

**WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**COMMITTEE: BUDGET - SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT**

**DATE: AUGUST 7, 2008**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

SUPERVISORS GERAGHTY  
BELDEN  
O'CONNOR  
CHAMPAGNE  
KENNY  
SHEEHAN  
MERLINO

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

HAL PAYNE, COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE &  
FISCAL SERVICES  
JOANN MCKINSTRY, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF  
ADMINISTRATIVE & FISCAL SERVICES  
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD  
RICHARD MURPHY, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF  
FISCAL SERVICES  
JULIE PACYNA, PURCHASING AGENT  
REPRESENTING THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT:  
BUD YORK, SHERIFF  
ROBERT SWAN, UNDERSHERIFF  
SHANE ROSS, CHIEF DEPUTY  
MIKE GATES, LIEUTENANT, DEPARTMENT OF  
CORRECTIONS  
SUPERVISOR STEC  
SUPERVISOR TAYLOR  
SUPERVISOR THOMAS  
ALYSON MARTIN, *THE POST STAR*  
TOM RANDALL, *THE ADIRONDACK JOURNAL*  
SARAH MCLENITHAN, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE  
SPECIALIST

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Mr. Geraghty called the meeting of the Budget Committee to order at 2:00 p.m.

Mr. Geraghty informed the Committee that the first item to be addressed was the review of the 2009 Sheriff's Budget. Starting with the Sheriff's 911 Center (A.3020), he stated that the revenues and expenses were both up approximately \$16,000 and asked if there were any questions regarding this budget, to which Mr. Belden asked why Sheriff York was requesting \$13,000 for Office Equipment (A.3020 220) and \$34,735 for Technical Equipment (A.3020 250) when in the prior two years no funds had been requested.

Sheriff York responded that the jail was now four years old, and he had been informed by the 911 Center staff that the equipment currently in use would be in need of replacement in the near future; therefore, he stated, he was requesting one new server for the back-up 911 Center and monitors because they were coming to the end of their service life, as well as the radio console that was stationed in the Municipal Center basement.

Mr. Belden asked if the replacement of this equipment could be done in a two year period and Sheriff York responded it could be done but in the event that the 911 Center went down and the back-up server was unavailable, this would create a problem in that the 911 services would be unavailable in Warren County.

Mr. Belden then asked if grant funds were available to help with the purchase of this equipment and Shane Ross, Chief Deputy, responded that grant funds had been received to help fund the equipment.

Mr. Belden asked how much revenue the Sheriff's 911 Center (A.3020 1140) had received thus far for this year and Sheriff York responded that as of June 30, 2008 they had received \$103,000 of the \$320,000 that had been projected for 2008. He added that the majority of the revenues would be received in the fall.

Mr. Champagne asked why the 2009 request for Personal Services (A.3020 110, 120, 130 and 140) decreased to \$794,758 from \$806,758. Richard Murphy, Deputy Commissioner of Fiscal Services, responded that several employees had retired and new employees were hired, there was a reduction in salaries of \$12,000.

Mr. Belden questioned if the 4% that had been negotiated in the Sheriff's Alliance Contract had been accounted for in the 2009 budget. Hal Payne, Commissioner of Administrative and Fiscal Services, replied in the negative and stated that there was money available through vacant positions that had not been filled to cover for the \$275,000 in retroactive salary increases.

Mr. Payne asked how many times the 911 Center back-up equipment in the basement of the Municipal Center had been utilized, to which Chief Deputy Ross responded that it had been utilized four to five times since its installation four years ago. Mr. Payne then questioned if it was necessary to do a back-up for the back-up and Sheriff York responded in the affirmative, stating that the computers and monitors that were being utilized 24 hours a day, seven days a week, were coming to the end their life cycle.

Sheriff York remarked that for the Sheriff's 911 Center (A.3020) portion of the budget he had limited the request to an increase of 2.6%.

Moving along to the Sheriff's Law Enforcement (A.3110) Budget, Mr. Geraghty remarked that the largest increase noted was in contracts which totaled \$317,095.40. Sheriff York remarked that one reason for the increase was that in 2008 the request for Natural Gas (A.3020 414) was \$130,000 and he was requesting an increase of \$20,000 in the 2009 Budget, totaling \$150,000 due to the increase in cost for natural gas.

Mr. Geraghty asked why Repair/Maintenance of Equipment (A.3110 422) had increased from \$34,173 in 2008 to \$85,000 in 2009 to which Sheriff York replied in 2007 \$40,401.49 had been expended for the repair and maintenance of equipment and only \$22,000 had been budgeted. He stated that as of June 30, 2008, \$28,000, or 84% of the budgeted amount for the year, had been expended and he requested the increase to more accurately reflect the actual dollar amount in the 2009 Budget year.

Mr. Kenny stated that if \$28,000 had already been spent for the first half of the 2008 budget year, perhaps he should double the figure to \$56,000. Sheriff York responded that a lightning strike to the communication tower on Prospect Mountain in 2007 had cost the County \$70,000 for repair of equipment, which had not been budgeted for, but was paid from the 2008 Budget. He added that rather than having to ask for contingency funds, he felt it would be easier to include it in the budget so that in the case of another lightning strike, the funds would be available for the necessary repairs.

Mr. Geraghty asked whether there was a solution to prevent lightning from striking the communications tower to further prevent this expense. Sheriff York responded that he believed that the problem had been the car port not being properly grounded and the funds had been expended to properly ground the wire and the phone was removed. He added that he was unsure if this would alleviate the problem permanently.

Mr. Merlino asked why Contracts (A.3110 470) had increased from \$38,181 to \$90,000. Sheriff York replied that as of June 30, 2008, \$21,622.80 had been expended from the total budgeted amount of \$40,000. He added that the Civil Division had notified him that they were in need of a new software system due to the fact that the one currently used was outdated and the cost of the new software was \$65,000. He added that this could be expended over a two year period and they could reduce the request to \$70,000, if necessary.

Mr. Champagne remarked that he felt it was unnecessary to budget \$85,000 for the repair and maintenance of equipment when there was no way of predicting if the equipment would be in need of repair. Sheriff York stated that if it was the consensus of the Committee that this expense was unnecessary he had no problem reducing his request. Mr. Champagne noted that if it was not included in the budget it would not be expended. It was the consensus of the Committee to reduce Repair/Maintenance of Equipment (A.3110 422) from \$85,000 to \$60,000.

Mr. Geraghty said that the Committee needed to address the increase in Automotive-Gas & Oil (A. 3110 442) from \$200,385 in 2008 to \$425,000 in 2009. Mr. Kenny asked what had been spent thus far this year for oil and gas expenses to which Mr. Geraghty responded \$158,000 had been expended as of June 30, 2008. The consensus of the Committee was to reduce the requested amount for gas & oil from \$425,000 to \$375,000.

Mr. Geraghty questioned the request for \$50,000 in Automotive Equipment (A. 3110 230) when patrol car cages and light bars could be transferred from car to car. Chief Deputy Ross responded that several patrol cars had cages and light bars that were in need of replacement.

Mr. Geraghty then asked for an explanation of the request to replace the motor on the air handler (A. 3110 250-Technical Equipment) on a four year old building. He added that although the request was only \$6,500, he did not feel equipment that was four years old should have to be replaced. Mr. Payne questioned why they had expended \$58,466 in the 2008 Budget, and Sheriff York said he would report back to the Committee on that question.

Mr. Payne questioned the Sheriff's Patrol request for \$10,000 in Other Equipment (A.3110 260) to purchase an air conditioner unit for the mechanical closet, ladders and a salt spreader. He noted there was a shared spreader that maintained the Municipal Center parking lot, Westmount and Social Services and the Sheriff's Department parking lot could be included. It was the consensus of the Committee to reduce the request for Other Equipment (A.3110 260) from \$10,000 to \$5,000.

Moving along to the Sheriff's Correction's Division (A.3150) portion of the 2009 budget request, Mr. Geraghty remarked there was an increase in appropriations of \$173,545.20.

Mr. Belden asked for clarification regarding the request for \$16,300 for Office Equipment (A.3150 220) when the building and all the equipment in it were four years old, to which Mike Gates, Lieutenant, Department of Corrections, responded that the computer equipment warranties had expired for the jail administration computers that were located at each correction officer's station as well as the central control and the Commander's Station. He noted that a total of sixteen computers with monitors were in need of replacement and that these were essential to maintaining security, as no back-up for this system was available. Mr. Belden asked if it was possible to cut back on the number of guards needed if these computers and monitors were purchased, to which Sheriff York replied in the negative as the number of Corrections Officers and Supervisors were mandated by the New York State Corrections Commission.

Mr. O'Connor noted that across New York State larger jails had been built and the State would not

allow a portion of these jails to be closed when not filled to capacity. Sheriff York added that the Warren County jail was averaging 145 prisoners a day of the maximum capacity of 186, leaving 41 beds available. He added that the State mandated that all 41 beds could not be utilized due to jails being considered to be at full capacity at 85%, or 156 beds. Sheriff York added that the number of prisoners in the State jails had decreased, while the number of prisoners in Warren County was increasing.

Mr. Gates noted in order to cover the costs for the Furniture/Furnishings he would reduce his overtime budget by assigning on-duty Corrections Officers mandated training when they were over staffed by at least three officers. Mr. Geraghty added that the overtime budget would have to be reduced by \$5,000. It was the consensus of the Committee to decrease the Salaries-Overtime (A.3150 120) from \$220,000 to \$215,000 to cover the cost of the \$10,000 necessary to purchase new office chairs (A.3150 210-Furniture/Furnishings).

Proceeding, Mr. Geraghty noted the next item to be addressed was the request for \$14,000 under Other Equipment (A.3150 260) for the purchase of a new dishwasher and refrigerator for the jail kitchen. Mr. Belden asked if it were possible to buy one piece this year and the other piece the following year, and Sheriff York replied in the negative as the equipment was in constant need of repair.

Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, asked for clarification on why the Salaries-Sick Leave Incentive (A.3150 140) was budgeted for \$24,000 when in the 2007 Budget year \$5,600 was the actual amount expended, to which Sheriff York replied that this had been reduced from \$24,000 to \$18,000 for 45 of the 60 employees currently employed at the jail. Mr. Payne stated that in 2007 only 14 employees received the sick leave incentive and he did not believe that it was necessary to budget for such a large amount. It was the consensus of the Committee to budget \$18,000 for Salaries-Sick Leave Incentive (A.3150 140).

Mr. Geraghty stated that revenues had decreased by \$486,000. Sheriff York responded that in previous years the budgeted amount for revenues had been unrealistic and that the previous administration had been warned that counties across the State were building their own jails to hold their own inmates. He noted that \$900,000 was estimated to be received for boarding inmates and to date they had only received \$222,000. He added that a more realistic figure for boarding inmates would be between \$350,000 and \$400,000.

Sheriff York added that the jail had been built on the incorrect premise that if a larger jail was built it would bring in revenue for the County. He added that there was no way to make revenue on a jail since the liabilities far exceeded the revenues. He noted that on a request by the Budget Committee, he had looked into the possibility of boarding Federal inmates. He said that with the boarding of ten Federal inmates a day the County could generate an estimated \$211,000 a year in revenue. He then pointed out that the expenses would exceed the amount of revenue received.

Sheriff York stated that if the jail began to board Federal inmates, there would be expenses for hiring of interpreters for the foreign inmates and additional health care expenses due to the prevalence of communicable diseases amongst inmates. As an example, Sheriff York referred to an inmate that had spent one month in the Warren County jail and had cost the County in excess of \$30,000 for a procedure that was necessary at Glens Falls Hospital.

Mr. Gates added that another concern with Federal inmates was that they utilized the local jails to recruit new gang members. He added that this could create gang-related problems in Warren County.

Mr. Champagne stated that it was his belief that Warren County Buildings and Grounds should have one Department that dispersed employees to each facility to maintain them. He added that this meant rather than having separate departments to mow the lawn and plow the parking area, one Department would be in charge of dispersing employees to each property to maintain them. Mr. Payne added that there had been a meeting earlier in the day to discuss the possibility of sharing services and equipment within the various County departments.

The Sheriff's Department portion of the Budget Committee meeting ended at 3:14 p.m. and Sheriff York, Messrs. Swan, Ross and Gates exited the meeting.

Mr. Geraghty asked Mr. Murphy to address the Committee on the 2009 Warren County preliminary budget analysis. Mr. Murphy stated that he had done a brief analysis and that the total of all departmental requests for appropriations increased by \$12,784,000 and the total departmental estimated revenues increased by \$4,792,000, an increase of \$7,992,000, or a 23.2% increase over the 2008 budget. He added to offset the budget increase the Treasurer's Office was recommending the use of \$2,250,000 of Occupancy Tax Appropriations, \$1,250,000 of Waste Management Appropriations and \$250,000 of County Road Appropriations.

Mr. Kenny stated that he believed that the Occupancy Tax Appropriation could only be used to promote tourism to which Mr. Payne replied that these funds were raised in Occupancy Tax to pay for the Tourism budget and to pay the towns their percentage. He added that Occupancy Tax was not comprised of tax dollars coming into the County Budget but was a fund that bills were to be paid from. Mr. Murphy said that through the use of these funds, the total percentage increase in the budget could be decreased from 23.2% to 12.3%. He noted that items not included in the preliminary budget were the Sheriff contract settlements, retirement rate increases, the sale of land on Route 9 and the New York State Budget for 2009.

Mr. Geraghty noted that a sizeable portion of the increase was for the payment of bonds now due which had not been accounted for in previous budgets. He stated that the County had been aware by not paying down the bonds, there would be sizeable payments due in the 2009 Budget year.

Mr. Payne stated that the Chairman of the Board suggested using Waste Management Appropriations to fund the entire amount due to the fact that the County would be bringing in more revenue as the per kilowatt amount received had increased.

Mr. Merlino asked for clarification on how the Occupancy Tax Appropriations were determined. Mr. Murphy responded that when the Occupancy Tax Fund was established, no funds were disbursed which caused the disbursement to be one year behind. Mrs. Sady added that each year, fund balances for Waste Management, Occupancy Tax, County Road and the General Fund were used to reduce the amount to be raised by tax.

Discussion ensued.

Moving along, Mr. Geraghty noted that Packet #1 included listings for those Departments whose Budget request had decreased or included reasonable increases, while Packet #2 included questionable increases; *copies of both packets are on file with the minutes*. Mr. Geraghty suggested that the Committee review the preliminary budgets and report back with any questions or concerns.

Mr. Geraghty asked if meetings had been scheduled for each Departmental Budget requesting questionable increases and JoAnn McKinistry, Deputy Commissioner of Administrative and Fiscal

Services, replied in the negative. She explained that meetings had not been scheduled due to the need for the Budget Committee to review the requests prior to determining which Departments required them.

Mrs. Sady noted that the Legislative Board budget request (A.1010), had been set aside due to the inclusion of all contracts for outside agencies, none of which were mandated. She added that the possibility existed to reduce funding to these agencies. Mr. Geraghty questioned whether they had separate Budget codes and Mrs. Sady replied that some of them did and there were a few included under A.1010. It was the consensus of the Committee that the outside agency contracts and the Legislative Board requests would be reviewed at a later date.

Mr. Geraghty stated the next budget request to be reviewed was Legal Defense of Indigents (A.1170). Mr. Kenny noted that the budgeted amount for contractual services was \$200,000 and each year more funds were expended than what had been budgeted. Mrs. Sady noted that this request had been questioned due to the inclusion of a request for a salary increase and Mr. Geraghty suggested that the salary increase be discussed in executive session. It was the consensus of the Committee that all salary increase requests would be reviewed at a future Committee meeting.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Julie Pacyna, Purchasing Agent to discuss her request to increase Advertising Fees (A.1345 436) from \$2,300 to \$7,500. Mrs. Pacyna stated that the increase was necessary as she had recently been informed that if two official newspapers were available in the County, her office was required to publish in both publications. She added that she was in the process of working with the County Attorney's Office to see if there were any exceptions to this rule as the number of postings had more than doubled since the prior year. It was the consensus of the Committee that the request to increase Advertising Fees (A.1345 436) to \$7,500 be approved.

Referring to the Human Resources Budget (A.1435), Employee Assistance Program (EAP), Mr. Payne noted that there had been a total of 24 calls made and he questioned whether the program was worth the cost. Mr. Geraghty stated that if the program was able to save one employee, the cost was not an issue and it was the consensus of the Committee that the benefits of the EAP far exceeded the expense to the County.

With respect to the Board of Elections (A.1450) Budget request, Mr. Payne questioned a request for Furniture/Furnishings (A.1450 210, 220), which consisted of two new computer desks, two chairs and one storage cabinet for the new voting machine facility. He noted the new office furniture approved last year would be delivered within the next couple of weeks and the furniture being replaced could be used for this purpose. Subsequent to discussion, the Committee decided to eliminate the request for Office Equipment (A. 1450 210, 220) in the amount of \$3,352. Mr. Geraghty asked Mr. Payne to report back to the Committee on what the \$500 budget request for Uniforms (A.1450 453) pertained to.

Mr. Geraghty noted that the Mail Room Budget (A.1670) was requesting \$14,000 for a new mail delivery vehicle (A.1670 230). He asked Mr. Kenny if he thought it was possible for the Glens Falls Post Office to pick up the mail, to which Mr. Kenny replied he was unsure. Mr. Payne stated that the vehicle they were currently using to pick up and drop off the mail in Lake George was one of the older Sheriff's Department 15 passenger vans. He added that the vehicle was impractical as it only got 9 miles per gallon, and the trip was 42 miles each day, and the van had difficulty traveling in inclement weather.

Mr. Geraghty asked for clarification as to why in prior years the Post Office had picked up the mail and now was no longer offering this service, to which Mr. Payne replied that he was awaiting a return phone call from the Post Offices in Lake George and Glens Falls.

Mr. Payne questioned why Mental Health had requested \$8,942 for Travel/Education/Conference (A.4310 444) for the 2009 Budget when in the 2008 Budget year they had only requested \$5,798 and Mrs. Sady replied that it was probably for the increase in mileage reimbursement. Mr. Kenny asked Mr. Payne to determine why mileage was being paid if the employees had County vehicles they could utilize for travel and Mr. Payne replied that he would report back to the Committee on this matter.

It was the consensus of the Budget Committee to review their Departmental request packets and return the following week to review the budget requests.

There being no further business to come before the Budget Committee, on motion made by Mr. Belden and seconded by Mr. Taylor, Mr. Geraghty adjourned the Budget Committee meeting at 4:11p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah McLenithan  
Legislative Office Specialist