

Hampton Roads Regional Jail

Board Meeting 2/17/2021

Members & Alternates Attendance

- Chris Pascal (CSO)
- Eileen Sprinkle (NNSO)
- Robert Geis (C)
- Martin Thomas (N)
- Sharon P. Scott (NN) **Chair**
- Alan Archer (NN)
- LaVoris Pace (P)
- Lisa Lucas-Burke (P)
- Brian DeProfio (H)
- Karen Bowden (HSO)
- Michael Goldsmith (N)
- Robert Ike (C)
- Chris Snead/Chris Bowman (H)
- Joseph Baron/Mike O'Toole (NSO)

A quorum was present.

Others in Attendance:

Col. Jeff Vergakis; Lt. Col. William Anderson; Deborah Hand; Deanna Isom; Major Barnes; Capt. Mack; Capt. Bhagirath; Pam Westbrook; Kathie Moore; Jeff Rosen, Esq.; Rebecca Hopkins

Call to Order

- Chairwoman Scott called the meeting of the Hampton Roads Regional Jail Authority to order, on the 17th day of February at 1:30 p.m. via Virtual Zoom.

Opening

- Chairwoman Scott opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

Approval of Minutes

- Chairwoman Scott asked for a motion for the Board to approve the minutes from January 20, 2021 meeting. Bob Geis moved to approve the minutes and Martin Thomas seconded; a roll call vote was taken per the virtual meeting instructions; the motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

- Deanna Isom – Reported that the revenue for out of compliance was trending over. Investment income was trending down and commissary revenue was trending up. Expenses were all down and were projected to come in under budget.

- Chairwoman Scott asked for a motion to approve the Treasure's Report. Martin Thomas moved to approve the report and Brian DeProfio seconded; a roll call vote was taken per the virtual meeting instructions; the motion carried.

FY2022 Preliminary Annual Budget

- Deborah Hand -- Reported that a Power Point presentation would be presented.
- Brian DeProfio -- Advised that the main focus of the budget this year was maintaining and attracting staff to the facility. Compression of pay would be addressed during the fiscal year. Retention bonuses would be awarded until a comprehensive study could be completed.
- Deborah Hand -- Reported that there were five main challenges for the budget. Those challenges were to meet the goals set by the Department of Justice, address the challenges caused by the Coronavirus, address salary compression and salaries that are not competitive, address the need to attract, recruit and retain staff, and to provide consistent, experienced leadership, and replace or repair aged infrastructure and equipment. The Budget was based on a \$4.00 increase in the per diem for the cities.
- Deborah Hand -- Advised the first challenge to meet the goals set by the Department of Justice would include new Inmate Medical Services Contract, increased Mental Health Staff, replace some of the Operations Lt.'s duties with an on-site Medical Contract Liaison to assure compliance with DOJ and contract requirements, coordinate with Jail security and operations and communicate emergent issues with Jail leadership - \$60,000. In addition, HRRJ would retain the Medical Contract Monitor to review medical claims, monthly financial reports and DOC Out-Of-Compliance reimbursement and increase in Dialysis expenses - \$15,000. This would be a total increase in Medical Services of \$1,250,090.
 - Joseph Baron -- Questioned if the DOJ would require an increase in correctional staff along with medical staff and if that increase was reflected in the budget.
 - Deborah Hand -- Answered yes. Staffing was treated as a separate challenge. No additional positions were added to this budget. It was better served to retain the current staff.
 - Brian DeProfio -- Advised it was not practical to add any additional staff.
 - Joseph Baron -- Questioned if that was still a goal or request from the DOJ.
 - Deborah Hand -- Answered yes that was still a request from DOJ but their immediate concern is the current vacancy level.
- Deborah Hand -- Advised the second challenge caused by the coronavirus would include increased inmate medical expenses in FY2020-FY2021, add \$100,000 to the FY2022 budget for COVID-19 related inmate care, increased cost for PPE supplies in FY2020-FY2021, increased cost for sanitation & disinfection supplies FY2020-FY2021, and added \$60,000 to the FY2022 budget for supplies.
- Deborah Hand -- Stated the third challenge of salary compression would include hiring a Consultant to perform a comprehensive pay study - \$100,000. In lieu of pay raises, would give staff temporary, quarterly, Tenure-based Supplemental payments and would begin the Supplemental payments in the third quarter of FY2021. The HR group provided a template calculating the Supplemental payment amounts which was used as the basis for the FY2022 Budget. FY2022 Supplemental payments would be \$736,840 and FY2021 Supplemental payment would include \$195,000.
- Deborah Hand -- Addressed the fourth challenge of attracting and retaining staff. This would include the recommendation of the HR group that the Sign-on Bonus be increased to \$1,750 with payments accelerated - \$80,000, the position of Major will be replaced with a second Assistant Superintendent -- \$20,000, two Jail Officer positions will be replaced with a Captain and a Lieutenant - \$36,000, six Officer Trainee positions will be replaced with lower paying Officer

Cadets for new hires below the age of 21 – (\$11,618), a \$1/hour shift differential will be added to teams on night shift, Field Training Officers and the ERT Team - \$403,990, mandatory overtime caused an increase of \$150,000, vacancy Savings increased to \$1.2M – which decreases the expense by - (\$750,000), decrease in Employee Benefits – (\$242,087), and added new positions – Public Information Officer, HR Specialist, Medical Liaison - \$168,833.

- Joseph Baron – Questioned the officer cadet program and asked if this pay would be before or after they finished the academy.
- Col. Vergakis – Answered that it would be prior to certification. The program would be a mentorship to those under the age of 21. Once they age to 21 they would then be certified.
- Joseph Baron – Questioned if the vacancy savings should be more.
- Deborah Hand – Answered that the differential pay and tenure based program would be funded by vacancy savings, but this would help bring the vacancy numbers down.
- Brian DeProfio – Questioned the cadet program. He advised this should be given additional thought and communication between Sherriff Baron and Col. Vergakis.
- Martin Thomas – Questioned if any money was budgeted for the compensation study.
- Deborah Hand – Answered that \$100,000 was budgeted for the pay study. Any leftover vacancy savings would also be used to fund the changes.
- Martin Thomas – Questioned that the goal was to hire 25 new officers by the end of the fiscal year. He advised that Norfolk has pulled back a number of inmates and that cost is around \$3 million a year. If the goal is 25 new hires when would Norfolk be able to send the additional inmates back to Hampton Roads Regional Jail.
- Joseph Baron – Questioned the goal of 75 new hires for the beginning of July for next year and if that would still be enough. He advised Norfolk has not sent inmates since October and was unsure if Norfolk would be able to send inmates again.
- Martin Thomas – Advised if Norfolk is going to have to voluntarily not send inmates to HRRJ then Norfolk would need to be compensated.
- Joseph Baron – Stated that the amount of people who have left have not been covered by the amount of people hired. He stated that he did not think this was sustainable.
- Chairwoman Scott – Advised that the budget was a proposed document and can be edited. She asked the board to continue the review of the budget presentation.
- Deborah Hand – Advised the bylaws required a budget be in place by March 1st and a special meeting may need to be made.
- Brian DeProfio – Asked Jeff Rosen to look into any repercussions for not having a budget in place.
- Deborah Hand – Addressed the fifth challenge of replacing or repairing aged infrastructure and equipment. This would include adding two civilian maintenance workers trained in electrical and plumbing - \$100,000, a new Offender Management System funded through the Inmate Telephone Contract, Capital Outlay from the Operating Budget - \$540,000, Capital Outlay Reduced (\$22,500), Capital Improvement Plan this year's cost would be funded with surplus from the General Reserve - \$916,000, CIP increased \$551,000 over FY2021, Fund the FY2022 CIP, as well as prior year CIP projects in progress through a surplus in the HRRJ General Reserve - \$1,935,000, and Energy Audit and Performance Contract includes \$9.8M in upgrades that will be fully funded by the energy costs savings instead of debt.

- Deborah Hand – Reported the reserves and the current projects. This included FY2021 HRRJ proposed funding \$1.6M of the budget with surplus from the General Reserve Fund. In order to minimize increases in member per diems in FY2022, HRRJ proposes to again fund \$1.94M in capital expenses from the General Reserve Fund instead of the Capital Repair and Replacement Reserve Fund. As part of the FY2022 budget, HRRJ proposes to fund the short term capital projects listed in the CIP using a surplus in the General Reserve fund. Through cost savings in the last 5 years the General Reserve balance has increased to \$12M. The Jail is able to fund the \$1.94M in capital and still maintain all reserve balances required by the indenture agreement and in accordance with the Jail's reserve policy.
- Deborah Hand – Updated the board on the debt service. The debt service included HRRJ's plan to issue bonds to fund the roof replacement, the storm water pond repairs, the kitchen floor replacement, the inmate shower renovation, radio system replacement and the elevator modernization. An energy savings project is also in progress and will be financed through the sale of bonds. However the energy cost savings generated by the upgrades will offset the cost of the project in full.
- Deborah Hand – Reviewed all the cost saving efforts. The cost saving efforts included no longer paying for medical pre-existing conditions, submitted requests for reimbursement to DOC for "Out of Compliance" medical expenses totaling \$4.34M since 2016, working with our medical contractor and local hospitals to register qualifying inmates in Medicaid under Medicaid Expansion, and sending high cost out-of-compliance inmates to DOC as quickly as possible. In addition HRRJ renewed the Mental Health grant in the amount of \$481,381 in FY2021 to provide staff training, inmate counseling and discharge planning for SMI population, led by Chesapeake Integrated Behavioral Health, the local CSB's/BHS's were awarded a grant to provide 9 Forensic Discharge Planners working with HRRJ's mental health population, awarded \$4,000 in Grant funds from VML for safety equipment in 2021, and was awarded over \$11,000 in Grant Funds for bulletproof vests since 2017.
 - Martin Thomas – Questioned what the total Capital Improvement Plan number.
 - Deborah Hand – Answered the total for FY2022 is \$916,000 and for everything that had not been expended it is about 1.9 Million in short term and 9.3 Million in long term debt.
 - Martin Thomas – Questioned what the debt number for this year would be.
 - Deborah Hand – Answered that 9.3 million is the debt for this year.
- Martin Thomas – Expressed his concerns with the budget.
- Chairwoman Scott – Advised that a second meeting should be held with Alan Archer and Brian DeProfio and other members from the fiancé committee to come up with a strategy to address the concerns with the budget.
- Joseph Baron – Motioned to postpone the approval of the budget until a special meeting to adjust the budget. Chris Snead seconded; a roll call vote was taken per the virtual meeting instructions; the motion carried.

Nomination Committee Report

- Alan Archer – The Committee reached a unanimous consensus to elect Brian DeProfio as Chair, Lisa Lucas-Burke as Vice Chair, and Colonel Jeff Vergakis as Secretary and Treasurer as the bylaws permit. The nomination committee did address that the order of rotation was changed due to some challenges. Alan Archer motioned for the nominations. A roll call vote was taken per the virtual meeting instructions; the motion carried.

Review of operations and Activities

Medical

- Pam Westbrook – Reported that HRRJ has had two deaths. One was expected and one was unexpected. The jail staff and medical staff did an exceptional job trying to resuscitate that individual. The preliminary report from the medical examiner stated that the Patient suffered a heart attack. The second rounds of vaccinations for the jail and medical staff have started.

Security

- Capt. Bhagirath – No new updates.

Human Resources

- April Brumley – Reported that the hiring process had been streamlined to about 15 days and HRRJ has seen an increase in the last 7 days of applications. HRRJ currently has 35 applications in the pipeline and have a potential hire date of March 8th. A Career Fair was held in February and 12 individuals were moved through the hiring processes. Morale building events have been added.
 - Joseph Baron – Questioned what the turnover rate may be for this fiscal year.
 - April Brumley – Stated she did not have that information but would provide that to the board.
 - Brian DeProfio – Questioned if the other jurisdiction are seeing restrictions for getting officers certified.
 - Joseph Baron – Advised that it depends on each sheriff's office needs. HRRJ does use the training academy but that is a difficulty for everyone to get officers certified within the timeframe of one year. He was unsure if the staffing needs would ever be met.

Maintenance Projects

- Capt. Mack – Reported that 226 work orders have been completed, 33 new intakes and 66 releases, 368 video court hearings were conducted, and 1,143 inmates were seen by the medical department.

Mental Health Grant

- Kathie Moore – Reported that for the month of January the CORE Program has received sixteen referrals and twelve were accepted, seven inmates have received services and, three of those reported to their first appointment at the CSB.

Superintendent Report

- Col. Vergakis – Reported there are many challenges that HRRJ is tackling one at a time. The vacancies are being attributed to retirements as well since the facility is hitting 20 years. The culture needs to be changed and that is being addressed. The budget has incentives to bring staff into the facility and also keep staff at HRRJ. He feels without the budget it would dampen the approach of bringing staff in. He asked for clarity in reference to the 250 decrease in inmates at a future meeting. He reported the targeted points for the DOJ are being met.
 - Joseph Baron – Reported that there was no agreement at the time when reducing the inmates to reduce the per diem as well. This was a temporary fix.
 - Lisa Lucas-Burke – Questioned where exactly the facility was with the DOJ report.
 - Jeff Rosen – Advised that would be addressed in closed session.

Medical Contract

- Jeff Rosen – Advised that negotiations with Wellpath have finished and the contract has been awarded at this time. The premium has been reduced, escorting has been added and provisions for staffing have been included.

Closed Session


- Alan Archer read the motion to go into closed session. Brian DeProfio seconded. A roll call vote was taken. The motion carried.

Closed Session

- Alan Archer read the motion to reconvene in open session. Eileen Sprinkle seconded. A roll call vote was taken. The motion carried.
- Chairwoman Scott- Thanked the board for their help during her term as Chair. She stated it was her pleasure to hold the office of chair and congratulated Brian DeProfio and Lisa Lucas-Burke as Vice Chair.

Adjournment

The next meeting is scheduled for March 17, 2021.

Chair Signature: 

Recording Secretary: 