waiting for the new Board of Commissioners to take affect in January before taking any action on the *Space Plan Recommendations*, noting the timing of the November elections; and indicating that it may create public relations / perception issues.

O'Hare suggested the need to emphasize the length of time these studies regarding Space Planning have been taking place; and the enormous effort put forth in coming to this point of recommendation. *PSSC* members stressed the need to emphasize that the BOC is only taking action on the Jail at this time, that the remaining recommendations would be addressed by the BOC at a later date.

Solowczuk thanked *PSSC* members for their input and honesty, noting that they have assisted in making issues clearer for the townships, and expressing his appreciation for being part of this committee. Guenzel further thanked the *PSSC* membership for their input and discussions, indicating that he hoped members would be able to continue to serve in 2007.

**8. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned by Facilitator O'Hare at 6:00 pm.

**Next Meeting:**

Wednesday, January 17, 2007

4:30pm – 6:00pm

110 N. Fourth Avenue, Large Conference Room

Approved by Committee: 29 November 2006