

LEGAL COMMITTEE

May 21, 2008

PRESENT:

**Doug McGivney - Chairman
Elizabeth Young
James Keegan
John Musall
William Hughes
Reginald Crowley
Lawrence Andrews**

ABSENT:

Tom Dias -notified

PRESS:

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ALSO PRESENT:

**Melissa Noblin-Deputy
Arlene Levinson
Sheriff Harrison
Beth Cozzolino
Mike Benvenuto
Dan Tuczinski
Bob Pinto
Gene Keeler
Ira Halifond
Tom Lanphear
Dave Bartlet
Undersheriff Sweet
Jim Andrews**

Chairman McGivney called meeting to order at 10:13 a.m.

Chairman McGivney addressed the Committee and stated that due to the new cost cutting measures being undertaken by the Board that the process for filling positions, which have been vacant for a significant period of time, requires that justification be presented to Committee. He further stated that the quarterly reports which have been requested will not only be of benefit to the Board but will prove beneficial to the Department Heads themselves when preparing for the 2009 budget process.

At the June Legal Committee meeting, Chairman McGivney requested Department Heads be prepared to address Alternatives to Incarceration.

SHERIFF - David Harrison:

Resolution Request authorizing the Columbia County Sheriff's Office to contract with Government Payment E.X.P.. Motion to approve made by E. Young and seconded by W. Hughes, motion carried.

Resolution Request authorizing the Sheriff to develop an inmate work crew of non-violent/minimum security inmates under guide lines set forth by the NYS Commission of Corrections and minimum standards. Motion to approve made by J. Keegan and seconded by R. Crowley, motion carried.

Updates were given on various revenue enhancement and cost cutting projects that the Sheriff is currently investigating, i.e. new food and pharmaceutical vendors as well as TRAX grants, etc. Discussion ensued and the Sheriff was commended on his diligence, the efficiency of his Department and his attempts at reducing costs without reducing services.

Chairman McGivney informed the Committee that there are 4 wheel and dirt bike issues throughout the County and the Sheriff is attempting to obtain grants which would allow him to purchase similar vehicles to enable the Department to better address the problem. He further stated that whether grants are received or not the problem needs to be addressed and the equipment purchase, which would require RFPs. Discussion ensued and Committee consensus was to move forward with RFPs for the necessary equipment.

Chairman McGivney requested that A. Levinson, B. Cozzolino, G. Keeler & I. Halfond to come up with a uniform reporting system.

PUBLIC DEFENDER - Arlene Levinson:

Conference approval was requested for a continuing education "Ethics for Domestic Violence Practitioners" in Catskill at a cost of \$50 per attorney. Motion to approve attendance made by L. Andrews and seconded by J. Musall, motion carried.

Request to fill summer intern position was addressed and discussed and it was stated that authorization had been previously granted (Resolution 105-2008).

Resolution Request to fill the budgeted, vacant, position of Assistant Public Defender III, at a salary of \$37,000. Motion to approve and move to Finance made by W. Hughes and seconded by J. Musall, motion carried.

PROBATION – Mike Benvenuto:

Caseload Explorer Software and specifics of same, as well as other types of Software utilized by the Office were briefly addressed.

The Pre-Pins Program and various aspects of the program were briefly discussed

Annual Report was addressed and a motion to accept and approve was made by W. Hughes and seconded by J. Keegan, motion carried.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY – Beth Cozzolino:

Drug Court was briefly addressed and it was stated that further discussion should take place at the June meeting. It was also stated that the Drug Court Manual is currently being revised.

P. Williams addressed the Committee and stated that He, R. Brown and L. Scheer recently viewed the D. A.'s Office and suggested that all Supervisors view the office at some point. The desperate need for renovations and/or new offices were briefly discussed.

COUNTY ATTORNEY – Dan Tuczinski:

Resolution request to modify and renew the County's Westlaw contract due to expire in June of 2008, at a cost of \$1,950. Motion to approve and move to Finance made by E. Young and seconded by R. Crowley, motion carried.

Motion to move to Executive Session to discuss specific personnel and actions to be taken with respect to same as well as Contractual issues, made by W. Hughes and seconded by R. Crowley, motion carried.

Motion to move to Regular Session at 11:52 a.m., made J. Keegan and seconded by E. Young, motion carried.

Resolution Request to approve a settlement, as outlined by the County Attorney in *Bevens v. Tarrant v. County of Columbia Litigation*. Motion to approve and move to Finance made by J. Keegan and seconded by R. Crowley, motion carried.

Discussion ensued regarding the filling of the vacant Assistant County Attorney position, which was previously approved and D. Tuczinski informed the Committee that he has posted the position and, would like to fill with Brent Stack. Discussion ensued and a motion approving same was made by E. Young and seconded by J. Keegan, motion carried. The County Attorney is to notify applicants that their resumes and applications would be kept on file.

Lengthy discussion ensued regarding Professional Legal Services and a motion to go out for RFPs and not contract with any new Attorneys until after RFPs are received, made by W. Hughes and seconded by E. Young, motion carried.

Motion to adjourn at 11:55 a.m., made by E. Young and seconded by J. Musall, motion carried.

Doug McGivney-Chairperson

James Keegan

Lawrence Andrews

Reginald Crowley

Thomas Dias

William Hughes

John Musall

Elizabeth Young