

**Columbia County**  
**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**  
**June 8, 2020**

**Present:** Chris Polzer, Keith Miller, Liz Miller, Nancy Long, Doug Ferguson  
**Also Present:** Vern Gove, Jim Foley, Jessica Hale, Shonna Neary, Katie Day, Kate Young, Kathy Johnson, Marie Darling Ellis, Angela Hinze, Roger Brandner, Greg Bisch, James Stilson, NaDeanna Giuffre

**Monthly Agenda Items:**

- 1) Call to Order. Meeting called to order at 9 a.m. by Polzer.
- 2) Compliance with Open Meeting Law. Posting compliance was met per Open Meetings Law.
- 3) Approval of Agenda. *Motion was made by K. Miller to approve the agenda as posted. Seconded by L. Miller. Motion carried.*
- 4) Approval of Previous Committee Meeting Minutes – 03/09/20 and 05/27/20. *Motion made by K. Miller to approve the previous meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Polzer. Motion carried.*
- 5) Public Input: n/a.
- 6) Approval of Expenditure Reports. Reports will be reviewed by each office.
- 7) Chair's Comments: Chair Polzer introduced and welcomed the new members: Nancy Long, Liz Miller, and Doug Ferguson. Polzer also wished to thank former Chair Pufahl on a doing a great job with the previous Public Safety Committee and leaving it in such good shape. Polzer commended all three department heads for their hard work and dedication through the COVID pandemic. L. Miller further commended Sheriff Brandner on his newspaper comments regarding the ongoing protests and rioting. In the coming months, tours of the law enforcement center, medical examiner suite, and jail will be planned for the new committee.

**Emergency Management.** (Johnson, Darling Ellis)

- 1) **Expenditure Report.** Report was reviewed. *After a review of the Emergency Management expenditure report, a motion was made by K. Miller to approve the report. Seconded by Long. Motion carried.*
- 2) **General Review of Department Activities.** Monthly activity reports were provided in binders. Discussion. Johnson reviewed department activities and highlighted the Wisconsin Disaster Funds being received from the March 2019 flooding, COVID supplies continue to be ordered, and the county-purchased Skytron decontaminating robot is being utilized in several county buildings. Sheriff Brandner took this opportunity to thank Kathy for stepping up during this pandemic, especially with her work on the front lines in obtaining the much needed and in demand PPEs. Chair Gove and PSC Chair Polzer also echoed thanks and gratitude to Kathy who is really shining as the leader in Emergency Management. Johnson extended her gratitude to Marie Darling Ellis, Sheriff Brandner, and the extra assistance provided by the Accounting Office for loaning a staff member to the COVID Help Desk and establishing special COVID accounts to more easily track funds, expenditures, donations, and necessary overtime during this crisis. The deadline for COVID funding is set for 10/31/20.

**Medical Examiner.** (Hinze)

- 1) **Expenditure Report.** Report was reviewed. *After a review of the Medical Examiner expenditure report, a motion was made to approve the report by K. Miller. Seconded by Long. Motion carried.*
- 2) **General Review of Department Activities.** Monthly activity reports were provided in binders. Discussion. Hinze provided a brief overview of what her department does for the county and a detailed explanation of the information that is provided monthly. COVID numbers will also be added in the future. Hinze highlighted her monthly activity reports to include the death certificate process. Each death certificate must show the required information needed and the specific detail of everything in the patient's system at the time of death. Hinze advised that the Farber Funeral Home issue is being worked on. Hinze spoke briefly about COVID-related deaths and differentiated the two as dying "with" or dying "from" COVID. Hinze

advised that the fees ordinance is being updated with the assistance of Corporation Counsel. Hinze stated that part of educating each committee member, she will provide an informational binder and Power Point presentation for the committee. A tour of the ME suite can be done whenever supervisors are available.

3) **2021 Capital Outlay.** Discussion. Hinze advised of anticipated items needed for 2021.

**MATRS Program Update.** (Day, Young) Health and Human Services Kate Young gave a brief update on this program. Of the 16 referred, there are currently no clients in the program now. The grant ends 06/30/20 and Columbia County has reapplied. Monthly updates by Human Services were requested.

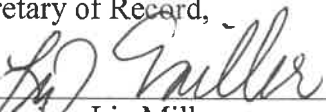
**Sheriff's Office/Jail.** (Brandner, Bisch, Stilson)

- 1) **Expenditure Reports.** Report was reviewed. *After a review of the Sheriff's Office's expenditure reports, a motion was made K. Miller to approve the report. Seconded by Long. Motion carried.*
- 2) **General Review of Department Activities.** Monthly activity reports were provided in binders. The Sheriff provided highlights stating it has been very busy over the past several months and commended his staff on how well they stepped up to meet the challenges. The Sheriff advised that the office saw a slight reduction in domestic-related incidents, but a spike in impaired driving arrests. A radio tower project update was provided. The CCI escape investigation led to charging two women who were involved in the planning and execution of the escape. Four homicide suspects were safely taken into custody in Wisconsin Dells by the Columbia and Sauk ERT teams. The detective bureau is working diligently on various cases to include the ongoing homicide, drug and child pornography investigations and search warrants, drug overdose deaths, CCI John Doe cases, as well as a sexual assault involving a CCI staff member who was subsequently arrested. The Sheriff's Office has assisted with protests and riots involving our own communities in Portage, Columbus, Lodi and Wisconsin Dells, but also those occurring in Madison. Peaceful protests are supported to keep citizens safe and hopefully deter escalations to rioting, criminal activity, and violence. Sheriff Brandner explained his stance and assured the committee that with the assistance of HR and Corporation Counsel, hiring and performing thorough background investigations are set to a very high standard here in Columbia County. In addition, the Sheriff has high expectations, strong and competent supervisors, and demands holding all staff to a high level of accountability at the Sheriff's Office because as he stated, "it is a privilege to wear this badge." Chair Gove commended Sheriff Brandner for his dedication to the county and his staff. The Sheriff advised that body cameras were approved for purchase and the newest units should be available later this year. From the recent storm, the dispatch center received 106 - 911 calls and 206 calls on the regular lines. Staff are seeking and writing as many grants as we can for gas masks, drug equipment, etc. Despite how other departments managed the COVID-19 pandemic, all facets of the Sheriff's Office have been very busy with increased calls for service. The Sheriff invited the committee members to attend the next swearing-in ceremony for eight new staff members on 07/13/20 following the July Public Safety Committee meeting.
- 3) **Inmate Count and General Review of Jail Operations.** Inmate Count: 102. Stilson advised that with fewer inmates being housed due to COVID-19, there has been an increase in mental health issues, but more proactive work being done in the jail. Despite fewer county inmates, there was an uptick in federal inmates. Like many other jails in the state, Huber inmates being released out to the community to work has been suspended to help control potential spread of the virus. Evaluation of lifting the suspension has been ongoing and will be reevaluated next week again.
- 4) **Line Item Transfer – Riot Gear.** Discussion. *Motion by L. Miller to approve the Line Item Transfer of \$8330 from Prisoner Food Contract to Sheriff's Admin Field Equipment. Seconded by K. Miller. Motion carried.*
- 5) **2021 Capital Outlay.** Discussion. The Sheriff advised of anticipated items needed for 2021 in both Pool and Non Pool Capital Outlay.

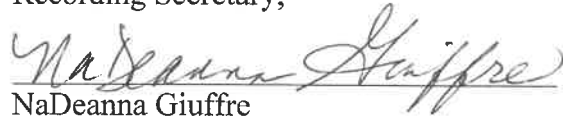
*Motion by K. Miller to adjourn the meeting at 11:18 a.m. Seconded by Long. Motion carried.*

Next meeting date: Monday, July 13, 2020 at 9 a.m.

Secretary of Record,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Liz Miller  
Committee Secretary

Recording Secretary,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
NaDeanna Giuffre  
Assistant to Sheriff Brandner

cc: Public Safety Members 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair Foley  
Chair Gove 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair Koch Internet

Approved