



Onondaga County Legislature

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PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES – MAY 17, 2022 MARK A. OLSON, CHAIRMAN

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Ryan, Mr. Garland, Mr. McBride

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Knapp

ALSO ATTENDING: Mr. Conway, Mr. Headd, Ms. Lesniak, Mr. DeSantis, Mr. Beebe, Ms. Vilardi

Chairman Olson called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. *A motion was made by Mr. McBride, seconded by Mr. Ryan to waive the reading and approve the minutes of the previous committee meeting. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.*

1. **SHERIFF'S:** Mr. Eugene J. Conway, Sheriff
 - a. Informational

Mr. Conway:

- Three events this Friday at 12pm at OCC campus — graduating most recent police academy class, swearing in 20 new recruits and 8 custody correction recruits and an awards ceremony
- This week is known as law enforcement week - started by President Reagan and held week of May 15
- Dr. Crabill is retiring from OCC and want to take a few minutes to recognize her – for a period of time the academy was not at OCC – first thing I did in 2015 was ask Dr. Crabill if the academy could return to OCC – she was gracious and accepting – OCC is the ideal location – access to fitness center and arena – small gesture to thank her and recognize her
- Many colleagues throughout the State and Country are struggling to find employees – custody department is struggling to find recruits – thus the reason custody will be getting another class within the same week
- Four topics today: accreditation, body scanners, tablets and body cameras,
- Accreditation is a dry topic – very important in law enforcement – strived for when taking office in 2015 – NYS accreditation been around for years – Sheriff's office is state accredited – approximately 80% in NYS are accredited – 150 standards have to be adhered to – reassessed and evaluated annually – assessors outside the agency come in and look at the standards – looking for documentation that organization is adhering to the standards – every three years there is a full assessment which includes talking to personnel
- Strive for more excellence with The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (“CALEA”) which is the premier agency – international in scope – 3 year process – in April we received this accreditation – only 91 of over 3,000 organizations are accredited – only 8 in NYS – 300 plus standards – COVID has changed onsite assessments but standards remain the same – challenge is maintaining the accreditation – if you don't follow the standards you are at risk of losing accreditation – a lot of time goes into this process
- Two years ago Governor wanted to address police reform – majority of what came out of that was already accomplished through CALEA – doesn't make us perfect but has benefits to helping us defend ourselves and have documentation on training
- Jail has received highest accreditation – over 300 standards to meet – have been reaccredited
- Accreditation on National Commission Correctional Healthcare – voted to continue to accredit Onondaga County (“OC”) justice center
- Assessors are retired law enforcement, judges, and some have no law enforcement background

- Undersheriff came from Manlius and was instrumental in obtaining CALEA; Dewitt received accreditation just before he left office

Mr. Olson:

- As mayor he is brought in every three years to make any statements about the police department

Mr. Ryan:

- Congratulations – in the context of CALEA previously the storage center was brought up in regards to accreditation – Mr. Conway answered we were nervous about that area but were proficient enough to pass the standards
- Still have the inadequate facility – hopefully this is the year that we change course

Mr. Garland:

- Congratulations – in light of the accreditation on healthcare – a few years ago there was an incident with an inmate that was pregnant and/or asthma – are there checks in place that they are receiving the medical help they need

Mr. Conway:

- We have a vendor that provides medical care and is subject to these standards – vendor has been with OC for several years
- Body scanner is different than a metal detector – have had metal detectors for many years – detects metal to a degree – a few years ago a body scanner became available – similar to x-rays – at first was prohibitively expensive – ongoing problem is contraband in our jails – now people are secreting drugs within their body – staff have to be cautious to make sure fentanyl isn't on the envelopes received in the mail – this is a tremendous challenge – body scanner helps determine if someone has drugs within their body – bought two scanners last year at \$130k from the telephone account – monies derived from inmates using phones – a commission comes back to OC – scanners were not purchased at taxpayers' expense
- Have had several recoveries of drugs and weapons that would not have been discovered –lighters, pipes, knives – if they say they have secreted something we have to put them in a dry toilet or on watch – have to have clearance from the NYS Department of Health to verify scanners aren't causing harm because you're taking an x-ray – have a permit from NYS Department of Health –has to be inspected by someone certified – system passed all requirements – every one that comes into the building goes through the scanner
- Answered Mr. McBride's question – have two body scanners
- Answered Ms. Kuhn's question – staff do not go through the body scanner they enter through the metal detectors

Mr. Conway:

- Tablets were introduced and issued to each inmate at Jamesville and the Justice Center — filters on tablets – can receive emails from family, friends attorneys, watch TV and movies
- Receive services that people use to come into the facility to provide from Syracuse schools or BOCES
- During COVID everything was shut down and services were put on hold which was not healthy for inmates or staff
- Answered Mr. Ryan's question - ICF has been the tablet vendor for the past 4-5 years and specializes in public safety - same vendor that has provided other communication tools
- Justice center has been a bit more of a challenge – brick building so was hard to get service
- Inmates understand it is a privilege and they will lose it if not behaving – already had one destroyed – helps us with mail, programs and keeping the inmate occupied
- Answered Mr. Olson's question - inmate pays for movies but not for educational or email

- Answered Mr. Garland’s question – no cost to OC so don’t know the price – new generations are better and stronger so would not be able to use the glass for suicide – internet is monitored using filters – bulletproof as possible as to how they could hack into it – haven’t had any issues nor have we heard of other facilities with issues – benefits outweigh the negatives
- There is some legislation in the state that wants to do away with any commissions a vendor can receive which if passed would have a negative impact on tablets
- Answered Ms. Kuhn’s question - not yet being used for telemedicine but would entertain looking at it – it’s up to vendor to decide inmate’s access
- Answered Mr. Olson’s question - did anything come out of starting this program that surprised you – no traveled to St. Lawrence 3-4 years ago to see how they were working out –when COVID started and agencies couldn’t come in knew something had to be done – no limit to how long they can be on it – honor system – still have TVs in general area
- Body cameras – cameras were delivered in March because of supply and demand issues – have been preparing them to be implemented – as of last week have 25 on officers with an additional 65 to be added within a month –several weeks of working with vendor, OC Information Technology, and deputies – a great deal of coordination efforts prior to be putting in place – leased 250 body and 75 car cameras that read license plates – won’t see car cameras until fall – total cost \$504k per year – includes cost of storage – cameras have live stream built in
- You may recall when we first put this together it was for police, custody and civil – the amount of \$600k will only address the police department – does not include anyone in custody or civil
- Will submit in 2023 \$504k to cover what we have now – this is where we are and the cost – have committed to 5 years
- Syracuse Police Department and local police departments have identical cameras so are able to share information – total amount included filling a position that will oversee this program
- Answered Mr. Ryan’s question regarding funds – submitted the cost for everyone to have body cameras and that was not approved

Mr. Ryan:

- I think for the record I said we should include civil – have cameras in the Justice Center and Jamesville
- For the record – always skeptical of the CE timeline

Mr. Garland:

- Recently had the gun buyback program – how are those guns melted or destroyed – years ago the guns weren’t properly disposed of and there was a sheriff deputy that ended up with one of the guns

Mr. Conway:

- This goes back to accreditation piece – have a policy and a standard – there are checks and balances for disposal

Mr. Garland:

- Has the policy been followed up on and changed – Mr. Conway answered yes

Mr. Conway:

- Talked about Storage facility for over 20 years –have talked to DA’s office – try to save money and cooperate – Buckner was accepting of a joint facility – can’t take an old elementary school with tons of windows and doors and make it a storage facility
- Part of accreditation is about where guns are stored and the vault – OC is inadequate – basement of a former UPS facility for the past 25 years
- Very agreeable to working with SPD in finding a location that would save both agencies money
- Answered Mr. Olson’s question about 30-40 unfunded vacant openings – funded vacant will be 15 after Friday

A motion was made by Mr. Ryan, seconded by Mr. McBride, to adjourn the meeting. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



MELANIE VILARDI, Deputy Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

DATE: MAY 17, 2022

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
Gene Conway	OSSO
Bob Heald	Comptroller's