

POLICE SERVICES STEERING COMMITTEE

Wednesday January 23, 2008

4:30pm – 6:00pm

200 North Main, Ann Arbor

Members Present:

Jeff Irwin	County Commissioner, Chair of Board
Ruth Ann Jamnick	Ypsilanti Township
Pat Kelly	Dexter Township
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: Paul Bunten, Dan Minzey, Brenda Stumbo, Kenneth Unterbrink

Staff Present: Mary O'Hare (Facilitator), David Behen, Robert Guenzel, Linda Wicks (Recording Secretary)

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Facilitator O'Hare, 4:40 pm, at the Washtenaw County Building, 200 North Main, lower level conference room.

2. Approval of Minutes

Ouimet moved for approval of the December 5, 2007, Police Services Steering Committee meeting minutes; McFarlane and Kelly seconded; all in favor.

3. Citizen Participation

None.

4. Adopt 2008 Calendar

Kelly moved for approval of the 2008 *PSSC* calendar; Irwin seconded; all in favor. This 2008 *PSSC* Meeting Schedule has meetings the First Wednesday of each month, 4:30pm-6:00pm, 200 North Main, Lower Level Conference Room. Exceptions to this First Wednesday schedule are this January 23 meeting and the July meeting, which is rescheduled to the third Wednesday, July 16, 2008. It was noted that the Ann-Ashley parking structure moves to a single entry-payment at 4pm; therefore parking ticket validation is not effective.

5. County Budget Update

County Administrator Bob Guenzel presented an update on the County Budget, providing information about the current anticipated budget shortfall of about 8 to 10 million for 2008 and 2009.

Budget developed through 2007 Planning Process for 2008/2009:

- 5 & 10 year projections had included an assumption that Property Tax Revenue would grow by 5.5%. Property Tax Revenue is 70% of General Fund Budget (\$107 Million). In the past the County could know the year in advance what this property tax revenue would be through winter tax collection,

equalized in April; with the tax collection now in the summer, the County won't know this year's revenue amount until equalization in April. During the 2007 Planning Process it became clear that the long-range Property Tax Revenue projection of 5.5% needed to be adjusted; with 3.5% used for the 2008 budget. This figure is now expected to be closer to 0% (actual figure available in April).

Two major factors then impacted projections: Housing market and construction decline in Washtenaw County; and ongoing labor negotiations. Projected savings through structural changes in the employee pension plan were impacted by incorrect actuarial figures, which had been checked by two independent actuarial firms.

Communication venues presenting this information to employees and public include the following, based on the County Guiding Principle to make this budget issue as transparent to and get as much input from the organization as possible:

- 1) Commissioner briefings, Department Heads, Employee Groups, Union Groups
- 2) Administration Updates on eCentral
- 3) eWashtenaw/News Updates
- 4) Group of 180/Leadership Meeting, TownHall Sessions
- 5) Web Presence with input/feedback opportunities
- 6) Hiring Freeze in effect 1/1/08
- 7) Strategic Oversight Committee, comprised of a representative group of Department Heads

Guenzel stressed that the County needs to be as thoughtful as possible about solutions, but also must get the 2008 issue resolved, indicating that the 2009 issues will need some structural changes within the organization. Guenzel stated that he would be presenting his recommendations to the Board of Commissioners on February 20, 2008.

Moran inquired about Tax Abatements, indicating that if the County's position should be that it must be more careful regarding abatements, it might be helpful if there were a memo to this effect. Guenzel stated his commitment to economic development in Washtenaw County and his confidence in the local jurisdictions to do what is best for this development. Irwin suggested the need for more high-quality information regarding the magnitude of abatements, noting that the County is not currently in the position to set any guidelines for local jurisdictions; stating that it is really an iterative process balancing what is good for a community today.

Guenzel stated that the County has a contractual obligation to honor Police Services Contracts. Vaillencourt stressed the need not to cut anything that would jeopardize public safety while resolving the current budget issues.

Ouimet stated that, as challenging as these times are for Washtenaw County, it is also an opportunity as we go through 2008/2009 to re-engineer functions within County government, which can, in the long-term be a big plus. What are the things that jurisdictions are doing that the County many not need to, and what are the things that the County is doing that can partner with jurisdictions to alleviate cost factors? He noted that the bottom line is that we all have to work closer going forward for everyone's success.

McFarlane noted that Superior Township will probably have slight growth during this period.

Jamnick stated that it would be good if information was shared with jurisdictions regarding assumptions and projections based on December Property values. Lovejoy Roe suggested that County Equalization could work with local assessors.

Kelly said that Enbridge settlements have just happened, for jurisdictions with Enbridge pipelines running through, resulting in a significant hit on property values.

6. BOC Referral of Proposal

Irwin stated that there was a resolution introduced during the Budget Planning Process by Commissioner Lovejoy Roe suggesting allocation of resources from the General Fund toward more General Fund Road Patrol Deputies. An initial amount of \$750,000 was introduced, subsequently brought back with a lesser \$350,000 amount for the resolution. The BOC took the action to refer this issue to the *PSSC* for discussion and recommendation. Irwin stated his expectation that this would go on the 2008 *PSSC* Workplan. Schwartz stated that this discussion should include other options such as reducing all contract costs slightly. Schwartz further noted that in light of the current budget situation, this issue may be moot.

Lovejoy Roe said that the premise behind the proposal was to start looking at the savings that may occur by not having the full complement of Road Patrol onboard by January 1, 2008 – to keep the monies set aside for Police Services used for this purpose.

McFarlane stated that he would not be in favor of increasing the General Fund Road Patrol, that what has been allocated is fair, and that if there are additional monies allocated these should go toward reducing the costs for those contracting. He concurred that in light of the current budget situation, this issue may be moot.

Vaillencourt noted that providing additional General Fund Deputies could create a “catch 22” situation, where others then cut back, noting the need to not make it too easy to not contract. She said that if there are additional monies available she would be in favor of those contracting getting the benefit.

Lovejoy Roe suggested that additional Deputies may be able to be added without creating additional burden/overhead costs for the County, as these overhead costs have been spread across the current pool. She indicated that this could be a win for both County & jurisdiction if additional Deputies could be added at a lesser cost and used to fill vacancies that currently fill at time and a half.

Irwin noted that if additional Deputies are added under current “overhead” costs, this could be viewed by jurisdictions as riding on top of their overhead costs.

Mahony stated that all the Deputy positions are filled now, stressing the issue of “at what capacity these Deputies are used while in training”. He noted that if they are not counted toward staffing, their salaries are still being paid – there is no cost savings.

O’Hare stressed the need to determine if there really are any savings to be utilized.

McFarlane stated that there is no current written policy for deployment of recruit Deputies and how these recruits are being utilized in Townships, expressing concern if they are being used as Deputies that are being paid for by the jurisdiction.

Mahony stated that there is a section in the contracts that talks about the “not counting of Recruit Deputy hours towards service fulfillment stopped at the end of 2007”. He stated that they had asked specific questions about this at jurisdiction and budget meetings, inquiring if this meant that they could count recruit time as a body. He noted that Recruits are certified, but internally have a 4-6 month training process. Mahony stated that “where having a recruit in your community brings your on-duty patrol units down below the level it would be if you were fully staffed with sworn, fully-trained officers, the County is now back-filling this”. Mahony said that initially this was not being done, because they were operating

under their understanding of the contract policy; but that when it was determined that this contract policy may not have been articulated clearly, they looked at how the Sheriff's Office could make sure the jurisdictions get what they were trying to achieve with minimum staffing ratios.

McFarlane inquired if the General Fund positions were listed in the Shift Bid. Mahony stated that shift bid had to be posted six weeks prior to when it would take effect; indicating that they had looked at where Recruits would be in the process. He indicated that six of the General Fund positions had been locked out from the bid (days & afternoons), in so much as part of the year-long bid process Deputies could bid on these six positions, knowing that until recruits were trained and available, they would be working in contract areas first.

Mahony stated that to have 12 Deputies out January 1, 2008, per contract, would require backfilling about four shifts a day with overtime, at considerable overtime expense, until all the Recruits are trained and up to speed. He indicated that to do this would take about a third of the annual allotment for overtime.

Vaillencourt inquired if the General Fund Road Patrol would be used to fill vacancies for Contract Deputies; noting that this could leave the General Fund Road Patrol continually short. She stated that at some point these two entities should stand on their own and be responsible for their own staffing.

McFarlane stated his belief that the General Fund Road Patrol should be used to fill vacancies – that Contract Deputies should come first. He stated that the General Fund Deputies should be used to backfill for Contract Deputies.

O'Hare suggested that *PSSC* members monitor contracts and deployment for early 2008, to see how everything is working; then follow-up with a more educated conversation in a few months.

O'Hare stated that in terms of communication and interpretation of the contract and what policies are surfaced as a result of questions, the *PSSC* may want to address regarding how this should be handled and communicated – is there a way to be able to bring this back to the *PSSC*, as issues come up?; how can these be known sooner vs. later? -- the role of the *PSSC* could be as the “clearinghouse”. O'Hare reminded *PSSC* members of the Listserve (*L-PSSC*) for communication opportunities between meetings.

Jannick stated the need for a definition of a deputy, noting that the only place a definition is available indicates “Certified Police Officer”. She said that the County Board can consider them as “Fully Trained Officers ready-to-go” but the Sheriff's policy conflicts with this as they go through training. She indicated her expectation that Ypsilanti Township will always have recruits, and may seldom have 38 certified police officers, Washtenaw County trained. Jannick inquired about the specific assignment positions, filled vs funded.

O'Hare asked *PSSC* members to email her, or the *L-PSSC* Listserve, with issues/questions for the next *PSSC* meeting, so these may be added to the February agenda. She noted the need for the *PSSC* to clarify methodology and how it is actually working. Irwin suggested that the next *PSSC* meeting should focus solely on the Recruit/Trainee issue vs. filled positions, looking at issues such as:

- What is the status of filled positions?
- How many trainees do we have?
- How are we counting trainees or not counting them as fulfilling contract positions?
- What does the contract say specifically about Recruits/Trainees?

Kelly suggested that examples or suggestions for definitions be included in this discussion, along with where these definitions should be captured. Irwin stated the need to go back to the contract for review.

O'Hare stated that a number of contracting jurisdictions have not yet contacted the County to get hooked up and trained in order to get their online Police Services reports. She asked that jurisdictions contact the County to get this access as soon as possible.

Moran stated an additional issue for *PSSC* discussion being time off in Court; when the incident was in another jurisdiction and the Deputy is now sitting in Court on another jurisdiction's time.

7. 2008 Committee Workplan

Postponed to February 6, 2008, *PSSC* meeting.

8. Committee Check-In

Postponed to February 6, 2008, *PSSC* meeting.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Facilitator O'Hare at 6:15 pm.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, February 6, 2008

4:30pm – 6:00pm

200 North Main, lower level conference room

Approved by Committee: 6 February 2008