

JUDICIAL AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

April 17, 2009

The Judicial and Public Safety Committee met on Friday, April 17, 2009, at the Kane County Government Center, County Board Room, 719 S. Batavia Avenue, Geneva, Illinois.

Present: Chairman Kenyon, Tredup, Allan, Davoust, Fahy, and Ford (late). Absent: Shoemaker. Also present: Co. Bd. members Wyatt, Lewis; Sheriff Perez and staff Keaty; Court Services Admin. staff Hyatt, Stodieck, and Anselme; Circuit Clerk Seyller; Finance staff Waggoner, Clark; Auditor Keck; Coroner West; State's Atty. Barsanti; KaneComm staff Baustian; IT Dir. Fahnstock and staff Strike; Chief Judge Brown; Judiciary staff Naughton; HR Mgmt. Exec. Dir. McCraven; Asst. State's Atty. Shepro; and members of the press and public.

Chairman Kenyon called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m., noting there would be an Executive Session to discuss personnel prior to adjournment of the meeting.

Minutes of March 13, 2009 - were approved on motion by Tredup, seconded by Allan. Motion carried.

Public Comment – None

Monthly Financial Reports – Waggoner noted that under Adult Corrections salary expenditures were at 33% year to date. While this is close to where they should be, overtime expenditures are significantly over budget at 95% of that budget. Much of the overage is due to staff vacancies, and the fact that some officers are still in training and are not expected to begin work at the jail until May. She indicated that total salary expenditures will continue to be monitored. Under Corrections, Board & Care, outplacement costs are at \$168,000, which represents December through February invoice payments to Kendall and Kankakee Counties. Waggoner explained that since the outplacement budget is at zero for 2009, any amount spent will create a budget overage for the year. Under Juvenile Custody, juvenile outplacement costs are at 34% with only three months of expenditures being expensed. If this trend continues, the budget could be approximately \$328,000 over by the end of the year. (Ford arrives.) Allan felt it didn't make sense to have nothing budgeted for the Board & Care line item when people are always being outsourced. Perez said he was told there would be zero in that line item. Keaty reported they currently are at 98% capacity for males, and 89% for females. For the month of March they were at 97% capacity for males, and 79% for females.

DISCUSSION: BUDGET ISSUES

Kenyon announced that the rest of the meeting would be dedicated to discussing budget issues. The committee was provided with several graphs for reference.

State's Atty. Barsanti said he had spoken to every elected official and they were all surprised that there had been no discussion with the Board or the Chairman on the various options for trimming their budgets. He felt there were alternatives to cutting services such as early retirement, increased health insurance contributions, etc., and would like to see those discussed. Barsanti said the workload in his offices continues to increase. Last year he made the required 1.5% budget cut. No one in his office received an increase, and with increased costs, they were actually making less than they did the year before. Barsanti recognized the county was in a crisis, but the electeds are looking for a discussion on alternatives. Barsanti said he had heard there were 11 county employees who had maxed out their IMRF (35 or more years of service), three of whom are in his office. He thought some sort of health insurance incentive might be attractive to these employees. Taking three people out of his budget would save over \$100,000, which would go a long way towards covering shortfalls. He understood the difference between early retirements and buy-outs, noting the latter was a lot more expensive proposition for the county. If buy-outs aren't an option he wants someone to tell him that so he can answer questions his people are asking. Kenyon commented that he thought offering an insurance incentive made a lot of sense. He hoped some answers to these questions would come out at next week's joint meeting of the Executive and Finance Committees. Barsanti felt a plan could not be put together without knowing what the alternatives are. It was Shepro's understanding that HR was looking at the possibility of offering early retirement incentives, but it could not be offered selectively. A class of people would need to be identified who would be eligible, and it would then need to be offered to all of them. Fahy recognized Barsanti's concerns and those of the other elected officials, assuring them that there would be discussion with them on the various alternatives.

Sheriff Perez pointed out that with two thirds of his employees covered under three separate collective bargaining agreements, changes to the agreements would need to be negotiated and that will take time. Perez said he had already met with the attorney representing the three bargaining units, and it was very positive. He thought there were several people in his office with 25 to 30 years of service who would consider early retirement if an insurance incentive were offered. He also felt increasing insurance premiums for all county employees was another good option. Those he had spoken to preferred that over getting laid off or having to take furlough days. Perez said they have identified things operationally that they can cut back on, which will make pretty substantial savings without affecting their manpower. Perez said they had just applied for a federal COPS Grant, which is part of the economic stimulus package. If they are able to get four of the eight deputy positions they applied for, that will keep them at even staff as they have two deputies retiring by the end of the month. He pointed out that there would be no cost to the county for three years. At the end of the three years we would be required to keep those people on for an additional year; however, they could be laid off after that if there is no room in the budget for them. A decision will be made by

September 30 as to who gets the positions. Per a question, Perez projected 4-8 public safety officers would be eligible to retire next year. (Fahy steps away.) Concerning the jail, Keaty discussed several cost saving measures they planned to take. (Fahy returns.) Keaty pointed out that during the last contract negotiation, the county pursued the elimination of comp time, which resulted in 30 officers being paid for overtime. Keaty asked if comp time could be negotiated back into the contract, as that costs them nothing. Perez pointed out that overtime spending in the jail alone is already at 75-80%. Perez acknowledged that in the past he had 8-10 people who carried the maximum 480 hours of overtime. Most, however, carried less than 40 hours. Allan suggested requiring that comp time be used over a certain period of time.

Circuit Clerk Seyller said with a 5.5% across the board cut, she had no alternatives except layoffs as her budget is 97% personnel. In December she dropped eight positions due to attrition. She felt that the Board needs to look at salaries across the county as there is a huge discrepancy between departments. She provided several examples. Seyller said she was willing to do her part, but questioned what her part was in the whole picture.

Coroner West agreed with Seyller and Barsanti. He felt a lot of information had been given out publicly that has caused elected officials to be very concerned. He noted that some of the exemptions to the cuts were the largest departments of the county. West thought the elected officials were being discriminated against. He stated that if electeds need to cut their budgets, all departments need to cut at the same rate including the Chairman's office and the Finance Department. West said electeds were willing to work with the County Board, but don't want to see others getting increases and additional staff while they are asked to make cuts. As his office is small, the loss of any staff person in his office is a major concern at a time when they have a lot of cases to be dealt with. Fahy appreciated the input, but felt everyone needed to stop dwelling on the past and move forward.

Mary Hyatt noted that Court Services had a number of issues the effect their budget. She noted that everyone who has a bachelor's degree in their department gets subsidized by the state. She expressed concern that if positions are cut, they will lose the subsidy. Once that subsidy is gone, it is very difficult to get it back. They also have statutorily required services that they have to provide. She pointed out that while electronic monitoring is not required by statute, it does save the county a lot of money in jail days - approximately \$13 million since the beginning of the program. Hyatt hoped everyone was willing to work together and look at other options such as early retirement and insurance increases. She felt that cutting programs will impact the county's overall financial picture. .

Doug Naughton indicated that the Chief Judge had asked them to come with various scenarios to make the necessary budget cuts. They were looking at furloughs, they have vacancies they haven't filled, wage reductions, and cuts in mandated line items. They have already run out of money for psychological and psychiatric evaluations. Naughton said they would do their part but wanted to hear what their options are, because based on what he has today they can't meet their target. Naughton asked whether or not they were expected to turn in their plans today. Kenyon responded that they could turn them in with the understanding that there may be changes based on other options that might be available.

West said it was his understanding that they were being asked to cut 5.5% from their original budget, which actually ends up being close to 10%. He wondered what percentage they were really dealing with. Kenyon advised West to get clarification from the Chairman or Finance Director. West reminded the committee that all the elected officials complied with all the cut backs they were asked to do the first time. They are willing to do their part, but need clear information on what they are dealing with.

Perez indicated he had run the numbers, and last year they generated \$3.3 million in revenue to the General Fund. He anticipates that number will be higher this year as his department conducts all foreclosure sales. Total fees collected last month in the Civil Division only was \$141,000, compared to \$95,000 at this time last year. That's not counting the money that is generated from Corrections through the phone system, bond fees, the state criminal alien assistance program, etc. He noted his office will lose some of the revenue generated, because KaneComm is now a separate entity from them. That accounted for approximately \$760,000 last year that went into the General fund.

Ford felt that 5.5% was a baseline and that there needed to be some flexibility since every department is run differently. He thought it was important to look at other options such as early retirement, increased health insurance premiums, and comp time. He felt the county needs to look at where its income comes from, and that information needs to be provided by each department.

Merit Commission staff indicated they had a small budget and had already made their cuts and were good to go.

Baustian reported that KaneComm employees 19 people in their division, 17 of whom are member of the PBLC collective bargaining agreement. They will be impacted by the discussions the Sheriff is currently having with that union. They were budgeted for all 19 employees this year, and intended to be fully staff in order to avoid unnecessary overtime. However, their preliminary plan is to refrain from filling the two remaining positions for the remainder of the year. Baustian felt that would cover most of the 5.5% they were seeking. She pointed out that they are depending very heavily on the employees' willingness to flex their own work hours to ensure that that would not cause any additional overtime to be created. Baustian said that was

fine right now, but she didn't know if long term that was a realistic business practice. In 2010 they would probably want to revisit that.

Motion was made by Fahy, seconded by Allan to place the following submitted monthly reports on file: Finance, Sheriff, Adult Corrections, Drug Rehabilitation Court, Court Services Administration, KaneComm, and the Coroner. Motion carried.

Executive Session - The Judicial & Public Safety Committee moved into Executive Session at 9:55 a.m. to discuss personnel on motion by Fahy, seconded by Ford. Motion carried. The committee returned to open session at 10:22 a.m. on motion by Fahy, seconded by Ford. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:23 a.m. on motion by Tredup, seconded by Ford. Motion carried.

Ellyn M. McGrath
Recording Secretary