

**General Services Committee**  
**July 16, 2013**  
**Minutes**

**Members Present:** Committee Chairman Philip Reed, Legislators Michael Astafan, Michael Behling, Robert Ferris, Jennie Adsit, Anthony Doldo, Chairwoman Carolyn Fitzpatrick

**Others Present:** Legislators Robert Thomas, Michael Montigelli, County Administrator Robert Hagemann, Fire & Emergency Management Services Director Joseph Plummer, Undersheriff Paul Trudeau, Watertown Daily Times Reporter Daniel Flatley, Senior Typist Torri Richmire

Chairman Reed called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and offered privilege of the floor.

Undersheriff Paul Trudeau addressed the committee stating that in March 2013 he met with several members of the Board and requested an additional two deputies with no results. He stated that he is now forced to implement Plan B which is staffing the airport with deputies will no longer be a priority. He stated that he is not saying he won't cover it, he will guarantee morning coverage, however afternoon coverage will only be if a deputy is available. He advised that he is currently down five deputies due to a retirement and if allowed to hire two officers they will not be on board for months due to training but it would only make him down one deputy. He invited Board members to be in attendance when he sets up a meeting with TSA and airport staff to explain his plan. Chairman Reed explained to the Undersheriff that privilege of the floor does not allow the committee to ask or answer questions in response and that he may be called upon later in the meeting to address his statement.

The minutes of the June meeting were approved without objection or correction.

Chairman Reed introduced a resolution amending the 2013 County Budget in relation to the State FY10, FY11 and FY12 Law Enforcement Prevention Program Grant (LETP) and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Adsit and seconded by Legislator Doldo. There being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Reed introduced a resolution authorizing FY 2012 Operation Stonegarden Grant Agreement and amending the 2013 County Budget in relation thereto and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Astafan and seconded by Legislator Behling. There being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the resolution as presented.

Chairman Reed introduced a resolution authorizing agreement for the Provision of Nursing Care at the County Jail and entertained a motion for consideration. A motion was duly made by Legislator Doldo and seconded by Legislator Behling. Mr. Hagemann explained that Sibley Nursing Personnel Service used to provide backup when needed but they are no longer in the business so this company will fill that void. There being no discussion, the Committee agreed to sponsor the

resolution as presented.

Joseph Plummer, Fire & Emergency Management Services Director, advised the Committee that Blue Wing Services who is the consultant for the public safety communications system arrived in town yesterday and have scheduled town hall meetings in Adams, Chaumont, Depauville, Evans Mills and Champion before meeting with the General Services Committee on Thursday, July 25<sup>th</sup>. He stated that they are on a fact finding mission to get feedback from county department heads, EMS workers, firefighters and the public on what their communication needs are to do a better job in an emergency situation. Blue Wing is also educating attendees on the newest technology and terminology available as well as the advantages of interoperability of communication systems among agencies.

Mr. Plummer stated that there is a group meeting with Administration and Blue Wing on Thursday so that he can get an idea of 2014 budgetary needs stating that currently this project has been funded by grant money but he will soon need to use county dollars. He did explain that being a member of the Central New York Interoperable Communication Consortium with neighboring counties is a key point for receiving grant funding but his estimate would be approximately \$15 million to \$25 million to complete the project. He explained that the current communication system is mobile base operations which is no longer acceptable for those in the field and that portable coverage with the portable unit worn on the hip and speaker microphone on shoulder is needed. He stated that 12-15 towers will need to be erected around the county to accommodate the new system.

Mr. Plummer then addressed the committee regarding the 911 analog upgrade system stating that he is very pleased with the vendor they currently have and would like to remain with them and re-use some of the same pieces and software licenses that have already been purchased. He estimates that to start from scratch this project would be \$1.5 - 2 million but by upgrading the current system it should come in at about \$610,000. Fire and Emergency Management applied for a \$600,000 grant, with 12 other counties, New York State used a formula and awarded all 13 counties a portion with Jefferson County receiving \$295,000. Mr. Plummer stated that once complete it will be a turnkey project including yearly maintenance for five years with very little training necessary. He broke the cost down stating that it will cost approximately \$610,000, he received grants for \$295,000, \$47,458 (with the hope to receive another \$47,458 next year), an award letter for \$90,000 and \$37,000 maintenance fee that will not be due next year for the current system, resulting in a request for \$92,000 in the 2014 Budget to complete the project. He stated that if the upgrade is not done at this time and he returns the money that later on the County will have to foot the whole \$610,000.

Chairman Reed requested that Undersheriff Trudeau approach the podium for continued conversation to his earlier privilege of the floor. He stated that the Board cannot dictate how the Sheriff's Department uses their resources and reiterated that the department was down four deputies and was approved for two positions leaving them with two outstanding officer requests. In response to the Chairman's request, Undersheriff Trudeau stated that the last school session was Winter 2013 with the next session starting in August of this year and there may be sessions coming up in September. Undersheriff Trudeau stated that he is not giving the board an ultimatum but wants the Committee to know that his officers are stepping up to fill the gaps but they are getting burnt out. He stated that if the other two positions are approved it would allow him to make sure there is an

officer at the Watertown International Airport to cover the incoming and outgoing flights and at summer events within the county.

In response to questions from Legislators, Undersheriff Trudeau stated that of the four vacancies, two will be filled by lateral transfers from another agency with no schooling needed. He explained that when a new deputy is hired they are required to attend 20 -23 weeks of training, after graduation they must go through 13 weeks of field training with a veteran officer and then they are on their own for the remainder of their year probation.

Following further discussion, Mr. Hagemann advised that when a person hands in their notice of retirement, by law there is a 30 day window where that employee can rescind their request, the budget does not allow for the payment of two wages resulting in the hiring process to begin once that position is vacant. He stated that the Undersheriff is correct that these two positions were budgeted in the 2013 budget but what is missing is the Federal funding that in the past covered 90% of the wages for those two positions. That figure was in excess of \$130,000 but in the past couple years federal cuts have reduced that figure to under \$30,000 annually. He stated that without a police force out there the plane does not take off. Chairman Reed stated that initially four deputies were hired to cover the airport but since the takeover their Transportation Security Administration (TSA) duties have decreased on paper. Undersheriff Trudeau agreed that the duties have been reduced but their physical presence has not. The Undersheriff stated that they will cover the morning flight but he will not guarantee that a deputy will make it on time for the afternoon flight if they are tied up on a call. When asked what date this can be expected, he stated that he still needs to talk to the Sheriff regarding.

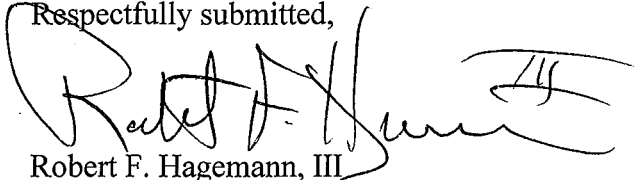
Chairman Reed questioned whether there was any consideration of modifying duties elsewhere instead of at the airport stating that the department was increased by two officers due to the airport. Undersheriff Trudeau stated that his reason for not guaranteeing the afternoon flight is because that is their busiest time of day. He reiterated that he is not saying there won't be coverage at the airport if staff is available but their priority will be the current duty they are on at the time and a replacement officer will not be sent.

In response to a question from Legislator Astafan, Mr. Hagemann stated that in order to have an off duty officer at the airport they would need to be of peace officer status so that they can respond to a situation that may be addressed. He also stated that TSA requires that they have special training. Chairman Reed stated that his hope is that there are enough police agencies in the area that they may be able to work together to make sure that there is coverage at the airport to not disrupt flights in and out.

In response to a question from Legislator Ferris, Mr. Hagemann stated that he hopes to get the airport committee together next week to review applications that they have received for the airport manager position.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m. and scheduled to reconvene on Thursday, July 25, 2013 at 5:30 p.m. for a presentation from Blue Wing Services, Inc.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert F. Hagemann, III". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and a distinct "III" at the end.

Robert F. Hagemann, III  
Clerk of the Board