

COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: Law Enforcement & Courts
CHAIRPERSON: Bill Bingham, Chairman
DATE/TIME: February 16, 2021 @ 4:32 p.m.
LOCATION: Jo Daviess County – 3rd floor County Board Room

PRESENT – Law Enforcement & Courts:

☒ Bill Bingham	☐ Vacant	☐ LaDon Trost
☒ Darcy Wild	☒ John Korth	☒ Scott Toot
☒ Don Zillig		

A quorum was established.

Other Board Members: None.

Others: Dan Reimer, Dan Schleicher and Kevin Turner

1. Minutes Approval:

- a) Minutes from September 21, 2020 Law Enforcement & Courts Committee and Finance, Tax & Budgets Committee Joint meeting – John Korth made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 21, 2020 Law Enforcement & Courts Committee meeting. Seconded by Don Zillig and motion carried following a roll call vote resulting in all ayes.
- b) Minutes from November 16, 2020 Law Enforcement & Courts Committee meeting – Don Zillig made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 16, 2020 Law Enforcement & Courts Committee meeting. Seconded by Darcy Wild and motion carried following a roll call vote resulting in all ayes.

2. Citizens' Comments: None.

Committee Chairman, Bill Bingham asked for a moment of silence for County Board Vice-Chair Steve Allendorf. Our loss of Steve Allendorf is going to impact the board as well as this County. May God bless him and may God bless Diane and Chris and his family.

3. Unfinished Business

- a) FY2019/FY2020 Strategic Goals & Plans – Review Committee Assignments from 2019 County Board Retreat – Update Status/Progress – Dan Reimer discussed that each standing County Board committee was asked by the Executive Committee to review their strategic goals & plans and provide a progress update. Bill Bingham discussed the committee did a really good job addressing each goal in November, but we will review them again tonight for any updates. Continue to work for EMS solutions we continue to work on and is an agenda item for tonight's meeting. Replace EMS vehicle has been completed. Courthouse security improvements are ongoing. Explore options for separate drug testing facilities for Probation has been completed. Complete Courthouse maintenance of soffits, fascia, and flooring is in progress. Sheriff Turner commented that hopefully we can have some action this year to replace the radio system to 800 MGHZ. ETSB has put some money aside for this project. We are probably one of the last counties in northwest Illinois that has not gone to 800 MGHZ yet. There has been no action to develop a comprehensive, 10-year plan for Courthouse maintenance. The EOC Training Center has been completed. Courthouse parking has been completed, the policy has been suspended due to the winter weather and will be re-implemented again on May 1st.

- b) Progress report - Jo Daviess County All Hazard Mitigation Plan Update – Chuck Pedersen was unable to attend the meeting. Nothing new to report at this time. Scott Toot reported that the Village of Apple River passed their resolution and it was sent to IEMA. This was the last outstanding item. The final document has been approved and is posted on the JDC website.
- c) Update on the MDFPD Communication Tower Project – Dan Reimer reported that the MDFPD Communication Tower Project is included in the FY2021 Jo Daviess County budget plan. Last fall it was agreed that the cost, which is estimated at \$140,000, would be shared by ETSB \$75,000, MDFPD \$30,000 and Jo Daviess County \$35,000. A Joint meeting between the Law Enforcement & Courts Committee and the Ad-Hoc MDFPD Communication Tower Committee will be scheduled in the near future. There are a few items associated with the project that still need to be finalized including site selection, procurement options and the appointment of a project manager. Don Zillig commented that he would like to see the process keep moving as quickly as possible as Dan Reimer will be retiring soon. Reimer commented that he will be more than happy to assist with the initial phases of the process including drafting any procurement resolutions or RFP's. We do need to appoint a project manager.

4. New Business

- a) Discussion and possible action on Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police Federal Use of Force Certification – Sheriff Turner explained that this is something that the Department of Justice is requiring, use of force certification. It has to be approved by the Illinois Chiefs of Police and they forward it on to the Department of Justice. If we do not comply with this we would not be eligible for any Federal grants county-wide. This is for informative purposes, no action is required. Turner wanted it on the record that we are currently compliant.
- b) Discussion and possible action on a request to purchase a 2021 Ford Utility AWD Police Interceptor from Morrow Brothers, Greenfield, IL at a cost not to exceed \$34,985 – Bill Bingham discussed that this request is to replace the current K-9 vehicle. The current K-9 vehicle will be provided to the Buildings Grounds Maintenance Custodian who travels back and forth between Galena and the Hanover Highway facility. Sheriff Turner added that this is a state bid and the reason we are going with an SUV is because it is a canine vehicle. **Scott Toot made a motion to approve the purchase of a 2021 Ford Utility AWD Police Interceptor from Morrow Brothers, Greenfield, IL at a cost not to exceed \$34,985. Seconded by John Korth and motion carried following a roll call vote resulting in all ayes.**
- c) Discussion and possible action on jail cook position – Bill Bingham discussed that the current jail cook will be retiring soon and rather than hire a new jail cook Sheriff Turner has recommended we contract all our jail meals. We currently have a meal contract for some of our meals with Dillions in Galena. Sheriff Turner discussed that he is looking at various options for inmate food and is asking the committee for approval to transfer some of funds appropriated for the jail cook salary to the Other Service Charges line item. Sheriff would like approval from this committee to be forwarded on to the County Board. **Don Zillig made a motion to approve line item transfers from personnel line items allocated for the jail cook position to 719 Other Service Charges for food service expenses. Seconded by Darcy Wild and motion carried following a roll call vote resulting in all ayes.**
- d) Discussion and possible action on the Emergency Medical Services Sustainability Report – Bill Bingham commented that this item was included on the agenda to give Dan Schleicher,

from the Elizabeth EMS, an opportunity to discuss emergency medical service issues from his perspective. Dan Schleicher discussed that thirteen months ago a 40 page Emergency Medical Services Sustainability Report was completed and presented to the County Board. In the conclusions and recommendations section it states EMS in its current form is not sustainable and this report is far too important to put on a shelf and hope for the best. In August of 2020 the Jo Daviess County Board did adopt an Ordinance that combined two Special Service Areas and created a new SSA #7. The Ordinance authorized an increase to the maximum tax levy rate for the combined Special Service Area, for the purpose of providing emergency ambulance service to SSA #7. Schleicher discussed that this allowed the Elizabeth Community Ambulance to hire three full-time paramedics and it's been absolutely wonderful! It is working tremendously well as far as covering our schedule; however we are now starting to lose people on the other end. Recently an EMT that was taking almost 200 hours of call time per month moved to Chicago. They haven't been able to replace her and have tried to absorb those hours. They have another EMT who will be moving to Preston, IA and the end of March, who is scheduled for over 200 hours a month. One of the three paramedics that we hired is trying to get on a full time fire department either in Davenport, Dubuque or Cedar Rapids. His partner takes a couple hundred hours of call for us and the paramedic is covering over 300 hours a month for us. Of the fourteen people two currently have, six of them including Schleicher, are 60 years old and older and are all looking at retiring. Schleicher is not sure what the answer is. Last year they had 362 calls and cover 200 square miles of Jo Daviess County. If they are unable to respond it would put an increased burden on Galena and Stockton. There are not a lot of unemployed paramedics in Jo Daviess County. Schleicher discussed they will continue to do the best that they can for as long as they can, but if we can't attract some new people we will be in trouble. Bingham added that he feels Schleicher's pain and it is not just his organization but every organization in Jo Daviess County. If we don't deal with this sustainability issue that would mean providing the resources and providing the funding so that EMS in Jo Daviess County can have some structure of a paid service we are going to have a whole lot of problems. Galena EMS ran 740+ calls this past year which is 100 calls more than any previous year. It is going to continue. We think of ourselves as a small community because we have 3,300 people living in Galena, but what we are missing is that we have 30,000 people in Galena every weekend. We have two ambulances. We haven't gone to the level that Elizabeth has with full time paid paramedics. We are not a paramedic service; however we hope to get to that point. There is a lot of good information in that final report, specifically regarding sustainability. All of the services in the county are doing good work, but they are having a tremendously hard time getting the number of needed people to help them continue to provide a quality high level of service. We really need to go to the next level here at some point and deal with this issue soon. Most are volunteers and don't get paid, some receive a small stipend. If you don't have people actually on the call schedule you never know for sure who is going to respond for a call. Scott Toot discussed that there are two things we can consider doing, one is to place a question on ballot, like what was done 45-50 years ago, regarding a county-wide ambulance service. Another option would be to have the County Board dissolve all of the current special service areas and create one special service area for the whole county. Toot discussed that the County has made Senator Stewart and Representative Chesney aware of the issues we are facing. Senator Stewart and Representative Chesney attended the February Legislative Committee meeting; the Committee discussed EMS and asked if they would consider sponsoring a bill that would make EMS an essential service in Illinois. Right now it is not considered an essential service. We also discussed the 1% service tax to help fund EMS, which has had some opposition to it. Schleicher added that he received an article from Lucas Bourquin that Lafayette County Board of Supervisors in Wisconsin voted to create a

county-wide EMS Department and they are working through the hospital. Staff is going to be employees of the hospital. Maybe that is something that we could explore. Bingham discussed that we need to explore all the options. Don Zillig commented that this has to be a priority in the County. Toot discussed that it seems like we are headed down the road to place a question on the ballot asking the voters about a county-wide ambulance service. This would be a huge undertaking and require a lot of planning, its more than just hiring people it's all the training, the facilities the equipment. It would have to be presented to the citizens. Toot stated that he will place this item on the Executive Committee meeting agenda and the County Board meeting agenda for further discussion. Schleicher asked if it would be possible to get some buy in from the fire districts. Bingham invited any new committee members to review the two EMS reports that can be found on the Jo Daviess County website home page.

5. Staff Reports

- a) Sheriff's Report** - Sheriff Turner thanked the County Board for passing a resolution in regards to HB3653. We are going to be seeing a lot of legislation this year from the legislators that are not going to be pro-law enforcement. The judges are going to start having more in person court. Turner has a meeting with the judges tomorrow to discuss opening up the courthouse for court cases.
- b) Circuit Clerk's Office** – Kathy Phillips, Clerk of the Circuit Court, was unable to attend the meeting.
- c) Probation** – Jamie Watson, Chief County Probation Officer, was unable to attend the meeting.
- d) Public Defender** – None.

6. Citizens' Comments – None.

7. Board Member Concerns – None.

The next Law Enforcement & Courts Committee meeting will be Monday, March 15, 2021, at 4:30 p.m. at the Jo Daviess County Courthouse, County Board Room.

Meeting adjourned at 5:33 p.m. following a motion by John Korth and a second by Darcy Wild. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes.