

**Columbia County  
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE  
August 9, 2021**

**Present:** Chris Polzer, Liz Miller, Nancy Long, Barry Pufahl  
**Absent/Unforeseen**  
**Circumstances:** Keith Miller  
**Also Present:** Vern Gove, James Foley, Jessica Hale, Shonna Neary, Roger Brandner, Greg Bisch, Jim Stilson, Kathy Johnson, Katelyn Schara, David Drews, 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 L. Miller to approve the agenda as posted. Seconded by Pufahl. Motion carried unanimously.*
- 4) Approval of Previous Committee Meeting Minutes. *Motion made by Long to approve the previous meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by L. Miller. Motion carried unanimously.*
- 5) Public Input: n/a.
- 6) Approval of Expenditure Reports. Reports will be reviewed by each office.
- 7) Chair's Comments: Thank you Mr. Polzer for the donut treats. To better streamline today's meeting, Mr. Polzer thanked the department heads for providing the budget packets before the meeting.

**Emergency Management.** (Johnson)

- 1) **Expenditure Report.** Report was reviewed. *After a review of the Emergency Management expenditure report, a motion was made by L. Miller to approve the report. Seconded by Long. Motion carried unanimously.*
- 2) **General Review of Department Activities.** Monthly activity report was provided in meeting binders. Discussion. Johnson presented her report and highlighted the following topics: with the increase in storms recently, the Fox and Crawfish are still below action phase, but the Wisconsin is rising and being monitored. There have been 11 vaccination clinics held since last month's meeting. Numbers are slowly going up. Pfizer and J&J vaccinations are being focused on due to Pfizer being suitable for ages 12 and up. September 2 will be the last day the National Guard will be able to assist us for vaccinations. Although the first responders required no additional emergency resources, Johnson was contacted re: the helicopter crash where she instructed dispatch to report the crash/hazardous materials release to WI Emergency Management Hotline as well as create a press release. There was no correlation between the helicopter crash and the ongoing EAA event in Oshkosh. Through conversations with other entities involved, they are open to sharing costs for new river gauges. ARPA funds may also be a possibility.
- 3) **Review/Approve 2022 Annual Budget.** Discussion. *Motion by L. Miller to approve the 2022 proposed Emergency Management (2115), S.A.R.A. (2116), Haz-Mat (2117) budgets and Capital Outlay (451) as presented. Seconded by Long. Motion carried unanimously.*

**Medical Examiner.** (Schara)

- 1) **Expenditure Report.** Report was reviewed. *After a review of the Medical Examiner expenditure report, a motion was made by L. Miller to approve the report. Seconded by Long. Motion carried*

*unanimously.*

- 2) **General Review of Department Activities.** Monthly activity report was provided in meeting binders. Discussion. Schara presented the monthly report and highlighted the following topics: average 48 calls for July. Following her meeting with Heather Gove and Health and Human Services staff regarding crisis management, grief support, and sharing resources, each department's roles were identified and how to best serve the community were discussed. Versiti's use of the morgue is set to begin in August. Through a conversation with Ellen Ellingsworth, once staff shortages are filled, more work with suicide prevention and education will continue. Chair Polzer commended the focus of the suicide education components. Overdose Fatality Review Team works with Transitions Behavioral Health by attending meetings and Compass Counseling holds a "complicated" (suicide and OD deaths) grief support session weekly. Staff updates: a deputy medical examiner was terminated, three positions are currently filled, but still in need of a Chief Deputy and two additional deputies. The process is ongoing.
- 3) **Review/Approve 2022 Annual Budget.** Discussion. *Motion by Pufahl to approve the 2022 proposed Medical Examiner (1270) budget and Capital Outlay (101) as presented. Seconded by L. Miller. Motion carried unanimously.*

**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 by K. Miller to approve the report. Seconded by Long. Discussion. Motion carried unanimously.*
- 2) **General Review of Department Activities.** Monthly activity report was provided in meeting binders. Sheriff Brandner provided highlights of the report to include: National Night Out were held in Columbus, Lodi, and Portage had great turnouts in each community. July had 32 impaired driving arrests, 15 domestic arrests, 10 overdoses with one death and two saves with the administration of Narcan. With the loss of three more jailers in July (retirement, left for another agency for more money and protective status, and no longer wishing to do the duties of a jailer) Sheriff Brandner thanked ACC Jessica Hale for her quick response to attend impromptu interviews and from those, two jailers were hired so far. August and September will be challenging with the staff shortages. Overtime will likely spike to maintain a minimum of eight jailers on duty per shift. A wrongful death suit was filed in April 2021 against Columbia County and many other entities stemming from an incident that occurred back in April 2019. The Sheriff discussed that following a shooting that occurred in Blackhawk, the suspect was caught and arrested in Milwaukee County. Through an ongoing agency assist investigation with Dane County, Columbia County detectives continue to help with the search Columbia County for dismembered homicide victims. The recent Amber Alert that began in Wisconsin Rapids came to a safe resolution in the Village of Rio through top-notch investigative work by Deputy Nate Fredrick in locating the suspect vehicle and through excellent negotiations by Captain Jim Stilson. We checked the ALPR license plate reader and learned that the suspect vehicle passed through Columbia County. There were two squad crashes in July: one was a squad v. deer and another was an at-fault crash which involved an on-duty deputy which will be dealt with internally.
- 3) **Inmate Count and General Review of Jail Operations.** Inmate Count: 128. Captain Stilson advised with the count up, staff continue to be busy. There were 249 inmates booked and 239 released. One inmate was booked and released four separate times in July. There were 74 doctor visits, 492 nurse screens, and one ER visit. Mental health and drug issues found at intake continue to rise. There were two attempted inmate suicides both of which were found in time and two incidents

where Narcan was implemented during the intake process. These are inmates who likely ingested narcotics just before or at the time of arrest and then begin to OD while going through intake at the jail. The current staff are overstressed due to the aggressive behavior, mental health, and drug dependency of inmates as well as being short-staffed. Although Sheriff Brandner continues to balance both the budget and staff levels, the funds must now tip in the jailers favor with overtime. The jail has been working with less than a desirable number of jailers while inmate counts were lower. Sheriff's admin now must increase the number of jailers on duty back to a minimum of eight for the safety and security of the staff and inmates. CD Bisch advised that following his visiting with both shifts in the jail, he saw great communication among the staff, but their wellbeing must be supported.

- 4) **Position Replacement Request – Jailers (3).** Discussion. *Motion by Pufahl to approve the three jailer position replacement requests (Susan Barton, Jonathan Vega Roman, and Katherine Krogman). Seconded by Long. Motion carried unanimously.*
- 5) **Jail Physician Services Agreement.** Discussion. One bid obtained for a one-year contract from a local doctor who carries her own malpractice insurance. This is an increase; however, the Sheriff's administration is comfortable with the services rendered. The contract was written and reviewed by Corporation Counsel. *Motion by Pufahl to accept the Jail Physician Services Agreement for \$106,000 with Dr. Vasilisi 'Lisa' Mironovich. Seconded by L. Miller. Motion carried unanimously.*
- 6) **Change in Capital Outlay.** Discussion. This decibel reader will be used by both the Sheriff's Office as well as the Planning and Zoning Department for county ordinance citations. *Motion by Pufahl to approve the Change in Capital Outlay for \$3100. Seconded by L. Miller. Motion carried unanimously.*
- 7) **Sole Source Purchase.** Discussion. The Sheriff wishes to purchase the same brand, make, and model for the Huber Center that already exists in the jail. This purchase has already gone before and was approved at the necessary committees as well as passing at the full County Board in July 2021. *Motion by Long to approve the Sole Source Purchase of the Tek84 Interceptor for the Huber Center. Seconded by L. Miller. Motion carried unanimously.*
- 8) **Review/Approve 2022 Annual Budget.** Discussion. Chair Polzer commended the Sheriff's administration for the transparency throughout the entire budget process. Overall, the budget came in \$2,040 under 2021's budget. The Sheriff advised that there are steep increases in software and the systems needed to operate 911 dispatch and patrol. The 2023 budget will be especially challenging with the anticipated need of eight new squads and more increases in software maintenance. The Sheriff explained that the goal was to keep the budget at zero increase understanding the possibility of using ARPA funds for some equipment. The Sheriff further advised the committee that he will likely utilize line item transfers in 2021 for needed squads/vehicles. *Motion by L. Miller to approve the 2022 proposed Sheriff's Administration (2222), Boat Patrol (2224), Dive Team (2226) Drug Education and Enforcement (2240), County Jail (2250), and 911 (2911) budgets as well as Capital Outlays Sheriff Camera System (345), Sheriff Administration (401), County Jail (402) and Sheriff's Autos (406) as presented. Seconded by Long. Motion carried unanimously.*


Meeting adjourned at 10:31 a.m.

Next meeting date: Monday, September 13, 2021 at 9 a.m.

Secretary of Record,

  
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Supervisor Liz Miller  
Committee Secretary

Recording Secretary,

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

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

Approved