

**Columbia County
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
November 14, 2022**

Present: Keith Miller, Liz Miller, Theresa Valencia, Troy Ryan
Absent w/o Notice: Mike Weyh
Also Present: Chris Polzer, Shonna Neary, David Drews, Bob Koch, Madeleine Meeker, Roger Brandner, Greg Bisch, Jim Stilson, Jon Stefonek, NaDeanna Giuffrè

Monthly Agenda Items:

- 1) Call to Order. Meeting called to order at 9 a.m. by K. Miller.
- 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 presented. Seconded by Valencia. Motion carried unanimously.*
- 4) Approval of Previous Committee Meeting Minutes. *Motion made by L. Miller to approve the previous month meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Ryan. Motion carried unanimously.*
- 5) Public Input: n/a.
- 6) Approval of Expenditure Reports. Reports will be reviewed by each office.
- 7) Chair's Comments: Chair Miller spoke about his appreciation and support of the Sheriff's Office, Jail, Medical Examiner, and Emergency Management offices for their roles in Public Safety. Chair Polzer echoed these comments and added that the county board values these departments and their staff. Chair Polzer advised of the passing of former County Board Supervisor and Chair Bob Westby. Further information will be forwarded by the County Clerk's Office. Chair Polzer took the opportunity to thank and recognize those Veterans who served or are still serving our great nation and their supportive families.

Emergency Management. (Koch)

- 1) **Expenditure Report.** Expenditure report was previously provided to the committee via email, posted on CCBoard/Public Safety Committee, and made available during the meeting. *After a review of the Emergency Management expenditure report, a motion was made by L. Miller to approve the report. Seconded by Valencia. Motion carried unanimously.*
- 2) **General Review of Department Activities.** Activity report was previously provided to the committee on CCBoard/Public Safety Committee. Koch presented his report and highlighted ongoing and upcoming training, meetings, and projects for October and November. Koch further advised of the recent AT&T site visit and tour for the NextGen911 project. On 12/20/22, the county will be participating in a county-wide full-scale exercise at Rusch Elementary in the City of Portage. Koch explained and discussed the negative ramifications of Land Information Dean Kaderabek's resignation from the county. There are great concerns about the expertise and knowledge that are needed with that office and his position. EM Deputy Robert Maier is planning to meet with Kaderabek before his departure in hopes of learning the bare necessities for functionality. Public Safety must be considered the highest priority. Other departments aid and supplement, but maintaining high standards in public safety must be accomplished. Sheriff Brandner met with Kaderabek as well to learn of the duties that must be done in order for certain programming to continue. In the short-term, the county will struggle. Questions about Project Lifesaver were discussed. Supervisor L. Miller inquired about the status of the MVB 3X modular vehicle barrier device proposed earlier this year for purchase with ARPA funds. Koch advised that the device was rejected during the budget process, but that it remains on the Executive Committee table for discussion. Timeline of ordering, processing, and training were discussed.
- 3) **Action on the Hazmat Training Grant.** Discussion. These grant monies will be used for refresher training for our current certified technicians and to certify new hazmat technicians of the Columbia County and Portage Fire Department hazmat team. *Motion by L. Miller to accept the \$2,036 Hazmat Training Grant as presented. Seconded by Ryan. Motion carried unanimously.*

- 4) **LIT – Capital Outlay.** The need of a new server and printer for the county’s door access and ID system were discussed. *Motion by L. Miller to approve the line item transfer of \$4,100 from EM Other Supplies and \$700 from EM Equipment (total \$4800) to EM Capital Outlay to replace the outdated equipment. Seconded by Valencia. Motion carried unanimously.*
- 5) **LIT – Fuel.** Due to the increased fuel costs, a line item transfer was required. *Motion by L. Miller to approve the line item transfer of \$1200 from EM Vehicle Maintenance to EM Fuel/Oil. Seconded by Valencia. Motion carried unanimously.*

Medical Examiner. (Meeker)

- 1) **Expenditure Report.** Expenditure report was previously provided to the committee via email, posted on CCBoard/Public Safety Committee, and made available during the meeting. *After a review of the Medical Examiner expenditure report, a motion was made by Ryan to approve the report. Seconded by L. Miller. Motion carried unanimously.*
- 2) **General Review of Department Activities.** Meeker provided highlights for the month stating that there was a total of 52 calls. Of those, there was one gunshot wound, three overdoses (pending toxicology reports), five autopsies, five Versiti donations, and one ATSF donation. Meeker discussed a recent toxicology report from September which tested positive for Xylazine which is a veterinarian tranquilizer. A ridealong was scheduled for a new applicant. Staff attended the Fall 2022 WCMEA Conference. Inquiries regarding the ME Office should be directed to the Human Resources Office.

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

- 1) **Expenditure Reports.** Expenditure report was previously provided to the committee via email, posted on CCBoard/Public Safety Committee, and made available during the meeting. *After a review of the Sheriff’s Office’s expenditure reports, a motion was made by L. Miller to approve the report. Seconded by Ryan. Motion carried unanimously.*
- 2) **General Review of Department Activities.** Activity report was previously provided to the committee on CCBoard/Public Safety Committee. Sheriff Brandner spoke about a recent armed standoff incident on STH 44. Through negotiations by Captain Stilson, the situation ended without further incident. Another active deer season is upon us. With that, there are many vehicle v. deer crashes and there was a motorcycle vs. deer crash that was fatal. The Sheriff reported another significant recent high-speed chase involving felony charges. This chase continued through four different counties and ultimately ended in Marquette County after several hours due to the vehicle running out of fuel. Although it was reported the driver had a weapon, the subject was taken into custody without injuries to any of those involved and a handgun was in fact recovered from the vehicle. A hit and run incident involving an intoxicated driver vs. a bicyclist was thankfully witnessed and the witness was able to clearly identify the driver as the bicyclist was seriously injured and could not. While being medically evaluated at the hospital, an inmate was able to obtain a scissors resulting in threatening hospital staff and Sheriff’s Office deputies. The incident was contained with no injuries. Several more jail incidents occurred this month. There was another overdose, a stabbing incident where one inmate attacked another unprovoked inmate, and another incident where jail deputies were attacked and sustained serious injuries. These incidents continue and are getting more and more severe. The jail staff did great in supporting each other. These individuals creating the problems must be held accountable. Despite the generous incentives already granted from the county, the jail is currently five staff members short and another resignation is anticipated this week which then the department will be six short. This puts added stress and extra overtime work on the current staff and more jailers are still leaving for Monday-Friday jobs. This is a huge concern. Jail staff support is at critical mass. The Sheriff advised that his staff are stressed out, but doing the best they can. They are great workers and very dedicated. Human Resources and the resources available through EAP are assisting whenever possible. The Sheriff also thanked Captain Stilson, Lieutenant Kjorlie, and the jail sergeants for their continued dedication in scheduling, managing, and the ongoing training. For additional support, counseling services through The Psychology Center will be meeting with staff who wish to have a chat session. Recently two law

enforcement officers from a different agency were arrested in Columbia County. The Sheriff's Office received unanticipated revenue from the Department of Corrections for holds in the county jail. The Sheriff further praised his administrative staff for the on-call rotations. Unlike other departments and department heads, all of these extra on-call duties and responses are done without compensation. The Sheriff spoke of the challenges of getting candidates to even apply for the jailer positions. The office is seeking new ideas for incentives and recruiting opportunities. With new hire incentives being given these incentives, there was a discussion about how to do something similar to those who are currently employed. If the new hires are making a higher wage than those who have been employed with the county longer, it will create other issues. If staff cannot be replaced, closure of certain jail pods are likely to maintain safety and security in the jail for inmates and staff. There will be costly ramifications if we cannot get qualified jail staff soon. Revenues will go down and expenses will go up. Discussion. Supervisor Ryan commented that society's "unintended consequences" are now happening in law enforcement, corrections, and education where fewer and fewer people are going into the fields because the benefits do not outweigh the negatives. The Sheriff explained that the 2% county-proposed ATB wage increase will not even be an increase to the current employees due to the increases in health insurance and other employee-contributed deductions. In previous years, the great insurance and longevity benefits were a draw to those applying. Even those benefits have also been surpassed by the private sector. When tenured staff can leave the county and make more on their first day with their new employer in the private sector, we will continue to lose skilled and dedicated department heads and staff. The office is currently down two deputies, soon to be six jailers, and two dispatchers. The Sheriff shared the OD Fatality Review Report and further advised that the Sheriff's Office is partnering with Health and Human Services in an attempt to minimize overdoses.

- 3) **Inmate Count and General Review of Jail Operations.** Inmate Counts: 164. There have been 206 bookings and 210 released. There were 63 doctor visits, 452 nurse screenings, and three ER visits. Stilson advised that despite the ongoing mental health and drug related issues with the inmates, the jail staff have been exceptional. With the most recent inmate attack on staff, off-duty staff came into work without delay.
- 4) **Position Replacement Request – Patrol Deputy.** After one and a half years of being a county deputy, this staff member returned to his former place of employment for \$8/hour more per hour. *Motion by L. Miller to approve the position replacement request for Deputy John Calhoun as presented. Seconded by Valencia. Motion carried unanimously.*
- 5) **Position Replacement Request – Dispatcher.** After just two years of being with the county, this staff member has sought a position in a neighboring county for a higher wage and closer to home. *Motion by L. Miller to approve the position replacement request for Dispatcher Nathan Snyder as presented. Seconded by Valencia. Motion carried unanimously.*
- 6) **Revisions to the General Employee Handbook – Proposed Changes due to Dispatcher Twelve (12) Hour Shift Change for 2023.** The proposed changes were reviewed and discussed. *Motion by L. Miller to approve the proposed changes for the Dispatcher Twelve (12) Hour Shift Changes as presented. Seconded by Valencia. Motion carried unanimously.*
- 7) **LIT – Business Cards.** Due to an unforeseen change in the county-wide email domain, the Sheriff's Office deputy and administration business cards all needed to be replaced. *Motion by L. Miller to approve the line item transfer of \$1,600 from Sheriff's Administration Dues to Sheriff's Administration Office Supplies as presented. Seconded by Valencia. Motion carried unanimously.*
- 8) **Committee Member Tour of Dispatch Center.**

Next meeting date: Monday, December 12, 2022 at 9 a.m.

Motion by L. Miller to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 a.m. following the tour of the Dispatch Center. Seconded by Valencia. Motion carried unanimously.

Secretary of Record,

Theresa Valencia

Supervisor Theresa Valencia
Committee Secretary

Recording Secretary,

NaDeanna Giuffre

NaDeanna Giuffre
Assistant to Sheriff Brandner

cc: Public Safety Members; Chair Polzer, 1st Vice Chair Brusveen; 2nd Vice Chair Rohrbeck; Internet

Approved