

TUESDAY, AUGUST 25, 2015

**APPROVED MINUTES OF THE
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING HELD**

**STATE OF MINNESOTA)
COUNTY OF DODGE)**

**COUNTY ADMINISTRATION OFFICE
MANTORVILLE, MN**

2015-16 C.O.W.

The Dodge County Commissioners met in Committee of the Whole August 25, 2015, in the County Board Room at the Dodge County Government Services Building, Mantorville, MN, at 4:30 p.m. CDT. Chair John Allen opened the meeting at 4:30 p.m. CDT.

Meeting Convened

The Chair acknowledged those present:

Those Present

Members present: John Allen District #1
 Tim Tjosaas District #2
 Rodney Peterson District #3
 David Erickson District #4
 Steven Gray District #5

Members absent: None

Also present: Jim Elmquist County Administrator
 Becky Lubahn Deputy Clerk

Sheriff Scott Rose met with the Board to discuss the proposed 2016 Sheriff's Office budget.

2016 Sheriff's Office
Budget Discussion

Mr. Rose reported that as they plan for the 2016 Sheriff's Office budget, they are anticipating a few changes in various areas of their office. The following is a brief summary of each line item showing increases or decreases in their proposed budget for next year.

Courtroom/Building Security & Safety

The biggest change the Sheriff's Office within their office in 2016 is the expansion and improvement of building security and courtroom safety.

Lori Gildea, Chief Justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court, has made courthouse security her number one priority. Over the years there have been numerous incidents of courthouse violence, some resulting in death. It can happen anywhere, in any court or government facility with tragic consequences. Sheriff Rose indicated he is appreciative the Dodge County Board has taken the position that installing a metal detector as part of the security upgrade and renovation is essential. The Chief Justice has requested that all 87 counties have a Courthouse Security Workgroup to review their security assessments, review current conditions and recommendations. With the assistance of the Court, Dodge County has organized the committee and attended their initial state-wide meeting on June 15, 2105. This training is being facilitated by the Minnesota Supreme Court.

In 2014, during the building remodeling planning, a security checkpoint concept was developed and will be implemented this fall to provide better security and safety for citizens and courthouse employees. The Honorable Judge Jodi Williamson and Mr. Rose have met at length to discuss statutory requirements as well as the expectations of the Minnesota Supreme Court.

Sheriff Rose reported this will be a somewhat evolving department within the Sheriff's Office while they work to establish a comprehensive and structured approach to addressing the daily security needs of the courthouse and of county employees.

2016 Sheriff's Office
Budget Discussion -
Continued

The security needs on the Dodge County campus are many:

- State law requires a Court Room Security Deputy in all hearings in both the main court room and the smaller hearing room which is being added during the renovation.
- Deputy posted at screening area at main entrance of courthouse Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. – 4: 30 p.m. (Two deputies will be required for a few hours during high volume court days.)
- Transport Deputies for all prisoner related transports.
- Monitoring of security cameras in both the courthouse and in the Government Services Building.

When the remodel is completed, Dodge County will have the current courtroom and a new hearing room on the first floor that will require security. Court Administration anticipates the hearing room will be used approximately once or twice per week and not for the entire day. The hearing room will be used for the child support magistrate hearings, conciliation court settlement conferences and trials and as needed for miscellaneous administrative hearings. The hearing room will also be used for overflow public seating during high profile cases, because the remodeled courtroom will only accommodate 23-25 in the public gallery. Potentially, there will be times where the county may have criminal proceedings taking place upstairs and hearings taking place downstairs.

As was discussed with the Board in 2014 (with Sheriff Jensen and Judge Williamson), this restructuring of the county's building security will create a number of staffing challenges that will require at least one FTE to accommodate their needs within the Sheriff's Office. The Sheriff's Office believes adding a supervisor position along with a .55 FTE deputy will be necessary to accommodate their building screening needs and overall courtroom security. The Sheriff's Office will utilize part-time Deputies to assist in the court room when needed. Sheriff's Office administrative staff has put a great deal of time in researching how best to utilize a new supervisor's position and have determined the following position would best suit their needs in this area.

Sergeant – Building Safety and Security

Responsibilities:

- Train and manage Court Room Security Deputies and Transport Deputies.
- Manage security screening area at main entrance to courthouse.
- Manage court security and transport scheduling.
- Assist with monitoring court hearings and data entry of transport data information on calendar.

- Assist with making sure proper paper work is prepared and served on individuals prior to going to and from court.
- Verify booking and fingerprinting has been completed.
- Monitor surveillance cameras for both courthouse and Government Services Building.
- Assist with walk up (lobby) complaints.

2016 Sheriff's Office
Budget Discussion -
Continued

Other areas they believe this position could assist with:

- Organizing and scheduling security walkthrough's of the Government Services Building with Court Room Security Deputies at various times during the day.
- Assisting with organizing medical first responder, CPR, and AED training and procedures for courthouse employees.
- Assisting with organizing Building Safety Training for courthouse employees.
- Member of the Dodge County Security Workgroup.

This would be a C43 union Sergeant position. During days where the courthouse is closed due to weather related issues (snow emergencies) the Sheriff's Office may utilize this person to assist patrol with road hazard and emergency calls. On other days (holidays) where the courthouse is closed, this supervisor would have the option to work on items within the office related to Court Room Security, or to assist patrol.

Chief Deputy Leonhardt would be the direct supervisor of this department as he has the most expertise in this area. This Sergeant would report directly to Chief Leonhardt who would also assist him when needed during the day, especially during heavy court days. Chief Leonhardt would still serve as the direct liaison with the Judge while the Sergeant would be their "day to day" office liaison with Court Administration.

The responsibilities of this new position will continue to be a "work in progress" as they continuously evaluate the evolving needs of safety and security in county buildings and ensure that the county maintains compliance with county requirements set forth by the State of Minnesota.

Discussion took place on the pros and cons of a licensed Sergeant vs. a non-licensed individual stationed at the security checkpoint.

Sheriff Rose informed the Board he would like to free up Chief Deputy from some of the duties he's performing now, the Sheriff felt his office would be better served with Mr. Leonhardt working more in an administrative role within the department.

Commissioner Erickson reported part of the goal of the remodeling project was to address security concerns within the courthouse. Mr. Erickson questioned the need for a licensed Deputy at the security checkpoint. It was Commissioner Erickson's opinion that they need to find a cost effective solution to the county's security concerns.

Mr. Erickson pointed out that at times they will need two people at the security check point in order to handle the people that will need to be screened.

2016 Sheriff's Office
Budget Discussion -
Continued

Sheriff Rose informed the Board during busy times the Court Room Deputy may come down to the security checkpoint and assist with the screening process.

Commissioner Peterson questioned why another licensed person would be needed.

Sheriff Rose commented there is already a licensed Court Room Deputy present on court days. On busy court days it will take more than one person to screen people. Mr. Rose informed the Board he prefers to have an armed security person to screen those coming in. Sheriff Rose also stated he wants to implement the security checkpoint process right the first time.

Commissioner Peterson noted the screening area is only a tool and cautioned the Sheriff about focusing all security measures on the screening area only because incidents can happen in other areas of the courthouse. Mr. Peterson commented they will still need to provide the security of the Sheriff's Office throughout all areas of the courthouse. Commissioner Peterson agreed they need to try to implement security in the courthouse correctly and as economically as possible.

Sheriff Rose reiterated they are just trying to implement security measures right the first time.

Judge Jodi Williamson and Chief Deputy Mike Leonhardt were available to comment on courthouse security plans.

Prisoner board and care stats for 2013-2015 were discussed.

Another area where the Sheriff's Office has seen a considerable increase in cost is prisoner board and care. Sheriff Rose reported Dodge County prisoner boarding numbers have gone up considerably in the last three years. Dodge County's daily prisoner average in 2013 was 10.19. In the first six months of 2015 their daily prisoner average was 22.14. By June of 2015 the Sheriff's Office was already at 69% of their budget for the year. The previous administration budgeted for five beds per day for this year. There are a number of factors they believe have attributed to this increase and will continue in the future:

- Dodge County Law Enforcement has seen a considerable increase in methamphetamine use and resurgence of heroin use along with personal and property crimes related to narcotics.
- The Sheriff's Office has developed a much more positive working environment that encourages Deputies to be proactive and aggressive on crime.
- Dodge County has a much more aggressive court system willing to incarcerate those that need to be held in jail.

- According to Minnesota State Demographers, Dodge County is expected to be the states 4th fastest growing county at 28.6%. Olmsted County is expected to be the 8th fastest growing county in the state at 22.1%.
 - Projection trends: 2015 – 21,700
 2020 – 22,922
 2025 – 23,994

2016 Sheriff's Office
Budget Discussion -
Continued

Dodge County has been averaging 22 beds per day and the Sheriff's Office doesn't anticipate this number changing any time soon. Due to this increase in inmate numbers they are requesting a budget to accommodate this average; \$441,650 for 2016. This is a 37.5% increase from 2015; an increase they cannot control or ignore. Sheriff Rose indicated they can only hope their responding to this steady increase in crime with more aggressive enforcement will decrease these numbers, but with the anticipated increase in population in our area, the Sheriff feels this may be overly optimistic. Judge Williamson also believes these numbers will only increase as our county grows. For 2016 they intend to renew the county's contract with Steele County for 16 beds and continue to pay for any additional (they are charging the same rate for additional beds). Steele County provides good service for Dodge County inmates and the Sheriff's Office has an excellent working relationship with them. Steele County has been more than accommodating in providing additional bed space as Dodge County needs continues to increase. Sheriff Rose noted they've only had a few occasions this year where Steele County was unable to take any extra prisoners for Dodge County. It was Mr. Rose's opinion the use of the Steele County Detention Center for our inmates saves Dodge County the expense and liability of operating our own jail.

Capital Outlay/Equipment and Machinery

The Sheriff's Office capital outlay request for 2016 is \$370,365, a 13% reduction from 2015. There are two areas of need included in this request; vehicles and a Next Generation 911 Phone System.

Marked Squads and Transport Vehicles

During budget discussions for 2015, it was suggested by members of the Board that the Sheriff's Office try to come up with a plan to rotate three squads per year to manage their fleet. After reviewing their fleet list, the Sheriff's Office has been able to put together a rotation to accommodate this request while still maintaining an appropriate fleet from a safety standpoint. This includes \$177,591 for three fully marked SUVs. The increase includes the SUV price going up approximately \$3,000 each from the manufacturer, and new squad cameras and new radars for each squad as they've re-used all the spare equipment they had available and the equipment in these vehicles that are being replaced are at their end of life and being phased out by the manufacturer. This also includes \$24,874 for a 2016 Cargo van and \$2,900 to transfer all the old equipment from their current transport van into the new one. This will replace their aging 2006 transport van which they bought used.

Next Generation 911 Phone System for Dispatch

The Sheriff's Office capital outlay request also includes \$165,000 for a phone system upgrade in dispatch. \$100,000 of this balance will be taken from E911 funds. Their current phone system's end of life is the spring of 2016. After this time period the Sheriff's Office will no longer have support available for this system. The Minnesota DPS Emergency Communication Network completed connecting all 104 dispatch centers (PSAPs) in the state to the next generation Emergency Services IP Network in 2014. Upgrading to a Next Generation 911 phone system in the Dodge County Dispatch Center will allow the county's dispatchers to much more accurately identify the location of callers, especially on wireless devices. This system will also allow texting, photos, and video to be sent to 911. This will allow reporters and dispatch to send more accurate information to responding deputies and EMS for added officer safety. Sheriff Rose noted that texting for help could potentially be lifesaving when citizens can't make a call or speak without endangering themselves. The deaf and hard-of hearing, and speech impaired will also benefit greatly from this expanded service. This upgrade is necessary to keep pace with today's technology and with Minnesota's Statewide 911 Program.

2016 Sheriff's Office Budget Discussion - Continued

Dispatch Part Time

In the Sheriff's Office Dispatch budget there is a considerable increase in part-time pay. By June of this year the Sheriff's Office was already at 115% of the 2015 budget. Two reasons for this increase were costs for training new Dispatchers to backfill vacancies never filled, and for filling schedule vacancies that were historically not being backfilled – vacation requests, sick leave, training, etc. Leaving shifts run short became more and more common throughout the last administration. The Sheriff's Office part-time pay went from \$148,000 in 2012 to just under \$23,000 in 2014. Over the past three years the previous administration routinely ran shifts short. The Sheriff's Office has seen how challenging it can be when it gets busy to keep up with just two Dispatchers. Manning dispatch with only one person, in their opinion, is dangerous, irresponsible and may create issues of liability. Allowing shifts to run short not only creates an officer safety risk, but a huge public safety risk when they don't have the staffing necessary to manage the resources needed for critical incidents. Unfortunately, the previous administration made decisions like this with Dispatch on a regular basis, decisions that appeared to be motivated to support their mission to disband the Dodge County Dispatch Center and contract services to one of the neighboring Sheriff's Offices.

Conference, Training, Registration, Dues

The Sheriff's Office training budget reflects a 10% increase from 2015. Due to the lack of training made available over the last four years, the Sheriff's Office believes they have some catching up to do with all areas of their office; patrol, records, and dispatch. In 2016 they will be adding additional court room and building security that will require additional training which they have not had in the past. New technology with dispatch (new radio system and new NG911 phone system) will require more training. The ongoing debate at the state on data privacy, public data requests, etc. will also require additional training for their records staff.

This in is in addition to training for patrol and investigations on the never ending changes at the state legislative level making their jobs more and more challenging every year. The Sheriff believes ignoring these training needs puts his office and the county at greater risk of litigation every day, on virtually every incident they deal with.

2016 Sheriff's Office
Budget Discussion -
Continued

Dodge County Fair

One new line item the Sheriff's Office is requesting for 2016 law enforcement coverage for the Dodge County Fair. This is a county function on county property where the Sheriff's Office is responsible for the security and safety of all that work there and attend. In the past they've been fortunate enough to have few problems at the fair because they've maintained a strong presence of law enforcement there, both Posse and Deputies. There are many other counties around the state that budget for this event so they can control the amount of security there and provide an adequate law enforcement presence to discourage problems. The Sheriff's Office believes the line item they've requested (\$2,500) will help offset their costs and maintain a safe environment for fair goers. This also puts them in a position to give more input and have more control over how security is done at the fair. This will enable them to better balance the security needs of the fair with some of the unwarranted concerns of past Board members regarding the beer garden and other events.

Summary

Their biggest increases this year were prisoner housing and part-time staffing costs. Unfortunately, they know prisoner housing costs are an expense that is difficult at best to predict. The increase in part-time pay was due in great part to the vacancies they inherited in virtually every department within their office:

- 6 - part-time patrol vacancies
- 4 - part-time dispatch vacancies
- 1 - part-time transport vacancy

The Sheriff's Office has done a number of things to try and help offset overages this year including postponing some equipment upgrades and utilizing Permit to Carry funds for equipment and furnishings in Records that normally would have come out of their Equipment budget. These expenses saved them over \$20,000 from their 2015 budget.

As they plan for 2016 and for the expansion of services their office will provide the county, including the county's additional courtroom/building security and safety needs, there are other areas they've reviewed in an effort to reduce numbers. On the Sheriff's Capital Improvement Plan, their side by side ATV was scheduled to be replaced this year. This was a need (\$15,000) the previous administration felt strongly about, their current administration does not. In 2016 the previous administration also listed the replacement of a snowmobile (\$12,840) and computer replacement (\$34,775). Their snowmobiles have been used very little in the past several years so they don't feel it's necessary to replace them at this time. They also believe with their planning with IT Director Tobey Hicks, they are in good shape to manage the computers they currently have.

The Sheriff’s Office is also working with their vendors to re-evaluate some of their updated systems in Dispatch to see if there are some services they can combine to save money. Finally the Sheriff’s Office is looking at an alternative to the Lexipol policy system that the previous administration had contracted with. They’ve been paying thousands of dollars a year for this system that was never fully implemented.

2016 Sheriff’s Office
Budget Discussion -
Continued

The Sheriff’s Capital Improvement Plan also called for a rotation of squad replacement, three squads one year/four squads the following year, and so on. They have a rotation in place, barring any major issues, where they can manage with three marked squads each year. There will be a need in the coming years to replace a few unmarked vehicles – one transport van (the small caravan) and one investigator’s vehicle. These will be well over 100,000 miles at this time.

As shown on the IFS report, the Sheriff’s Office is requesting no increases in the majority of their line items. Their command staff and administrative staff are all working together as a team, constantly working every day to improve the high quality of law enforcement services Dodge County citizens have come to expect, all while maintaining a responsible budget and a high level of accurate transparency.

Commissioner Gray thanked Sheriff Rose for the summary, he felt the summary offered insight they haven’t seen in recent years.

Commissioner Erickson commented the Sheriff’s Office budget is a big factor in the county’s budget and noted this budget has increased in previous years.

The Board thanked Sheriff Rose, Judge Williamson and Chief Deputy Leonhardt for the report.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 5:00 p.m. CDT.

Meeting Adjourned

ATTEST:

**JOHN ALLEN
CHAIR, COUNTY BOARD**

**BECKY LUBAHN
DEPUTY CLERK**

DATED: