At 8:50 a.m. Sheriff Carpinelli, Undersheriff McIntosh and Dispatch Supervisor Lalonde

The following dockets were approved:

1-To refill 1 FT Dispatcher, 2 PT Dispatchers, 1 PT Deputy Sheriff and 1 PT Correction Officer, due to a retirement, resignation and PT employees assigned to FT positions
2-To join the consortium of counties to request NYS to increase 911 surcharges. Cheryl Lalonde explained that Onondaga and Broome Counties had been approved to increase their 911 surcharge from $.35 to $1.00 per phone, but only for a limited time, requiring NYS Legislature approval for extension. The initiative is to make the increase permanent for landlines and cell phones for all jurisdictions.
3-Renewal agreements w/Black Creek, One path Careers and TLS for respective jail services thru 12/31/19
4-Extend SRO agreement w/South Lewis Central School District to 6/30/19
5-Approve Crackdown Enforcement award from NYS STOP DWI Foundation -$12,300
6- Appropriate Homeland Security grant funds for Emergency Operations Center-$54,984

Cheryl Lalonde announced the next radio meeting would be held on 10/23/18.

Sheriff Carpinelli posed an issue with recurring Legislator comments that the road patrol is not a mandated service and references to costs.

Undersheriff Jason McIntosh expressed personal exception to the comments that serve as a “slap in the face”, are offensive and just “not right”. He submits the Sheriff’s budget of $5.2 million of which $1.2 million is for road patrol, is less than 1% of the County’s overall budget of $130 million including the Hospital, equating $46 per capita.

Chairman Dolhof feels it is misleading to include Hospital budget figures that equate 58% of the total, asserting their operational revenue offsets expenses.

Jason reports 2010 personnel records show 15 road patrols, 2 investigators and 3 part-time employees, compared to the current 14 road patrol, 2 investigators and 3 part-time employees. A minimum of two deputies and one Sgt. are assigned for each road patrol shift. The Dept. of Justice recommends 1.5 police officers for every 5,000 residents, which computes to 40 officers, and the department currently employs 25.

The Dept. of Justice and the Bonadio Group consultants each reviewed the department and have indicated that the Sheriff’s Department is understaffed. Moreover, Undersheriff McIntosh declared his Criminal Justice degree and his many years of experience in law enforcement commands respect and trust in his qualifications and abilities.

Chairman Dolhof spoke of a public misperception knowing that State Police have backed off their patrols which forces greater County law enforcement response. He urged more reporting of number of arrests to substantiate personnel appropriations. Jason questions whether Legislators expect a day-to-day accounting of all deputy activity ie. yesterday deputies helped search for a lost 3 yr. old? He took grave exception to the non-trust, not only for himself but for all deputies, who have families, and who should not be subjected to worry about whether they job is in jeopardy because of the comments. Chairman Dolhof, again, urged reports to justify expenditures.

Legislator Burns inquired whether there was a road patrol report. Terry Clark will provide him the 2017 report. Sheriff Carpinelli affirmed compliance with required reporting. The Governor, he said, does not expect reporting of every day duties or occurrences by his personnel. He inquired why it’s always a hard time to obtain budgetary approval. Undersheriff McIntosh reiterated being offended by the lack of trust.
Chairman Dolhof declared there was no lack of trust from his perspective. He feels the Sheriff’s Department is being held to the same scrutiny as all others who have been asked to pare down their budgets. The State continues to diminish reimbursement levels and State budgetary allocations for various County mandated services. He reiterated the Governor’s erosion for State Police response locally that results in greater demand on County personnel.

Sheriff Carpinelli referenced trips he has made to Albany to advocate for the rights of Lewis County citizens, and against the waste of taxpayer dollars, asserting he would like more Legislator support in those efforts. Legislator King took exception because he had never been asked to accompany the Sheriff. Furthermore, he asserted never having posed eliminating the road patrol, instead had collaborated with the Sheriff on various occasions to identify solutions.

Legislator King referenced Board of Legislator approval of four deputies that were not filled for an extended period of time. He declared his attempts to work with the Sheriff. In regards to the Hospital, he is adamant that every County allocated subsidy be repaid, adding that he feels that good improvements have been made by Hospital administration.

Undersheriff McIntosh affirmed that when issues arise he has timely informed the County Manager and will continue that practice, as he did when the jail locks failed. His knowledge and performance warrants respect. His primary goal is to regain respect for the entire department while continually striving to improve the quality of operations.

Chairman Dolhof surmises it is more a lack of understanding for all that is encompassed under the Sheriff’s purview, than an issue of trust.

Sheriff Carpinelli invoked he does not mandate his officers to issue tickets to meet a quota, unlike the Governor who directs State Police officers to write at least two tickets every day, while recognizing we do not live in a high crime area. The officers are patrolling to provide a presence and evoke safety of all citizens. However, citing the drug and opioid overdose problems that had plagued our immediate area last year, he credits the formed Narcotics Team who have made strides to combat the problems, while working within budgetary appropriations.

The Undersheriff offered to provide numbers, noting the difficulty or impossibility to identify several performances, while reporting that one case may take up to three weeks.

Ryan Piche reported that the overall proposed 2019 County Budget represents a .08% increase. Meanwhile, the Sheriff Dispatch budget, which includes road patrol has increased by 7%; the Jail by 7.5% and the District Attorney by 11%. He would like some data to justify those increases.

Sheriff Carpinelli asserted that he answers to the people who trusted him enough to elect him. He and his officers put their lives on the line every day, they have earned and deserve respect. He declared having great respect for Legislators, and would like reciprocation.

Referencing past Sheriffs that he deems were not held accountable, he queried the reason for heightened scrutiny for he and his administration.

Legislator Burns suggested the Undersheriff provide more information to the public in an effort to dispel trust issues. Linkinglewiscounty.com website owner Nick Altmire said that he posts law enforcement blotters daily.

Sheriff Carpinelli informed coming from a city law enforcement environment, admittedly having to learn is very procedurally different from our County system. He affirmed having great respect for his personnel, and, after more thought also feels it may be more from lack of understanding. He and the Undersheriff welcome Legislators to the office, willing to explain what they do or respond to any questions. The Sheriff understands there may be disagreements, but termed respect utmost. He promotes more communication.
Undersheriff McIntosh deems it his job to keep peace within the department. However, anxiety piques when rumors circulate that the road patrol is not mandated. Again, he takes those comments personally, invoking the deputies are humans with families not just numbers, always doing their best in the interest of the citizenry.

Sheriff Carpinelli thanked the Legislators for recommending to the Board to refill his requested positions.

Ryan Piche respectfully repeated his request for the Sheriff to account for the budget increase, as he has done with every other department head who have largely held their budget static or decreased. The requests are common managerial accountability.

In conclusion, Sheriff Carpinelli informed he has registered to speak at an upcoming State sponsored public forum in Watertown on the issue of legalizing marijuana, which he adamantly opposes.

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Terry Clark, Clerk of the Board