

PUBLIC SAFETY & JUSTICE COMMITTEE
Minutes – September 8, 2014

Call to Order. Chair Beaver called the meeting of the Public Safety and Justice Committee to order at 4:00 P.M. on September 8, 2014 in the Conference Room N-1/N-2, Courthouse East.

Committee Members Present: Supervisors Beaver, Brill, Fell, Knudson and Wiedenfeld.

Committee Members Excused: None.

Staff Members Present: Josh Smith, County Administrator; Randy Terronez, Assistant to the County Administrator; Jeff Kuglitsch, Corporation Counsel; Jodi Timmerman, Deputy Corporation Counsel; David O’Connell, Human Resources Director; Sheriff Robert Spoden, Captain Todd Christiansen, Rock County Sheriff’s Office; Kathy Sukus, 911 Communications Center Director; Rita Costrini-Norgal, Mediation and Family Court Director; Louis Smit, Chief Deputy Coroner; Hayley Steele, Erin Berryman, Austin Vine, Coroner’s Office.

Others Present: Supervisors Russ Podzilni, Sandra Kraft, Mary Mawhinney and Tom Brien; Barry Irmen, Dr. Vincent Tranchida, Dane County Medical Examiner’s Office; Cathy Idzerda, Janesville Gazette; Jerry Lynch, Whitcomb-Lynch Funeral Home; Dr. Jay MacNeal, Medical Director Mercy Trauma Center; Jeanne Bifulk.

Adoption of Agenda. Supervisor Knudson moved approval of the agenda as presented, second by Supervisor Fell. ADOPTED.

Adoption of Minutes. Supervisor Brill moved approval of the minutes of August 18, 2014 as presented, second by Supervisor Fell. ADOPTED.

Citizen Participation, Communications, Announcement, Information. Ms. Sukus informed the Committee that the environmental study and archeological report for the Edgerton tower was complete and are okay. They will now go to the Historical Society and about 25 tribes to approve.

Consent Calendar.

Transfers and Appropriations. None.

Bills/Encumbrances None.

Pre-Approved Encumbrance Amendments.

Sheriff’s Office

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| JP Morgan Chase Bank NA | \$ 185.00 |
| JP Morgan Chase Bank NA | 1,300.00 |

Supervisor Wiedenfeld moved approval of the above Transfers and Appropriations, Bills and Encumbrances and Pre-Approved Encumbrance Amendments for the Public Safety & Justice Committee, second by Supervisor Fell. ADOPTED.

Resolutions.

Authorization of a Replacement Siren Purchase within the Rock County Outdoor Warning System – Siren #19

“NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Rock County Board of Supervisors duly assembled this ____ day of _____, 2014 approves and authorizes the replacement of siren #19, located at 31 South Madison Street, Evansville; and,

~~BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a purchase order be issued to Federal Signal of University Park, Illinois, in the amount of \$7,824.28; and,~~

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Sheriff’s budget be amended as follows:

...”

Supervisor Knudson moved approval of the above resolution, second by Supervisor Fell.

ADOPTED.

Accepting Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) Sub-Grant and Amending the Sheriff’s Budget

“NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Rock County Board of Supervisors duly assembled this ____ day of _____, 2014 approves and authorizes the acceptance of \$7,999 of HMEP grant funds and authorizes the Sheriff to sign the award documents; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Sheriff’s 2014 budget be amended as follows:

...”

Supervisor Fell moved approval of the above resolution, second by Supervisor Brill.

ADOPTED.

Approving the Medical Examiner System Transition Plan

“NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Rock County Board of Supervisors duly assembled this ____ day of _____, 2014 accepts the Dane County option and approves the intergovernmental agreement that delineates the roles and responsibilities of each county as per the proposal supplied by Dane County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the following items be approved:

- A. Establish the following Medical Examiner Department staff positions effective January 5, 2015 at 12:00 a.m.:

| <u>Position</u> | <u>Pay Grade</u> | <u>Full Time Equivalent</u> |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------------|

| | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|------|
| Lead Medicolegal Investigator | Unilat. (23C) | 1.00 |
| Medicolegal Investigators | Unilat. (19C) | 2.00 |
| ME Clerical Worker | Part-time | .40 |
| | Total | 3.40 |

B. Establish a pool of part-time Unilateral Medicolegal Investigators at pay grade 19C effective January 5, 2015 at 12:00 a.m.”

Supervisor Fell moved approval of the above resolution, second by Supervisor Brill.

Mr. Terronez went over the two options, stand alone and Dane County, and said the Committee had authorized going with Dane County and directed staff to move ahead with the resolution and agreement with Dane County. He then introduced Barry Irmén, Director of Operations, and Dr. Vincent Tranchida, Chief Medical Examiner.

Dr. Tranchida said Dane County Medical Examiner’s Office currently has a good relationship with Rock County’s Sheriff’s Office, District Attorney and Coroner’s Office, that whatever the Committee and County Board decides he hopes this can continue, and if they should decide to go with a standalone office he would be happy to help. He said it is his medical opinion that many of the decisions a Medical Examiner needs to make is very difficult without years of experience. Dr. Tranchida said going with a physician led investigation would provide more insight in court cases. Dane County would be able to provide anatomic and forensic pathology services at both the scene and behind the scene for cases needing it.

Mr. Irmén said it is a huge help to all to have one point of contact throughout between the family, investigations, communications, etc.

Mr. Terronez went over the Intergovernmental Agreement between Dane County and Rock County for Medical Examiner Services. He explained this would allow for Mr. Irmén to provide 20 hours per week on site for the first 26 weeks and 12 hours per week on site thereafter, and the office and temporary morgue would remain the same. A staff of three full-time investigators and a part-time clerk would be Rock County employees. Instead of being paid per call, the investigators would be on 24-hour shifts and there would still be an employee pool to fill in for vacations and sick days. We would begin the recruiting process around November 1st and overlap with existing staff until January 5, 2015.

Mr. Terronez went over the term, schedule and scope of work, administrative services, case review and autopsy services, general services, records, HIPAA, department expenses, payment, dispute resolution, and termination of the agreement. He briefly went over the history of the transition and the September 30, 2013 report prepared by Mr. Osborne.

Mr. Lynch, Whitcomb-Lynch Funeral Home, said it has been a challenge working with the Coroner’s Office. He said this is an elected office and does not require training. Mr. Lynch said the Dane County Medical Examiner’s Office would provide a trained Medical Examiner, and Mr. Irmén has worked in Rock County before and is very familiar with Rock County. He said he very strongly recommends going with Dane County, that he has worked with them before and they are top notch.

Mr. Terronez said the feedback from both the funeral home directors and fire/law enforcement/EMS personnel has been to go with Dane County.

Dr. MacNeal, EMS Medical Director, asked what the plan is. Dr. Tranchida said it is to provide oversight, training, teaching, support and administration.

Ms. Berryman, Rock County Coroner's Office, said the cases are started and followed through with one person now and they are running the office with two full-time and two part-time people, plus a number of per diem people and they are still short-handed. She asked how this would be any better. Mr. Irmen said the County is taking steps to change staffing hours, instead of per diems they will be hourly, schedules will be more uniform, and the hours will be longer.

Mr. Smit said this is essentially what they are doing now and they are still stretched and that he did not see how this would work.

Sheriff Spoden said he understands this is a huge endeavor, and that the make-up of crime has changed dramatically, become more complex. He said he believes we need for the expertise of having an expert at the scene. We need that expert within the first 24 hours or the case starts getting cold. Sheriff Spoden said he feels Dane County would meet our needs very well. He added that the Rock County Sheriff's Office, the Janesville Police Department and Beloit Police Department all feel we should go the Dane County.

Mr. Smit said his staff get along very well with Dane County and whatever is decided is fine with them. He said he feels some of the language in the agreement needs more work, and he feels the County has rushed to make a deadline. He said he feels there are still some issues that we should talk about this a bit more so we don't bite off too much.

Mr. Terronez said he met with Coroner Office staff at their monthly staff meeting to listen to their concerns. They were concerned about having a pool and we have followed up with a pool in the contract. He said he and Mr. O'Connell would be meeting with staff again at their September meeting.

Supervisor Fell said he has spent some time talking to some of the different agencies and the feedback he has received is they would like the County to go with the Dane County option. He added that he feels the process for the transition is good and the yearly follow-up is also good.

Supervisor Wiedenfeld said Rock County is not a small county with 165,000 citizens, we are the largest county in the state without a Medical Examiner, that the time has come to make a decision and that he is disappointed that we are not going on our own. He said he feels there should be a sunset on this in favor of Rock County. He said this is early September and it won't take effect until January and that he doesn't know why we can't have our own in place in this amount of time. He said we are not an appendage of Dane County and but this will make it appear we are.

Chair Beaver said she talked to a lot of people and had a few questions: 1) Will staff be Rock County employees – Mr. Terronez said they would; 2) Will we lose local control – Mr. Terronez said Dane County will provide a medical decision but there will be Rock County presence in the office in Rock County and Rock County staff will be responding to calls; 4) Are we paying for something we already receive free – Dr. Tranchida said he performs the autopsy service for Rock County, he does not go to any of the scenes, any calls over 15 minutes he does charge for and testifying in court cases; 5) Response time and they may need additional help – Mr. Irmen said they have to wait until a scene is safe and this usually takes a while. He said he and staff will be meeting with the different agencies to see how to better serve the process. Captain Christiansen said response time to the scene will not be an

issue, it is the run of the mill cases they are waiting sometimes 40 minutes for someone to show now. Mr. Irmen said the general calls will be handled out of the Rock County office and the investigator will be in the office.

Passed on the following vote: Yes – Supervisors Beaver, Brill, Fell and Knudson; No – Supervisor Wiedenfeld.

Committee Requests and Motions.

Schedule Tours Chair Beaver said they will be meeting at Rock Valley Community Programs on October 6, 2014.

Future Meetings. Chair Beaver said there will not be a quorum for the September 15th meeting and asked the Committee if they would rather meet on September 22 or 29. The Committee agreed to meet on September 22 at 4 P.M.

Adjournment. Supervisor Brill moved adjournment at 5:04 P.M., second by Supervisor Fell. ADOPTED.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Bondehagen
Confidential Administrative Assistant

NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED BY COMMITTEE.