

## MINUTES

**JANUARY 20, 2018**

The Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren met in Budget Session in its offices in the Wayne Dumont, Jr. Administration Building, Belvidere, New Jersey on January 20, 2018 at 9:00 a.m.

The meeting was called to order by Director Smith and upon roll call, the following members were present: Freeholder Ed Smith and Freeholder Jason Sarnoski. Also attending were County CFO Dan Olshefski, Fiscal Officer Kim Francisco and County Administrator Steve Marvin. Freeholder Rick Gardner was absent due to a previous commitment.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Director Smith.

Director Smith read the following statement: **“ADEQUATE NOTICE OF THIS MEETING OF JANUARY 20, 2018 WAS GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT BY FORWARDING A SCHEDULE OF REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS TO THE WARREN COUNTY CLERK, THE STAR-LEDGER, AND DAILY RECORD AND BY POSTING A COPY THEREOF ON THE BULLETIN BOARD IN THE OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS. FORMAL ACTION MAY BE TAKEN BY THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS AT THIS MEETING. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IS ENCOURAGED. IN ORDER TO ASSURE FULL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION, THOSE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO WISH TO ATTEND THE MEETING SHOULD SUBMIT ANY REQUESTS FOR SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE.”**

Mr. Olshefski said he had nothing new to add in terms of budget overview. All requests were in the normal range and included no surprises. Today, we will be going over the Departments of Public Safety, Prosecutor, Sheriff and Corrections. Mr. Smith thanked all attendees for coming out as they had initially been scheduled for a different date.

First to come before the Board was Public Safety Director Frank Wheatley. He said the department is holding the line since last year. The capital request for simulcast capability was discussed at length. This will be an important upgrade with the rollout of the LMR (Land Mobile Radio) project for it to function at an optimal level and enhance first responder communications in the central and southern portions of the county. As of now, there is no alert when we become disconnected. The cost for the two projects is to be \$300,000. They settled on AT&T as the service provider with Mr. Wheatley showing a hand-held device that he said had no delay and a clarity better than the regular system. Data is unlimited for Public Safety. Hunterdon County uses this system and is happy with it (though the terrain is different there). The system complies with Public Contracts Law. Last year, Mr. Wheatley said we were looking at \$1 million just for a south county antenna. While no one can project what the future holds and there is a monthly expense for this service, it was believed that this system would provide a net savings.

LMR and AT&T are under State contract and FirstNet will be shortly. Mr. Sarnoski asked if any state or federal grants were available. Mr. Wheatley said no, except we could try Homeland Security. Mr. Smith noted that the feds are subsidizing this project; we are using their network.

Other topics included a requested budgetary increase for the Fire Academy, considered warranted due to more programs, high attendance and for salary increases.

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Mr. Olshefski noted his appreciation that the department efficiently utilized Homeland Security grant funds that went toward the Correctional Center, Sheriff's Office, InfoShare, generators, etc. saying it really helped a lot. This portion of the meeting concluded at 9:25 a.m.

Prosecutor Richard Burke was next and began with a discussion about vehicles. He said, for the last five or six years, his department has returned money to the County to replenish their vehicles on an annual basis. He requested three this year. If we continue like this, he said, over the next couple of years, we will be in good shape. Three different vehicles, courtesy of a grant, are being used by Victim Witness and a couple of other units. The County still has to insure and maintain them and the grant runs through June of 2018. Putting money aside for more expensive specialty vehicles was advised, whether for complete replacements or rebuilds (to fix electrical and exhaust problems).

Mr. Burke requested retention salary adjustments for Assistant Prosecutors (in non-bargaining units) once the PBA contract is resolved. Mr. Olshefski did include such funding in the budget.

The potential for the NTF unit moving to Warren Acres was mentioned as Corrections already uses the site for training. The State recently required that two more divisions, Animal Cruelty and Medical Examiner, would now be under the Prosecutor. "Whatever happened to State mandate, State pay?" asked Mr. Marvin. Mr. Smith said we ask regularly through NJAC and we are rebuffed. This portion of the meeting concluded at 9:47 a.m.

Warden Ken McCarthy then approached to discuss the Department of Corrections. He began by providing details on three requests on his original budget proposal. First, he sought to upgrade the current firearm Glock weapons to transition to nine millimeter from 40 caliber. Considering trade-in values, the total cost for the entire transition was to be just over \$14,300. The Freeholders thought that was great. Sheriff McDonald interjected to offer to buy the 40-caliber ammunition for his department.

Secondly, Mr. McCarthy recommended upgrading the radio system in use at the jail since parts are no longer available for the existing one. TuWay Communications has a program that accepts trade-ins of the 52 radios. The Homeland Security Grant will cover close to 60 percent of the cost, leaving the County responsible for the balance in the fall.

Third, the jail's intercom/call box/public address system is at least twenty years old. It has two security functions and the boxes no longer exist to make repairs. If we want for it to fail, Mr. McCarthy said it would take about six weeks to fix. Replacing the system proactively will take about two weeks.

Regarding Bail Reform, this coming year will reveal what the impact will be. The population in the Correctional Center went from 119 in 2016 to 85 in 2017. This lower population has resulted in a savings in food service expense, but speedy trials are going to begin now so Mr. McCarthy expected to see an uptick in population.

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In terms of staffing, last year, two sergeant positions were eliminated and a lieutenant position was created resulting in savings. Mr. Sarnoski complimented Mr. McCarthy on doing a good job with his budget and managing the facility. This portion of the meeting concluded at 10:02 a.m.

Sheriff James McDonald's turn was next. He said he requested a two percent increase in his OE, mainly because of the two percent Cap situation. At the end of 2017, he had a remaining balance of \$10,300. "If I don't need it, I won't spend it. If I find other ways to fund things, I'll do that," said the Sheriff. He shared concerns about some existing contracts, particularly the alarm system and doors. He said the cost is \$14,000/year. We called them twice last year and were charged about \$800 for parts and labor. He wanted to look at the contract since he failed to understand the extra charge while paying \$14,000 for the year. Typically, the company is called between one and three times per year.

Mr. Lazorisak said the problem with the Court House is that the alarm system components are tied into the old fire alarm system and the whole thing is spider webbed. APS (the vendor) knows that system. Using a different vendor unfamiliar with the system could result in catastrophe. Mr. Marvin suggested Mr. McDonald try negotiating directly with the vendor to lower the yearly fee with Mr. Lazorisak's help. There has to be a certain knowledge of the system.

Foreclosure revenue increased from \$150,000 in 2016 to \$431,000 in 2017. The Sheriff expected 2018 to be about the same as 2017. Predicting this incorrectly has Cap Law implications, so Mr. Olshefski said he felt comfortable with budgeting \$260,000 and that would be achievable.

Contract negotiations are ongoing. Mr. Smith and Mr. Sarnoski suggested a one-time appropriation of \$100,000 for S&W increases, but the bargaining unit has to be settled before non-bargaining unit employees can be awarded raises. Sheriff McDonald felt confident that the contract would be settled easily and office staff would be taken care of as well with that amount. A meeting is scheduled for February 1 and he thought they could settle that day and accommodate everybody.

Discussion then turned to capital, starting with requests for two vehicles, one of which the Sheriff wanted to go back and forth to the training academy. He was advised to utilize the motor pool for that purpose.

The camera system in the Court House was characterized as "horrible" by Sheriff McDonald. It has only an eight day retention which he said is not adequate. Mr. Smith said due to lack of cooperation with the Judiciary, he was unwilling to make any further appropriations there until the conflict is resolved.

Mr. Smith asked if Sheriff Officers were out on road patrols since the question had been posed to him by members of the public. Sheriff McDonald said no; only to schools where there are no local police (Harmony, White). People may be seeing cars on the road on route to serve warrants or foreclosure postings.

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Mr. Marvin reminded everyone that next Saturday's Budget Meeting would deal with the Community College and Public Works. Then the final Budget Session will deal with the Technical School, Cap calculation, personnel requests and final wrap-up. Mr. Olshefski reminded the Board of the new State mandated process to submit the budget which will take longer than normal.

On motion by Mr. Sarnoski, seconded by Mr. Smith, and there being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Recorded Vote: Mr. Gardner absent, Mr. Sarnoski yes, Mr. Smith yes

**ATTESTED TO:**

**Steve Marvin, Clerk of the Board**