

LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING  
August 8, 2019

Joholski called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m. Committee members present:

Cary Joholski  
Frank Easterday  
Mary Henry  
Sheriff John Spears

Mike Leis  
Darrel Clark  
Chief Deputy Nathan Campbell - Absent

**Others in Attendance:** Supervisor Roger Call.

Joholski confirmed that the Agenda was properly posted. Leis moved to approve the minutes of the June meeting. Henry seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

**Invoices:**

The Sheriff's invoices were reviewed and explanations provided as requested. Clark moved and Henry seconded a motion to pay the invoices in the sum of \$80,896.81, which the motion passed unanimously. Sheriff addressed most of the invoices included standard operational costs. Sheriff mentioned two larger invoices included new asphalt for the parking lot, and the cost for changing to .9 mm guns.

**Sheriff's Activity Report:**

Sheriff Spears reported a serious house fire occurred this morning. Sheriff advised no one was hurt, but the fire destroyed everything. Sheriff mentioned the fire started in a camper, moved to the shed, and eventually took over the house. Seven fire departments were assisting, along with the Vernon County Emergency Management, and American Red Cross.

Sheriff Spears said the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual National Night Out event was a huge success. Sheriff said 400-500 people were expected to attend, but the event well exceeded around 1,200 – 1,500 people. Sheriff said every local police department, fire department, and EMS attended. Sheriff said the event was not just for kids, and the adults enjoyed the K9 demo, extrication, med flight, and much more. Sheriff gave all of the credit to the committee, volunteers, and booth vendors. Sheriff mentioned this ill always be a free event to promote safety, for the intent for families to leave their homes to meet local law enforcement, and other emergency services, and it is affordable for everyone. Sheriff recapped that many communities held their own NNO event, but Vernon County held as a whole. Sheriff said words cannot express how the community came together. Clark commended efforts to those who helped coordinate this event.

Sheriff Spears urged the committee to review the burning ordinance carefully. Sheriff mentioned the sheriff's office has concerns. Joholski advised the draft ordinance has been revised with Attorney Wilbur's suggestions, and the DNR limitations were removed. Sheriff advised that the dispatchers are already busy, and as the ordinance is currently written, will add even more work for them. Sheriff said it would make more sense for those to call the local fire departments / townships. Chief Deputy Sheriff Nathan Campbell added the statutes gives authority to districts. Clark said he knows a lot of people who do controlled burns, and if the proposed ordinance moves forward, the dispatchers will be busy keeping track of even more. Joholski discussed the dispatchers would merely be telling the public if there's a burn ban, and recommended a recording on the telephone with the information. Sheriff said he was just raising the questions and concerns. Sheriff was satisfied that everyone was aware, and changes could be made to the proposed ordinance. A discussion took place.

**Matters pertaining to maintenance and operation of office:**

Chief Deputy Sheriff Nathan Campbell said a company is coming to repair the rust and repaint the west side garage doors.

Easterday asked how operations were going in the jail. Chief Deputy Sheriff Campbell mentioned there's about 80 inmates housed right now. Campbell stated there are about 45 state inmate and sanction holds remain consistent. Campbell added once there's 90 and above inmates then the jail gets congested.

Sheriff Spears reported he received a letter from a housed state inmate complimenting the Vernon County Jail and jail staff. The inmate wrote how he had an idea of what he was going to experience, and was surprised, and impressed with staff, the jail, and administration. Sheriff added it's refreshing for staff to realize this.

**ATV / UTV Ordinance Requests: None.**

**2020 Budget Review:**

Chief Deputy Sheriff Nathan Campbell explained the budget was compiled differently this year, and includes wages and benefits. Campbell advised he met with Personnel to compare total numbers.

Chief Deputy Sheriff Nathan Campbell went into detail and explained each account, but in summary:

The total 2020 operation budget is \$4,988,418.00. Campbell reiterated that the majority of the operational budget is wages and benefits, leaving the sheriff's office with less than 20% to operate. Campbell added the operational budget plus non-lapsing funds brings the budget to just over \$5 million.

Jail Account (10.53000.) – Chief Deputy Sheriff Campbell explained salary increases due to the two new full-time positions, the food service contract increases by 3 ½ percent, overall increase to this account is \$15,000.00. Campbell raised the question if contracted inmates are worth housing. Campbell answered with absolutely, and without salaries, the budget is far exceeded. Campbell also mentioned it's not the number of staff needed to assist with the extra inmates, it's how the facility is setup that decides how many staff are needed.

Jail Maintenance Account (10.54000.) – Chief Deputy Sheriff Campbell explained with Vernon Manor's maintenance position open the sheriff's office is looking at bringing Don Dregne full-time. Campbell summarized this was budgeted for, so the budget stays the same.

Sheriff Office Operations Account (10.55000.) – Chief Deputy Sheriff Campbell reported this account decreases by \$5,000.00. Campbell added money has been saved since going paperless, a new copier is needed, and IT is now replacing squad computers.

Traffic Account (10.56000.) – Chief Deputy Sheriff Campbell mentioned this account shows an increase. Campbell said new winter tires are needed and will cost around \$15,000.00. Campbell said training is important, so conducting more training, which means meal reimbursements also increase.

Radio Account (10.57000.) – Chief Deputy Sheriff Campbell explained the miscellaneous account has an actual amount of \$9,000.00 for a revised budget of \$5,000.00, with a total decrease of \$4,000.00. Campbell added Sgt. Olson received a grant in the amount of \$17,000.00, which was put toward stacked monitors for the dispatchers.

Chief Deputy Sheriff Campbell quickly explained the non-lapsing funds. The jail fee fund (fund 15) comes from citations, and has a balance of \$74,340.13 (No County Tax Levy Component). The Training and Standards of Department of Justice fund (fund 23), used for office training, has a balance of \$45,080.07 (No County Tax Levy Component). The radio contingency fund (fund 42) has a balance of \$19,630.07, and requesting \$15,000.00, same as last year (Tax Levy, Plus Grants and penalty assessment). The water patrol fund (fund 72) has a balance of \$1,006.30, and is used for water patrol and equipment (No County Tax Levy Component). The E 911 fund (fund 73) has a balance of \$126,499.62, and has an adjusted balance tax levy recommended at \$96,000.00 in 2020. Campbell added Vernon Communications wants out of the 911, and every 5 years upgrades are needed. The Jail Escrow fund (fund 86) has a current balance of \$118,263.02, and is recommended that \$20,000.00 be transferred to fund 87. The Squad Car Acquisition fund (fund 87) has an adjusted balance tax levy recommended at \$116,000.00 for 2020. Also recommended that an additional \$20,000.00 be transferred from fund 86 to help support vehicle prices. Current balance is \$119,943.32. Two squad cars are currently on order \$72,854.00. The Drug Canine fund (fund 90) which is mostly funded by community donations has a current balance of \$52,455.39.

Leis added since the county is short money, the finance committee is asking departments to come up with \$100,000.00. Chief Deputy Sheriff Campbell responded that \$1 million has already been made, have to save taxpayers money, and the sheriff's office is already short staffed. Sheriff Spears added a jail is not supposed to make money, and it's the jailers who get the wrath. Spears said the extra inmates could be gone tomorrow. Sheriff said the housing income from when Sheriff Cary was running, could have paid for our facility. Sheriff mentioned now that the highway building is going up, how much money is owed on the facility is being looked at. A discussion took place.

Supervisor Call asked about the radio / tower upgrades. Chief Deputy Sheriff Campbell said there's a phone app that works through the two-way radio, which is compatible with First Net. Campbell said there will always be a need for two-way radios, and they will never go away. A discussion further ensued in regards to not hiring an engineer. Campbell added BayCom already gave a study, and estimated where towers should go, and Com Elec will do the same.

Clark mentioned how Richland County released a press release in regards to the M-ATV they received, and added how Vernon County is ahead of the game.

Clark showed the committee a picture of an Amish buggy that was non-compliant with State law. Clark said this is a safety issue, and they should be cited for not having the proper equipment. Sheriff Spears addressed the majority of the Amish are doing a fairly good job. Sheriff said the sheriff's office can talk to corresponding bishop to enforce a deadline. Sheriff added there's motorists too that are traveling without headlights / taillights.

Henry moved to adjourn, Clark seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. The next meeting will be on Thursday, September 12, 2019.

Morgan C. Paulson, Acting Secretary