

**POLICE SERVICES STEERING COMMITTEE**  
**Wednesday November 7, 2007**  
 4:30pm – 6:00pm  
 110 North Fourth Avenue

**Members Present:**

Paul Bunten	Chief of Police Saline
Jeff Irwin	County Commissioner, Chair of Board
Karen Lovejoy Roe	County Commissioner
Herb Mahony, Designee	County Under Sheriff
William McFarlane	Superior Township
Michael Moran	Ann Arbor Township
Mark Ouimet	County Commissioner
Kenneth Schwartz	County Commissioner
Patricia Vaillencourt	Village of Manchester

**Members Absent:** Ruth Ann Jamnick, Pat Kelly, Dan Minzey, Brenda Stumbo, Kenneth Unterbrink

**Staff Present:** Mary O’Hare (Facilitator), David Behen, Scott Patton, Linda Wicks (Recording Secretary)

**Others Present:** None

**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**

Ouimet moved for approval of the October 3, 2007, Police Services Steering Committee meeting minutes; Bunten seconded; all in favor. (“Police Services Workshop Summary of Questions and Answers, June 14 & 15, 2007” attached)

**3. Citizen Participation**

None.

**4. Committee Check-In / Other**

Bunten provided an update on the 800 MHz Radio Project, indicating that the contract (about 12 Million) for the “backbone” equipment (tower, connectivity) was awarded to Motorola about a month ago. He indicated that they are currently in the RFP process for end-user equipment, with proposals due November 19 and three companies currently indicating interest in bidding: Motorola, EF Johnson and Detroit Electric. Bunten stated that the 800 MHz Committee has been working on siting the towers for the seven transmitter stations to be installed, indicating that all but one location is now pretty well selected, with next steps to include site plans and township board approvals. He summed up that the project is doing well and moving forward, with cutover commencement now on track for around July 2009.

McFarlane reported that the Eastern Regional Police Feasibility Study is moving forward, with results expected in about a month.

McFarlane expressed concern about a proposal to heat the jail via “wood chips with a 90 foot chimney, which could present some health and welfare safety issues” for the hospital which is Northeast of the Jail. He stated his concern that this would add contamination as well as more controversy to the jail project. He further noted concerns about how it would be implemented at the facility, such as a reliable source for wood chips, noting that if pallets are used it could be unknown what had been on these and what contaminations there may be – if burned, does this contamination then float down to a major health facility in Washtenaw County? McFarlane stated that he is opposed to this, based on what is known today, indicating his belief that the hospital and residents in his township would be opposed also - that the prevailing winds would bring this toward them.

Behen said that Kerry Sheldon (Administration) is making a presentation to the BOC at tonight’s meeting regarding the Chevron Energy Solutions Comprehensive Energy Audit (CEA) at the Washtenaw County Correctional Facility, which includes some information on this Biomass Heating option. He noted that she is meeting with Supervisor Walters from Pittsfield Township on November 19<sup>th</sup> to discuss the issue, and would be happy to meet with any other concerned parties. Behen said that he would have Sheldon connect with McFarlane for discussion. Behen stressed that the presentation at tonight’s BOC meeting is regarding the feasibility study, with the associated cost of \$75,000 to be rolled into any total project costs for implementation.

Moran stated that he shared some of McFarlane’s concerns, indicating that he thought it “would be a really serious mistake given the fits and starts that you have all gone through toward getting the jail expansion to where it is today” to interject the controversial notion of a 90 foot tower, which is what people will see and talk about.

McFarlane inquired if this issue had been before the CJCC, with Patton responding no. Irwin indicated that it would be a more reasonable time to bring the issue to the CJCC after the feasibility study is complete, noting that these concerns from the *PSSC* today are also the same questions that the BOC has and which are being explored by the study: What are the issues of sourcing? What are the issues of pallets or chips, and where might they come from? What is the price of these vs. natural gas, and what would be the expected savings? What are the emissions of this method vs. the emissions of natural gas? What about safety concerns? He noted that these are the questions that all have, and the reason this issue is being explored via the feasibility study; further noting that preliminary estimates for savings are very dramatic and that there is a tremendous potential for savings. He said that all these issues are what drive the BOC to want to analyze the concerns to determine if they are real issues or perceived.

Schwartz stressed that the 90 foot tower is not absolute in size, indicating that the information he has received from the DEQ is that the tower must be at least 10 feet above the highest structure within a prescribed area; and that if you build at the lowest part of the grade you must come up an extra distance.

O’Hare stressed the option for *PSSC* members to see the presentation by Kerry Sheldon at tonight’s BOC meeting. She indicated that the *PSSC* may want to keep an eye on this study, as it relates to the Jail Project. Behen requested that it be put on the December *PSSC* meeting agenda, as a report out and opportunity for discussion. McFarlane expressed his appreciation to Schwartz for bringing this issue to his attention.

Bunten stated that felt it would be irresponsible to not study an issue that could save a half-million dollars a year. He noted that the study may show that it is not feasible, but that to not study this option would be irresponsible.

McFarlane inquired if the study could delay the jail project, with the response from Irwin that it could, but by weeks not months. He noted that it would not have a significant delaying impact, because the jail project already includes replacing infrastructure with the architectural piece in place; and that now is the time to answer the questions regarding boiler/heating systems.

McFarlane inquired about a back-up system to the biomass heating, with Irwin responding that the system would be built as able to run natural gas or wood.

Patton updated *PSSC* members on the Reporting Project, indicating that this is moving along well. He said that of the seven reports identified as requirements, five are complete and the remaining two 80% complete, to be done within a week. He said the Incident Report is dependant on the CLEMIS system, with the Sheriff's Dept scheduled to go live with CLEMIS today.

McFarlane noted that, while the end result will be good, the reporting system still needs to be fine-tuned; indicating that the information going in must be good in order to reflect accurate reporting coming out.

Patton stated that, if they have not already, jurisdictions will be contacted soon to have VPN access setup.

#### **5. Update on Discussions with Contracting Units including Overtime and Deployment Policy**

Mahony said that preliminary discussions are completed with contracting units regarding overtime and deployment policy. He indicated that he is meeting this evening for a possible final discussion with Manchester, Lodi and Bridgewater townships regarding the feasibility of collaboration between these three jurisdictions with regard to response area.

Mahony stated that they are still on the timeline to rollout completed overtime/deployment plans the first week in December, initially bringing to the *PSSC* at their December 5, 2007, meeting. He said that he is in conversation with Behen regarding how best to provide the information to the BOC (BOC Working Session, *PSSC* meeting, etc.).

Mahony indicated that many jurisdictions are looking at what the ramifications are for regionalization, and how you come up with a true regional approach for an area, and cost balance that. He noted that very few communities have demographics so close that you can say they are equal and pay equally.

Mahony said they are working with Dexter Township, Dexter Village and Webster Township to explore a 2009 Intergovernmental agreement, in which the County will contract with one entity for deputy whole numbers with the Intergovernmental agreement parsing out costs between the three jurisdictions. He indicating that these areas exploring collaboration will most likely continue in 2008 with contracting for individual deputies and doing a combined deployment; but that the work will continue through 2009 and there will most likely be some areas that go to a local agreement for 2009 where one area acts as the fiduciary and contracting entity on behalf of the other jurisdictions that are collaborating.

Ouimet shared that he had recently seen the Dexter/Dexter/Webster presentation by Mahony regarding multi-governmental units, and was very impressed with the breakdown and preparation.

Mahony noted that this had been a good meeting, and that the local units are now looking at how they can arrive at a formula for sharing costs, and what this would look like.

Mahony indicated that every deployment scenario that they put together showed that it is remarkably cheaper and provides better coverage if you collaborate than if you try to do it individually.

Schwartz shared that Salem Township had appreciated what the Sheriff had put together and presented for them, indicating it was quite “eye-opening” and informative.

Vaillencourt further commented regarding the tremendous help provided by Mahony and the Sheriff’s Office, supplying lots of information and understanding, indicating that it had been very well received at Council.

O’Hare asked for clarification of the existing collaboration that Manchester Village is part of, with Vaillencourt replying that the collaboration is currently between Manchester Village and Bridgewater Township, with Lodi now looking to become a third partner.

O’Hare indicated that she will put the *Discussions with Contracting Units including Overtime and Deployment Policy* item on the December *PSSC* agenda for a final report out.

Mahony stated that the Sheriff’s Office currently has four deputies off on leave regarding the West Willow incident, with another two off on Long-Term Disability and Workers’ Comp, noting that this will leave the department six short come January 1, 2008. He said that they had reviewed a lot of scenarios, and that the most economically responsible plan is to phase in the deployment of the General Fund deputies over the first three months of 2008. He indicated that to backfill these six positions the cost would be about \$600,000, and that, since the expectation of service has not yet happened, it makes more sense to phase the General Fund deputies in during the first quarter of 2008.

Mahony stated the need to look long term at how to deal with vacancies such as family leave, illness, and injury, noting that there is nothing constructively built into the budget to deal with this.

Mahony expressed appreciation for the collaborative work done by McFarlane and Moran in reducing two substations down to one for deployment (for first shift bid), indicating that this provides huge savings, eliminating the need for two car purchases, and saving money/resources operationally.

Schwartz inquired about the Sheriff’s Office strategy for deployment of the General Fund deputies, indicating that what he is hearing from some smaller communities is the need not to reward jurisdictions that are downsizing with the Sheriff and expecting to get this back via the General Fund deputies – that these smaller communities are hoping for some pro-active patrol.

Mahony stressed the reality that there would be very little pro-active activity from the General Fund deputies, indicating that their time will be pretty well used by non-contracting and under-contracting areas, noting that this will be an issue.

Mahony indicated that he would forward a copy of the September 5, 2007, *PSSC* “Preliminary Plan for 2008 County Wide Law Enforcement Deputy Deployment” document to Schwartz.

Mahony stated the need to work collaboratively with Scio Township to develop a communication strategy with a joint message educating Scio Township citizens regarding the need for police services. He stated that Scio was under-policed even prior to the recent reduction, and that the Sheriff deputies end up taking the brunt of the situation dealing with the citizens complaints regarding delays in service.

Mahony indicated that Scio Township is no longer a Charter Township; that Scio had their Charter challenged in Court, and lost.

Vaillencourt stated the importance of the *PSSC* keeping an eye on the General Fund deputies, to make sure that all the vacancies don't get transferred into these positions, and that they are not used solely to subsidize jurisdictions that are under-contracting. Mahony stressed that the reality will be that these deputies are used to subsidize under-contracting areas, because that is where the calls will be and there won't be any local resources to send.

O'Hare asked *PSSC* members to keep in mind that deployment is the Sheriff's responsibility, asking Mahony if there is anything needed from this group in terms of the idea of phasing in the General Fund deputies during Q1 2008. Mahony responded that he would appreciate any input.

Ouimet noted one of the major keys for the implementation is communication, and that it needs to be made clear when/where there is an under-purchase/contracting issue. He noted that under-contracting for deputies sets up a risk/reward situation, heavy on the risk side. Bunten stressed his concerns regarding officer safety issues presented by under-contracting areas.

Mahony indicated that he had informed Scio that they could count on three things occurring with regard to under-contracting (only five deputies for 2008, down from seven):

- 1) Average tenure of a deputy working Scio Township will be less than three years (rookies getting "stuck" with jobs that are not bid)
- 2) Increase in sick time use (as burn-out occurs) (there are more calls for service than can be handled, so Deputies are started each day further behind)
- 3) Solvable crimes will not be solved (there is currently an average of about 40 open cases that are solvable that there is no deputy to assign to)

Vaillencourt stressed the need for the County to look seriously at Public Safety and how we allocate our monies – how can we make it affordable for small communities? When do we as a county say it must start at that level to say that County-wide we are safe?

Irwin stated that this time is always "now", and it is one reason the *PSSC* is here. He noted that there had been a realization that there are rural townships that don't have the ability to pay, and that is part of the reason for bringing back some General Road patrol deputies; assisting the smaller jurisdictions that may not have a lot of calls for service but do need the occasional help from the Sheriff. He further stated that the larger portion of *PSSC* time has been spent addressing the issue of jurisdictions that are not in this situation, but are an affluent community with resources and money, but not the willingness.

Schwartz noted that the reason for forming Counties originally was to pool resources for small communities in order for them to have resources that couldn't be supported by their own taxes, noting his feeling that we do have an obligation to these smaller jurisdictions and that they do deserve some proactive patrol.

Vaillencourt stressed that the smaller townships do pay into the County, and that different areas of the County may have different needs, such as Human Services; but that somehow we have picked Public Safety and Justice and isolated this for jurisdictions to pay individually, while continuing to fund other services throughout the County.

Bunten shared that it almost doesn't feel like we are dealing with the problem, but rather providing "Band-Aid fixes" along the way. He suggested that perhaps we are not thinking out of the box enough.

Vaillencourt suggested the idea of billing for mutual aid for those that rely on this rather than contracting.

Mahony stressed that the Sheriff's Office has always been very proud of the fact that they respond to all citizens' calls for service. He noted that they may have to really re-think this philosophy in those areas that are under-contracting, and it may be that non-urgent calls need to sit in the queue until they can be responded to by a subsequent shift. He indicated that this would be a real change in their Sheriff's Office culture.

Ouimet stated that the situation is that, while the *PSSC* clearly understands all the issues such as "no-fills", the citizens do not - if they call, they expect a deputy to come.

O'Hare summarized today's *PSSC* discussion for 2008 workplan development as:

- 1) Define what Public Safety is – how do we define Public Safety in Washtenaw County?
- 2) What are the root causes of some of the funding issues around police services? Are we actually addressing these root causes, or are we creating fixes that cause different problems?
- 3) How do we effect any citizen communication that will help educate the population?

O'Hare noted that this conversation needs to be around "what is the fix that will actually enhance the Public Safety – as a connected discussion to funding conversation.

Lovejoy Roe noted that the contract has "tied our hands" and that we may not be able to get the most efficient services at the least cost to the County at large. She suggested the opportunity of running models that show costs if we are short, for example, two deputies all year – based on back-fill costs, etc. She stated this could be an opportunity to know now what could be a financial/efficiency nightmare for deployment, and that those involved might be interested in re-looking at the contract. O'Hare noted that when models were run in 2005/2006, the piece not known was what the deployment statistics would be; suggesting that revising what these models look like in light of the deployment models, could be an option. Lovejoy Roe suggested that this month be run as a model with the new contracted numbers, and administration leaves, and new dollars. Mahony indicated that this model had been run, and it did cause concern, prompting the suggested phased implementation of the General Fund deputies.

Mahony stated a main concept that should be taken to communities in 2008, is that collaboration can increase coverage, get a better level of service, and provide higher proactivity at a reduced cost. He stressed the need to show success and build on this – indicating that he believes they will have three good examples of success on which to build.

Moran indicated for the record his continued concern regarding Item #1 on the Police Services Workshops Q&A – "What if the Sheriff's Office does not have sufficient personnel to provide a deputy?" He stressed that the concept of the jurisdiction paying 2.5 times the contract rate for the first two weeks to backfill is not an acceptable answer.

Vaillencourt asked that a review of the Police Services Workshops (6/14-6/15) be put on the December *PSSC* agenda.

O'Hare indicated that a "Readiness status for 2008" item will be added to the December *PSSC* agenda, including:

- What do we know about what is going to happen in terms of action on the contract?
- Final report regarding jurisdictions' deployment plans
- Final report regarding Reporting System (monthly reports) for jurisdictions

#### **6. Update on Regional Dispatch Discussions**

Patton reminded *PSSC* members that the BOC has established two workgroups around Regional Dispatch: a Steering Committee and a Technical Operations Committee. He said that the Steering Committee has had an initial meeting and the Tech group has met four times. He indicated that the Tech Operations Committee has identified nine different options for dispatch, ranging from "do nothing" to "centralize everything"; and that these options will be narrowed down to just a few for presentation to the Steering Committee.

McFarlane congratulated Scott Patton on his recent election to the City Council in Howell, Michigan.

#### **7. Review and Update of 2007 Workplan / Meetings for 2008**

O'Hare asked *PSSC* members to start developing their workplan for 2008, suggesting a more leadership and proactive role addressing what we can do to actually change the face of police services across the County. She indicated one item still remaining on the 2007 Workplan is a further exploration of efficiencies that can be gained, noting an illustration of the recently combined substations. She stressed that *PSSC* conversations for the past few years have been more about "who pays" than exploring the actual costs of doing police services business.

Mahony stressed that a lot of work, tools and templates have been created, allowing expansion during 2008 to explore "what happens if we combine two services?" He stressed that these tools and templates will provide for the ability to "plug in" different numbers and scenarios to see what the impact is.

Lovejoy Roe stressed the need to look from a macro "big picture" level – getting rid of boundaries, rules and pre-conceived notions – and explore what service/costs could look like if the Sheriff Dept was truly one department for the County – looking past "who pays for what".

Mahony stressed that the County has the resources internally, with a high level of expertise, to plan meaningfully and explore options. He noted that while consultants can be hired at great cost, they would most likely be less informed regarding the community and services.

Bunten noted that if you regionalize all areas of the County that don't already have police services, make that a region and then staff, you can actually divide your resources up according to time of day and day of week and calls for services – becoming a patrol district. He stated his belief that there is a hybrid way of approaching police services. Schwartz concurred that there is a "big picture" way of looking at things that could possibly solve problems and reduce costs.

Moran noted that a County-wide millage proposal had been suggested in 2005, which was not accepted at that time. Irwin indicated that a County-wide millage presents the challenge of getting the portion of the County with their own police services to agree to vote for something that benefits the rest of the County.

Ouimet stressed that there is a huge communication issue going forward, which has not yet been studied.

**8. Adjournment**

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

**Next Meeting:**

Wednesday, December 5, 2007

4:30pm – 6:00pm

110 N. Fourth Avenue, Large Conference Room

Approved by Committee: 5 December 2007