



# Onondaga County Legislature

**JAMIE McNAMARA**  
Clerk

**JAMES J. ROWLEY**  
Chairman

**TAMMY BARBER**  
Deputy Clerk

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## **PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES – JUNE 20, 2023** **MARK A. OLSON, CHAIR**

**MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. McCarron, Mr. Ryan, Mr. Bush, Mr. Kinne**

**ALSO ATTENDING:** see attached list

Chair Olson called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. *The minutes of the previous meeting had been distributed, and there were no objections to waiving the reading. There were no corrections to the minutes, and the minutes were approved.*

**1. EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS (E-911):** Julie Corn, Commissioner; Kevin Spraker, Deputy Commissioner of Technology

**a. Amending the 2023 Onondaga County Budget to Accept Grant Funds from the New York Statewide Interoperable Communications Grant Targeted Program (\$2,750,000)**

- Looking to expand operating budget by \$2.75M to accept a grant from NYS
- Applied for grant with neighboring counties
- Receive SICG (Statewide Interoperable Communications Grant) every year
  - This request is a SICG Targeted grant specifically to upgrade radio system
- Radio system is very sophisticated and keeps expanding across multiple counties
  - St. Lawrence County to Broome County
- Trying build a redundant core Master site
  - Current Master site is in Onondaga County; looking to put a second one in neighboring county
  - Would provide functionality needed in case current Master site goes down
  - 911 can never go down; this would give redundancy for radio system
  - Would receive new shelter, generator, microwave connectivity and redundant core

### **Questions/Comments from the Committee:**

- What radios is E-911 talking about?
  - Police, fire, EMS, and other supported agencies
- Some DOT's have radios that are connected
  - Correct, this is not changing current radios
  - When radio is keyed up, it automatically goes to the Master core
    - If Master core is down, it would go into a 16 channel talk group and lose all resource channels
  - This upgrade would be taking the brains of the system and adding a second one
    - If Onondaga County went down, the second one would pick up and radios would function
- Where are you thinking about putting it?
  - Oswego County; but ink is still a little wet
- This is just a Master site, no new radios?
  - No; it would be one additional sink tower
- One tower?
  - Yes

- Talking into the radio is the brain that operates the system; it is not the handheld portable or mobile in the car
- Master site is the brains behind the scene, this would be adding a backup site in case Onondaga County goes down
- Are there matching funds for this?
  - No
- Is it good enough to cover?
  - Yes, it will cover the whole thing

***A motion was made by Mr. Kinne to approve this item.***

**Questions/Comments from the Committee Continued:**

- Is this the brains behind the inner operability that the county did for the last four years?
- Was it a capital improvement that were all put in at United Radio?
  - Yes
- What is the next step?
- Will there be 5G wavelength?
- How will Madison County and all other small counties get on board with what Onondaga County is doing?
- Is redundancy further down the road?
  - The radio system runs off a UHF system; currently have 16 tower sites around Onondaga County
  - Other counties have joined to help with maintenance costs
  - Never had the ability to add a secondary core
  - Every 2 years there is an upgrade to switches and software to the radio system
  - With the new upgrade, a second core to the radio system can be added
  - 5G would be like the modems that were put into cars 4 years ago
- It changes fast; what was talked about 3 years ago is now obsolete
  - That is about how often upgrades are asked for to stay current

***Mr. McCarron seconded the motion.***

**Questions/Comments from the Committee Continued:**

- Do we have an operating agreement that needs to be updated?
  - That is not necessary; the consortium agreement is the county's agreement and will leverage purchasing department to get what is needed

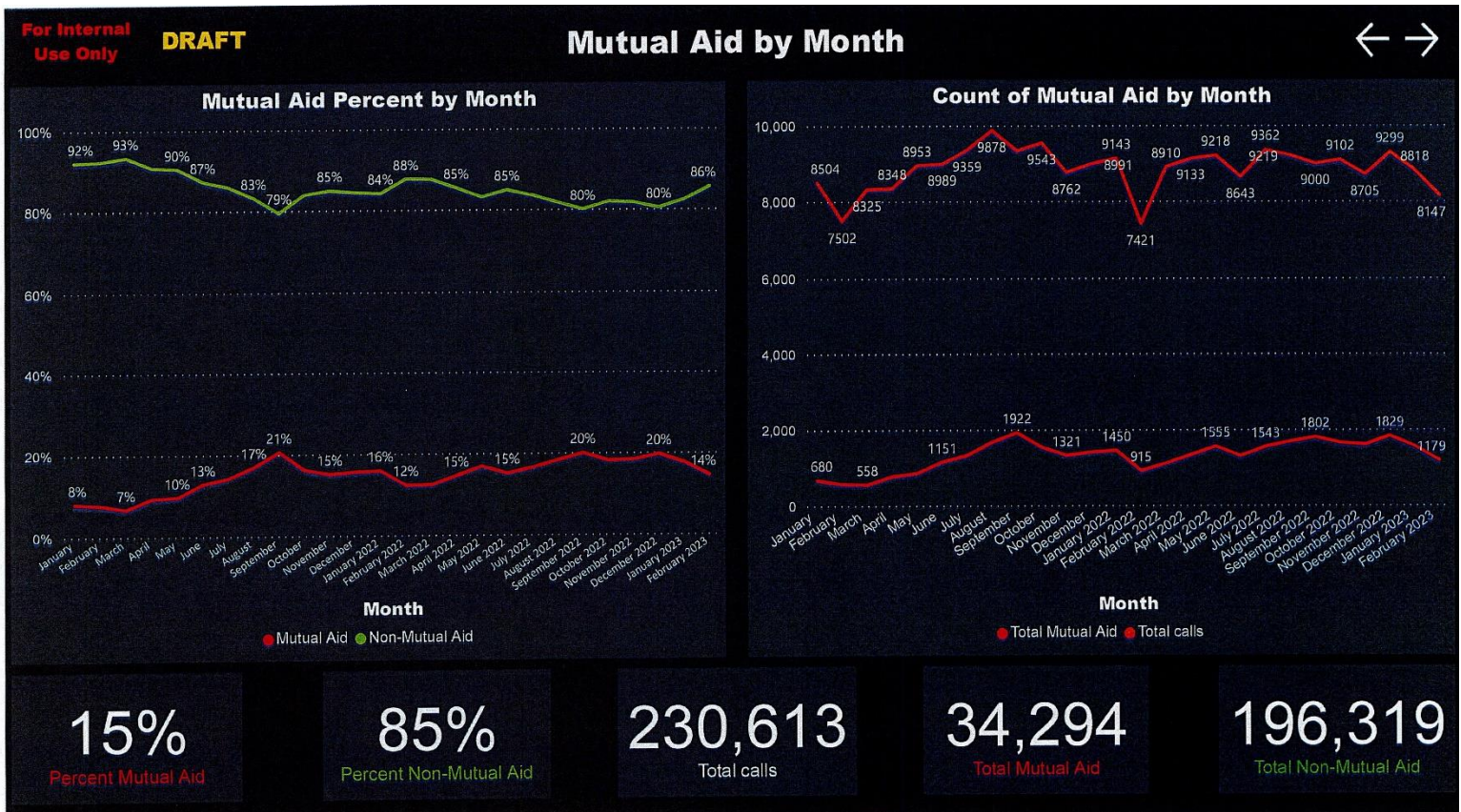
**Request: E-911 to let Legislature know when 2<sup>nd</sup> Master site is complete**

**Request: E-911 to let Legislature know when there is an updated consortium agreement**

***Vote was taken, passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.***

**2. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT: Daniel Wears, Commissioner; Jeffrey VanBeveren, Director**  
**a. INFORMATIONAL: EMS Data Update**

- The handout in black background is primary
- The typed handout is an addendum for months not into the interactive dashboard yet
- Overall have seen some improvements in the system as a whole
- Will continue to face challenges and will work with EMS agencies throughout the county to address challenges
- Focused on 2 data sets over the past 2 years:
  - Mutual Aid Calls
    - Agencies supporting each other by responding to calls outside their primary operating authority
  - Hospital Wait Times



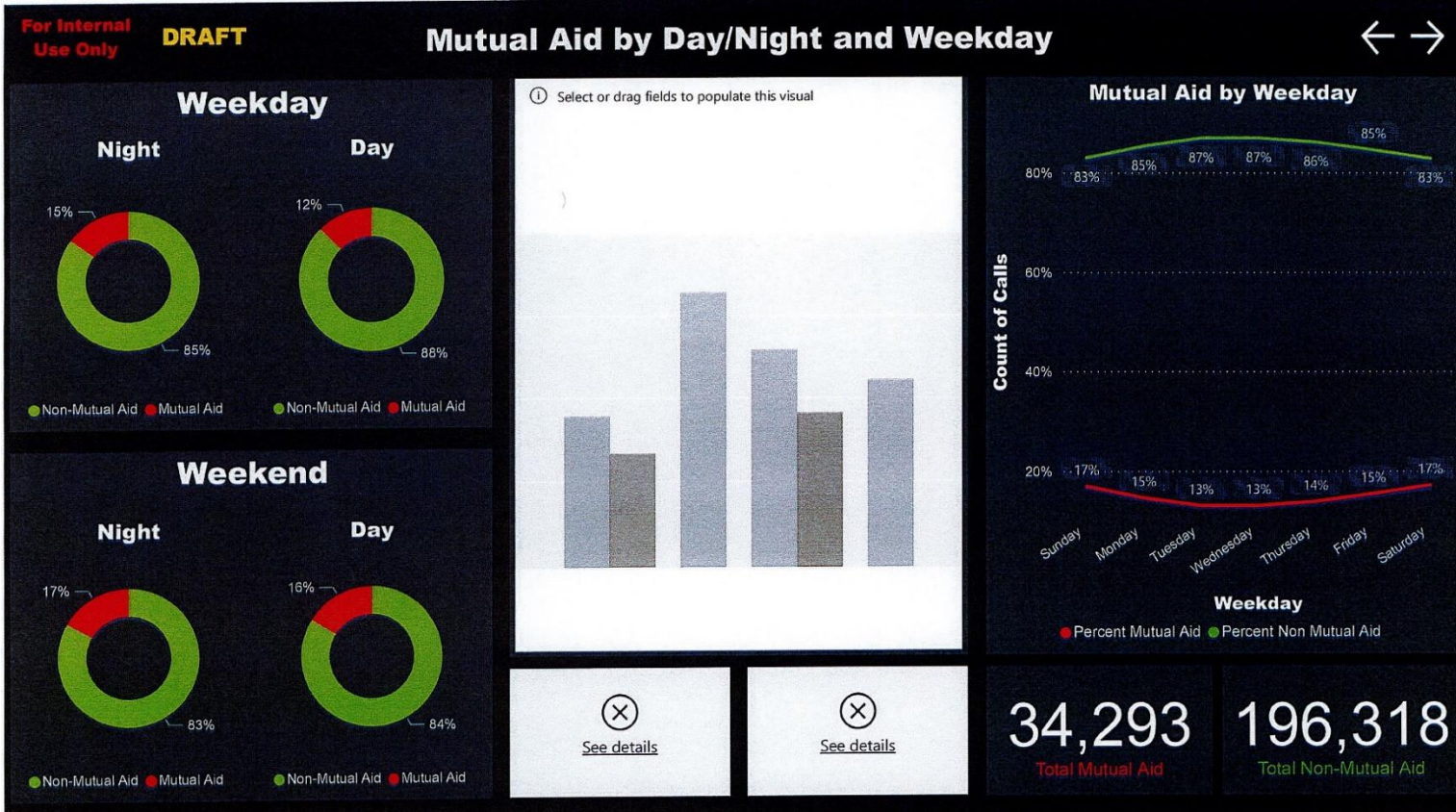
### Mutual Aid:

March Mutual Aid	Count	Percent
Mutual Aid	962	10.8%
Non-Mutual Aid	7956	89.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8918</b>	

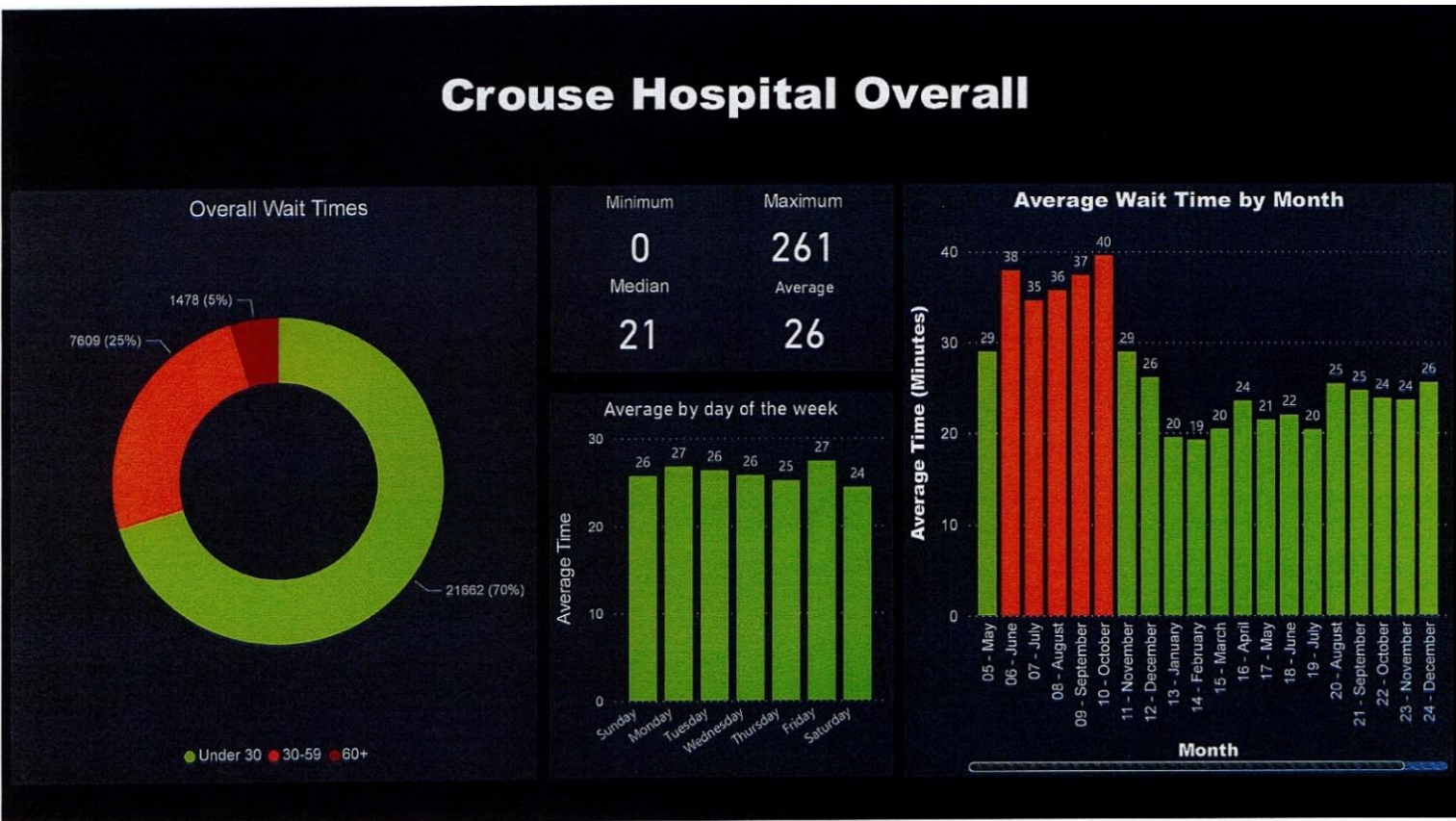
April Mutual Aid	Count	Percent
Mutual Aid	956	11.0%
Non-Mutual Aid	7699	89.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8655</b>	

May Mutual Aid	Count	Percent
Mutual Aid	979	10.8%
Non-Mutual Aid	8072	89.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9051</b>	

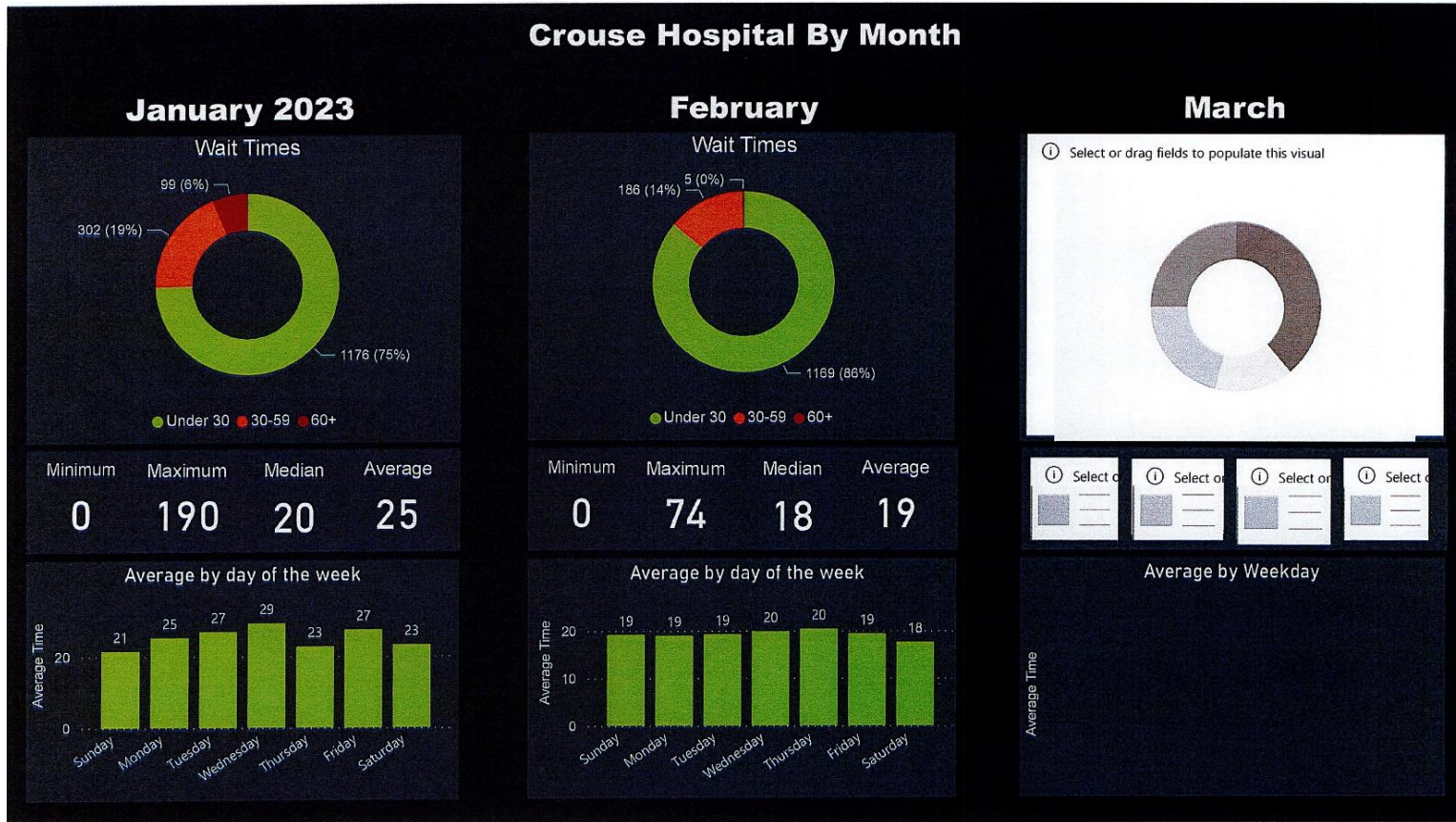
- Slide looks at mutual aid by month through February 2023 (March, April, May are listed separately)
  - Left side as a percent
  - Right side as a count
- Peaked in September 2021, hit number again in ~September 2022
- Have seen improvement
  - Through February 2023 down to 14% of calls recovered by mutual aid
  - March 2023 at 10%, April 11%, May 10.8%
- Summer months often climb a little bit



- Overall snapshot - weekends have the most utilization of mutual aid over the past 220k calls
- This is a very large data set
- From statistical analysis perspective, this will never change



### Crouse Hospital By Month



### Wait Times:

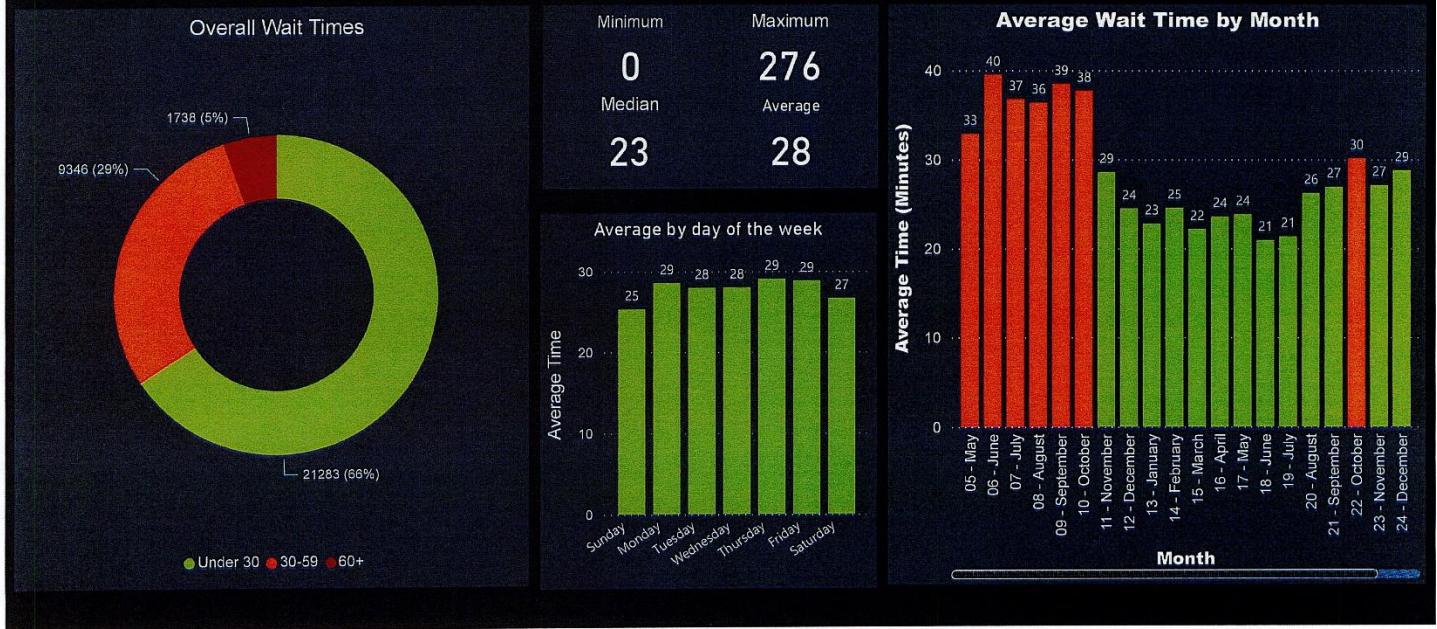
Month	Average	Under 30	Over 30	Over 60	Total	Percent over 30	Percent over 60
March	19.497241	695	111	6	823	13.5%	0.7%
Community	22.106377	1597	393	43	2005	19.6%	2.1%
Upstate	23.101201	1580	526	66	2143	24.5%	3.1%
Crouse	18.867255	1419	196	8	1629	12.0%	0.5%

Month	Average	Under 30	Over 30	Over 60	Total	Percent over 30	Percent over 60
April	20.03926	629	140	6	782	17.9%	0.8%
Community	19.70636	1561	253	14	1832	13.8%	0.8%
Upstate	25.6038	1390	482	59	1909	25.2%	3.1%
Crouse	17.56035	1258	131	10	1402	9.3%	0.7%

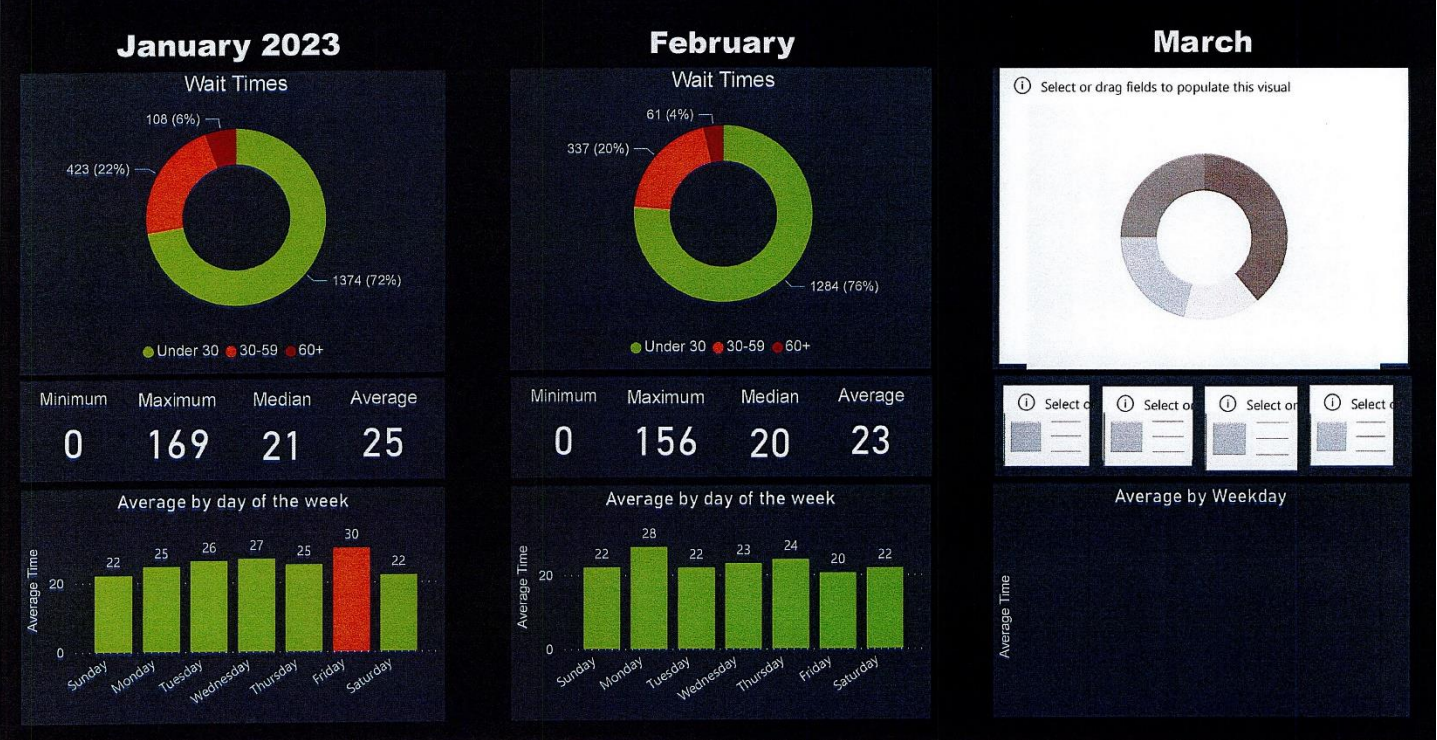
Month	Average	Under 30	Over 30	Over 60	Total	Percent over 30	Percent over 60
May	20.03595	720	146	8	884	16.5%	0.9%
Community	20.62462	1560	247	12	1823	13.5%	0.7%
Upstate	22.91421	1595	519	47	2147	24.2%	2.2%
Crouse	17.37702	1350	134	8	1489	9.0%	0.5%

- Looked at the impact of hospital wait times and effect on EMS system
- Summer 2021 was the peak with highest average wait time
  - Pandemic had exacerbating impacts on mutual aid and hospital wait times
- Crouse average continued to improve through May 2023

# St. Joseph's Hospital Overall



# St. Joseph's Hospital By Month



### Wait Times:

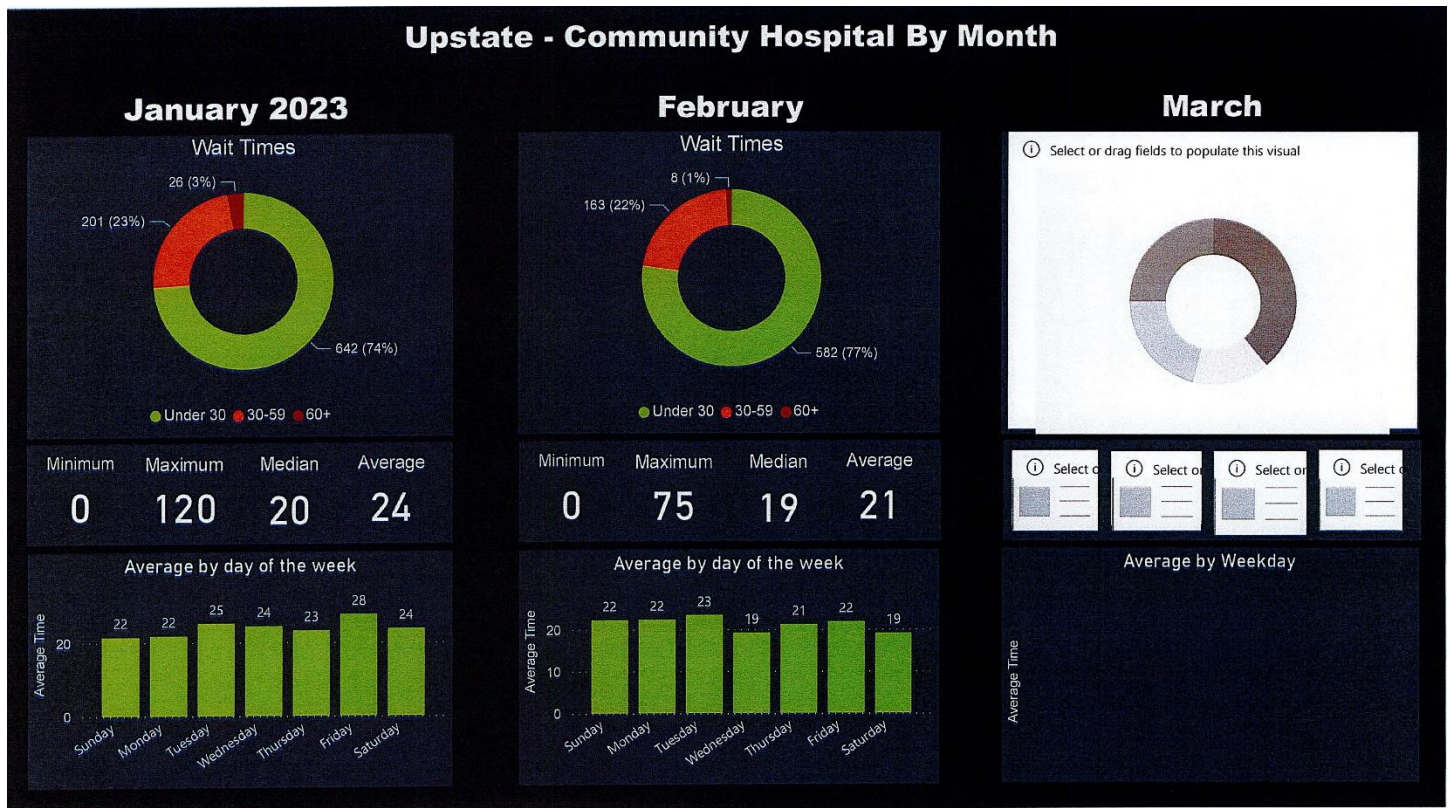
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Upstate	25.6038	1390	482	59	1909	25.2%	3.1%
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- St Joseph’s continues to improve
- Still have outlier calls with extended wait times that keep ambulance crew at hospital for unusual periods of time
  - Longer wait times means not back on the street as quickly and will require mutual aid to cover calls





### Wait Times:

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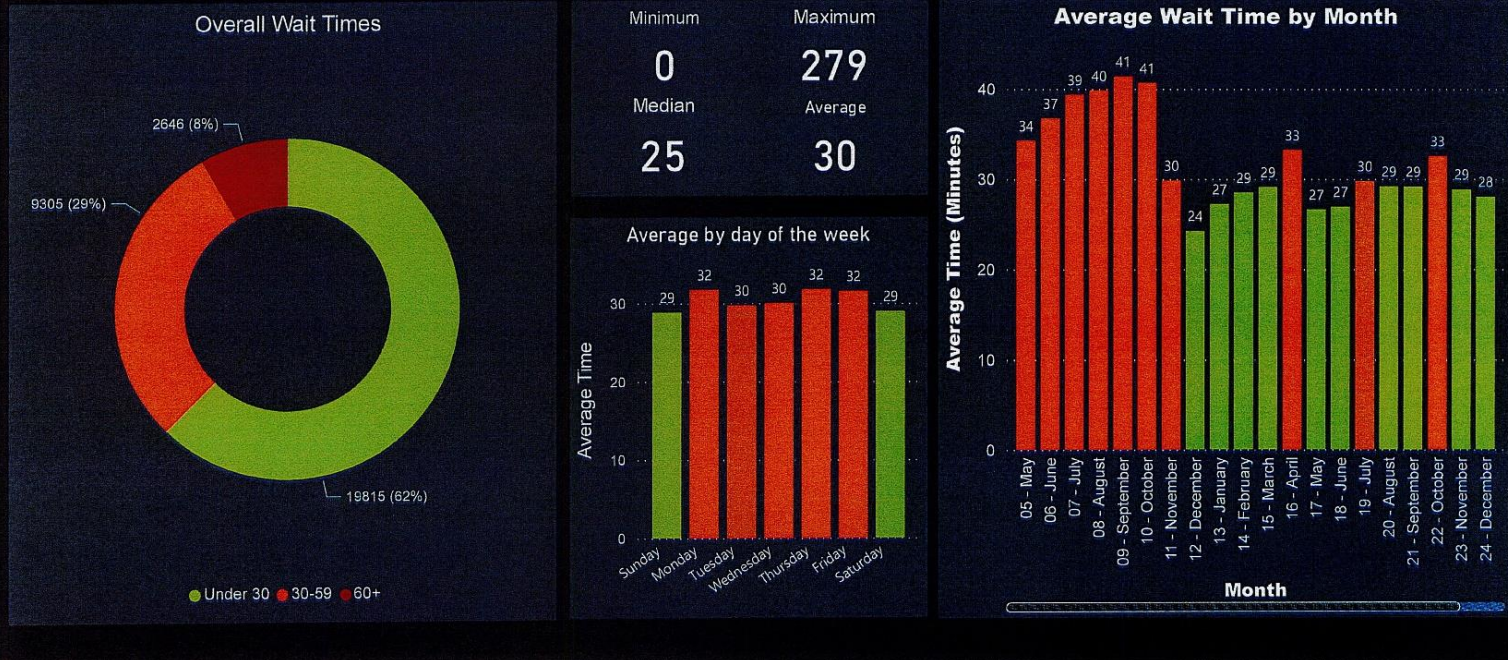
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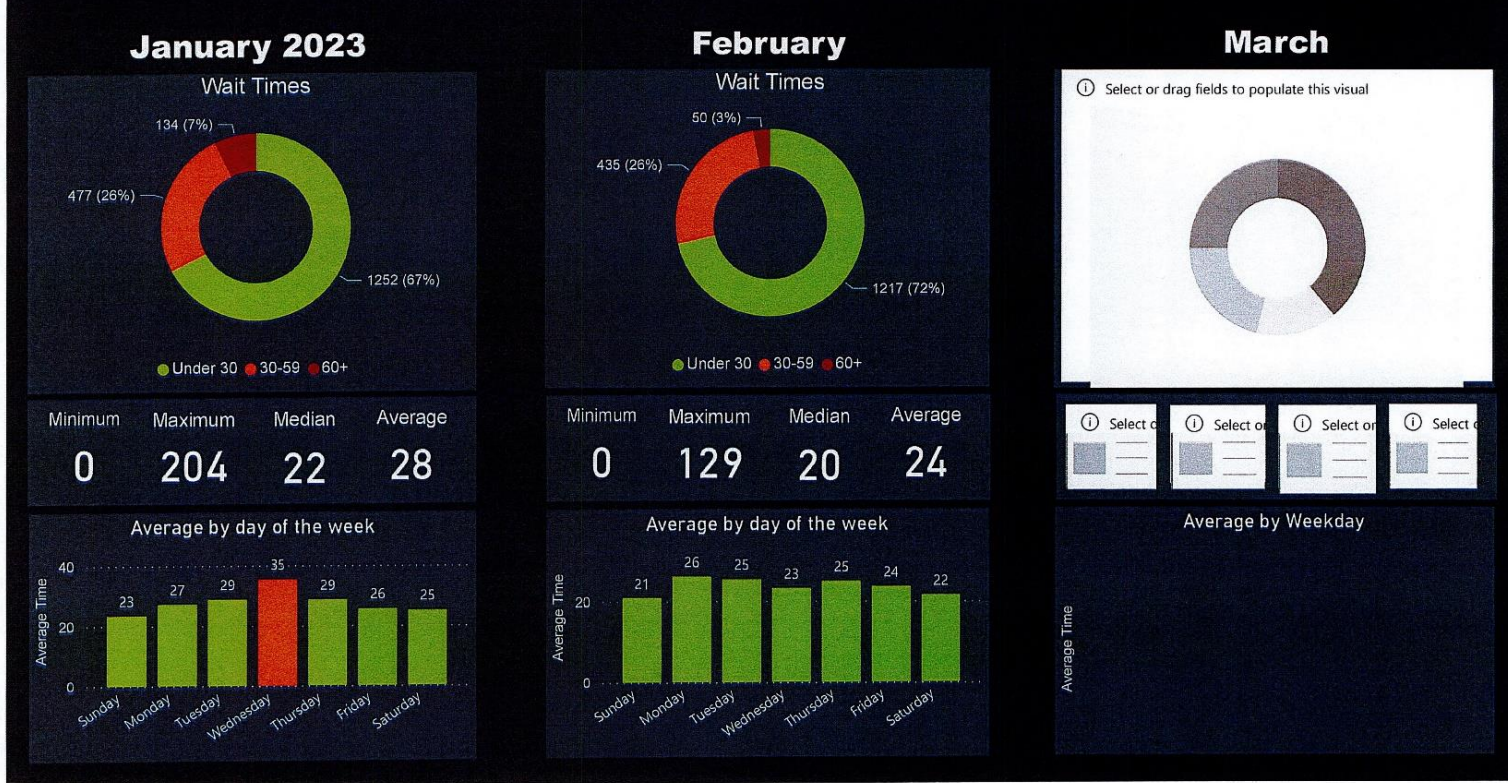
- Upstate Community continues to improve; September 2021 was worst
- Current average is 20 minutes for month of May



# Upstate Downtown Hospital - Overall



## Upstate - Downtown Hospital By Month



**Wait Times:**

March	Average	Under 30	Over 30	Over 60	Total	Percent over 30	Percent over 60
Community	19.497241	695	111	6	823	13.5%	0.7%
Joes	22.106377	1597	393	43	2005	19.6%	2.1%
Upstate	23.101201	1580	526	66	2143	24.5%	3.1%
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Joes	20.62462	1560	247	12	1823	13.5%	0.7%
Upstate	22.91421	1595	519	47	2147	24.2%	2.2%
Crouse	17.37702	1350	134	8	1489	9.0%	0.5%

- Upstate Downtown is a trauma center; expect higher wait times

**Questions from the Committee:**

- Did construction of ER have anything to do with wait times?
  - Had impact on safety getting patients across the street
  - Did not have actual impact on offload times
  - Everything going on with Emergency Department (ED) was in the parking lot; not inside
- Are we measuring arrival time to clearing the hospital time?
  - Yes
- Does it include paperwork?
  - Yes, electronic medical records (EMR) need to be uploaded to ED within 2 hours, as opposed to leaving a copy with the patient

**EMS:**

- Full 60 page presentation states there are many variables that come into play
  - These are pieces of data to inform decisions, not make decisions

**Questions/Comments from the Committee:**

- Is there overlay relative to which agencies require more mutual aid than others?
  - Yes, that is in the full report
  - It is not an overlay, data sets will need to be compared month to month
  - Bi-Agency specifics are the cyclical nature of who is paying the most today and who will pay the most tomorrow
  - The report is a “Count by Agency”, not by month
    - Tracks mutual aid received and mutual aid provided
  - Overall there are 250k data points

**Request: EMS to supply full 60 page report to the Legislature**

- It is interesting to see which organizations have the hardest time covering staff
  - The hard work is breaking it down by month to understand the current status
  - One month an agency will be having a hard time, then staffing improves
  - The next month a different agency that has been doing well will be having a hard time
  - Improvement due to reaction between agencies; i.e.: One agency increases salaries, the others react and also increase salaries

- Have you seen reduction in Nurse Navigation?
  - Four things having an effect on data sets
    - Nurse Navigation
      - For the first year (5/2022 to 5/2023), 1,773 calls answered; taking 755 out of EMS system
        - Expected to grow; not in the ER (Emergency Room)
      - 755 people never got transported to hospital or other destination; ~ 2 calls per day
        - Calls could have been home care, referred to another place or Uber to Urgent Care

#### **Questions from the Committee:**

- Who tracks that?
  - 911 and GMR (Global Medical Response); GMR owns Nurse Navigation
  - 911 is the contractual manager with GMR
- Is Nurse Navigation able to make suggestions to patients?
  - Yes; after a certain criteria, calls are transferred to a nurse with GMR
  - Nurse does an in depth triage and makes recommendation to patient
    - Patient makes final decision; can be transferred to hospital or accept nurse recommendation

#### **EMS:**

- Gone to a tiered BLS (Basic Life Support), ALS (Advanced Life Support) response dispatch system
  - There are now 6 call types that can be dispatched as a BLS ambulance which will save ALS ambulances for more critical calls

#### **Questions/Comments from the Committee:**

- How are the call types identified?
  - Call takers go through a nationally recognized questionnaire with caller
  - Call taker identifies what type of call and priority level
- A fractured arm does not need two paramedics
  - Correct, the Medical Director and 911 sign off on call type changes and how they are dispatched

#### **EMS:**

- City fire put an ambulance at Station 3, Bellevue, ~ 1500 calls year-to-date 2023
  - 150 to 200 calls supporting neighboring jurisdictions within the county
- Need to continue addressing the problem across entire spectrum of call; when someone calls 911 versus arriving or transferring to hospital care
  - This is the only way to make substantive change with the current environment due to state law and other things that limit what the county and other providers can do
  - Have to stay within confines

#### **Question from the committee:**

- Has city made a decision on RFP?
  - No idea; only know of 1 response

#### **EMS:**

- Agency staffing has improved and leveled off
- Job going forward is to continue working with agencies to figure out ways to help over the entire spectrum
  - Helping identify issues before they become problems and how to be supportive to alleviate issues
  - Weekly calls with ambulance Directors are identified opportunities for improvement
    - Weekly staffing and special events are reported in respective operating authority
    - Good opportunity for information sharing and assist each other with staffing if needed
    - Improvement over the last year
    - Workforce and hospitals have leveled off

- Steering away from post-pandemic and returning to normalcy

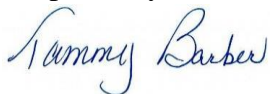
**Questions/Comments from the Committee:**

- Would be helpful if information is received prior to committee meeting
  - There is a delay in getting data; i.e. June data will not be received until August
- Would like to share with agencies within Legislative District to get feedback
  - All data is done in collaboration with EMS agencies
  - Agencies call out errors; some are not errors, just the way data is coming out
- Does Syracuse Community Health Center play a role?
  - Can be alternative destination in a rideshare like a WellNow or other Urgent Care
- What about the AMR TC3?
  - TC3 is a program that centers around Centers for Medicare
  - AMR in a 5 year pilot project; determination is made to treat at home and release or take to alternative destination
  - NYS law states the only place an ambulance can transport is to ED
    - With TC3 program, patients can be taken to alternative destination or treat and release at home and still collect for Medicare
  - AMR project is piloting across the nation because they are a nationwide company
- Is there any data on that?
  - AMR would have data; EMS does not

***A motion was made by Mr. McCarron, seconded by Mr. Kinne, to adjourn the meeting. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.***

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



TAMMY BARBER, Deputy Clerk  
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

DATE: JUNE 20, 2023

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
John Drapikowski	OC30
Julie Corn	E911
Kevin Spraker	E911
Dan Wears	EM
JEFF VANBEVEREN	EM
Tyler Peet	EM
Darcie Lesnick	LES
Tim Fratschi	Counsel
Sheriff Shelley	Sheriff
Tom Newton	Sheriff
Jim Beebe	Leg
John DeSantis	Leg