



Law Enforcement Ad-Hoc Committee Meeting Minutes  
December 02, 2021  
6:30 PM

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Chairperson: Mayor Robert Duncan  
Council Members: Mike Caughey, Kim Downey, and Charlotte Thomas  
Citizen Members: Travis Crosman and Don Messick  
Staff Present: City Administrator Michele Eldridge and City Recorder Lori Ross  
Law Enforcement Present: Undersheriff Duncan, Chief Larson, and Captain Smith  
Meeting Location: Harrisburg Municipal Center Located at 354 Smith St

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL** by Chairperson, Mayor Robert Duncan at the hour of 6:31pm

**MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR NOVEMBER 8, 2021**

- Downey motioned to approve the minutes for November 8, 2021 and was seconded by Thomas. The Ad-Hoc Committee then voted unanimously to approve the minutes for November 8, 2021.

Chairperson Duncan read the script for the evening as shown in **Addendum 1** and stated the next meeting will be held, January 6, 2022.

**CONCERNED CITIZEN(S) IN THE AUDIENCE** All present were there for items on the agenda.

**THE MATTER OF THE CONTINUANCE OF A DISCUSSION IN RELATION TO LAW ENFORCEMENT OPTIONS FOR THE CITY OF HARRISBURG**

**STAFF REPORT:** Eldridge informed Council that the staff report states the next City Council meeting, to discuss the Ad-Committee, is January 19<sup>th</sup> but it is January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Some of the highlights of the staff report include:

- Option 1 is doing nothing and reflects an increase of around \$12,500 due to the cost of living. She reminded the Committee that all contracts for Law Enforcement expire June 30, 2022.
- Eldridge felt that the City could not afford their own police department option. She stated that we would have to take all of the contracted services and add \$167,000 for one person and it still wouldn't be enough. Other options for the City would be to increase hours with either of our Law Enforcement Agencies.

- Eldridge reminded Council that in 2017-2019 we had 320 contracted hours with LCSO. If we increase the number of hours to 350 hours per month, that will cost the City \$50,516. If the City increased the hours for the City of Coburg, as shown in option 3, and left LCSO as it is now, it would be an increase of \$52,137.
- Eldridge felt that with some budget cuts, they could come up with about \$20,000 without going to areas like Community and Economic Development.
- Eldridge referred to all or nothing options as shown in options 4 & 5. Having LCSO only would be an increase to 315 hours per month at a cost of \$12,547. Coburg only, would increase hours to 347 per month at no additional cost due to their hourly rate being lower. She notes that number could change due to variables involved.
- Eldridge stated there are a lot of things that we do with our agency partners in addition to law enforcement and if you cancel a contract, we might not be able to go return on the same terms.
- She felt that options 2, 3 and 6 are the best options available to the City. She mentioned a public safety fee option but felt that the public wouldn't be in favor due the passing of the levy this year.
- Undersheriff Duncan commented that LCSO is always striving to do better and if the City is going to cut hours, it could possibly affect a position. If the City increased hours to 50 to 100 hours that might be more difficult at this time, but she will always look at that option. She feels that our relationship has been good the last few years and she will continue that as the new Sheriff.
- Caughey commented that other cities have other income to support law enforcement cost. He feels that isn't an option for our City and he likes option 6 the way it's written.
- Crosman asked Chief Larson what time they cut off services and Chief Larson answered 2am. Crosman stated regardless of the contract, we still have coverage. Crosman stated that LCSO has had staffing issues in the past and Undersheriff Duncan replied that they have had staffing issues for about five to six years which is the normal for everywhere. Staffing issues are due to retiring masses, the pandemic and people questioning where they want to work. She stated that the residents are paying for law enforcement services including calls. A contract means there is presence in the City which includes traffic, extra patrols, business checks and checking parks but it is also the ability for a fast response time.
- Captain Smith spoke of a call after the last meeting which was a burglary was in process at Grocery Deals. LCSO had someone in custody in 43 seconds due to enhanced services. There were two deputies in town and a 3rd deputy arrived six minutes later due to being in the area because of the enhanced services. LCSO tries to allocate where it makes the most sense and allocate extra where they have law enforcement service contracts.
- Captain Smith commented that at the last meeting, someone said that LCSO is meeting their contract hours by call response and Captain Smith stated that it was not stated at the last meeting, but it was referenced. Crosman replied that he did reference it. Captain Smith stated that he wasn't sure who said it, but that is not what is reported to the City. LCSO is meeting traffic and law enforcement goals. There are months where it is low, but they are meeting it.
- Undersheriff Duncan commented that there are three assigned deputies that have an obligation to Harrisburg first and those deputies know it. There are times when they are dealing with criminal problems, concentrating on traffic, other patrols and trying to solve crimes including follow up investigations. These are extra services that non-contracted cities don't get because they don't have the resources to do it. It's a far cheaper way

when you can't afford your own police department. She stated that Marion, Clackamas, and Lane County have assigned deputies and everything that deputy does is spent in that city besides high priority calls. Those cities are paying for that entire deputy including patrol cars and when the deputy is gone on vacation or training, you don't see a replacement. LCSO feels contract cities are a better option to get the hours and the services that you want. She stated that Harrisburg does have low crime and the Narcotics and Animal Control Departments pay special attention to the contract cities because it's important to us. For DUII arrest, 9 out of 10 times, hours spent on the caser are not typically incorporated in the total hours. She stated that if the City has areas they would like LCSO to focus patrol on, to please let someone know as that is what we are paying for.

- Captain Smith stated that LCSO gets \$5M from the \$13M Linn County General Fund and \$22M from the Law Enforcement Levy. This covers a 230-bed jail, a fully staffed 911 center, 24/7 patrols and the full-scale Law Enforcement Agency of 192 employees. Harrisburg is about 2.3% of funding through General Fund and other sources. \$680,000 comes from the Linn County Tax Assessors Office. This is the same rate that everyone in Linn County contributes. If you add in the \$249,00 enhanced contract, the total amount Harrisburg taxpayers contribute is around \$936,000.
- Thomas stated that she appreciates Linn County, but she feels we just need to decide if we want to stay with what we have or add more hours. She feels like it isn't our concern, as Council members if we cut our contract and it effects their budget. She won't consider her decision on whether or not it will affect the Sheriff Department as she already pays for that service as a citizen. She thinks we should be considering our citizens and what we're doing with the \$249,000. Undersheriff Duncan responded that she agreed with Thomas and as a City our consideration shouldn't be what they give everyone else, but depending on how deep those cuts are, they might have to cut services.
- Thomas thought the staff report sounded vindictive and Eldridge responded that she based it on conversations with commissioners that were disappointed the City left Linn County other services that were provided to the City. She agreed with Thomas that we need to do what is best for the residents.
- Thomas stated that the last two years have been awesome with LCSO, and they have met the hours and beyond.
- Undersheriff Duncan stated that she is taking over as Sheriff in January, and she feels that she has always had a good relationship with Harrisburg. She doesn't want anyone to feel threatened by the Sheriff Office as she wants everyone treated according to their moto. (Keeping the peace with dignity, honesty and compassion.)
- Downey stated that she liked Thomas's comments and we need to talk about what our enhanced services are and how that differentiates from county provided services. She didn't agree with the statement that "it was evident that we should eliminate the option to have our own police department" as we can always create a levy. She asked if we really know what our citizens want? She has not heard from any residents who are wanting this, and unfortunately, they are not here. What is the goal? If we could find out what they want, can we accomplish that with Coburg or LCSO? Would we even be able to find police officers if we had our own department?
- Messick agrees with Downey that we need to find out what our goal is. What do the citizens want? He is not getting the sense of a need for a City police department from his neighbors and friends. Messick stated that the Sheriff Department is in his neighborhood once to twice a night and Coburg as well. He stated that in the past, it was brought up about having one sergeant located in the office here in town, but it was advised that the City could spend the money elsewhere better.

- Chairperson Duncan agreed and that the main purpose of this meeting is that our citizens are safe. He sees Harrisburg as an amazing, beautiful place to live and he wants to keep it that way. Whatever we can do to keep what we have, he wants to do it.
- Messick responded that LCSO is a successful model with the patrol and the enhancement that we have, and it builds an insulation from crime.
- Chairperson Duncan stated that he never looks at the hour report for LCSO because he knows they exceed the hours every month and since partnering with Coburg, it has been comforting seeing their vehicles in town also.
- Ross stated that she thinks LCSO does a great job. She works with them probably more than other City staff and she always sees them in town whether at City Hall or on the streets. They communicate well with staff and get us anything that we need. Ross asked how it would affect resident who live in outlying areas for response time if we were to cut services.
- Jamie Knox, who lives outside city limits on Diamond Hill Rd, stated that she is also concerned with the response time for residents that live in the outlying areas. Would they have to wait for someone to respond from Brownsville or somewhere north? She has had LCSO respond to her residence twice, and it was within 10 minutes. She agrees that they are always here.
- Ross commented on the reader board accident stating that an officer responded within 10 minutes of the accident.
- Thomas stated that when her daughter had an accident on the bridge, a deputy never came. But added she sees them all the time on S 6<sup>th</sup> St with traffic enforcement.
- Downey commented that when a crime happens, people get upset. There isn't going to be a deputy there at that time because that's what criminals do. She feels LCSO responds quickly.
- Undersheriff Duncan commented that LCSO's presence in Harrisburg is a benefit.
- Messick added that from his perspective, the community doesn't want traffic tickets or interaction, they want response, and they want to feel safe. He would like to see what the citizens want.
- Downey mentioned that when we had the quarterly crime report we didn't hear from the citizens because they were involved in Neighborhood Watch. She thinks it was a great idea and she thinks we should do it again.
- Undersheriff Duncan replied that Neighborhood Watch needs to be a priority again and she has reached out to local NW representative Michael Mattingly and discussed ideas on how to make it effective and hopefully start again in January. She also mentioned the Citizens Academy this Spring and encouraged the committee to attend to get an understanding of the overall unique services LCSO provides. The next one will be an evening session and it's a good connection with the community and staff.
- Chairperson Duncan asked Captain Smith when the last time was the county boosted LCSO's pay (Allocations from the General Fund). Captain Smith replied that when LCSO got a 1% increase in the last budget cycle and in the last five years, they have not taken more than a 1% increase from the General Fund. LCSO received more money than projected four years ago due to property taxes valuations going up.
- Chairperson Duncan stated that when he first came to City Council, the City was paying around \$175,000 and now it's \$100,000 more 20 years later. Undersheriff Duncan replied that we need to remember that the General Fund has to fund the rest of the county resources and that's why the levy came about.
- Thomas stated that because of the levy, the county doesn't have to give more to LCSO because they are getting their own funds. Captain Smith agreed with Thomas's comment to a point stating the commissioners heard from the community that they

wanted a bigger law enforcement presence, and the base rate was not going to get that done. He stated that the General Fund base rate is set, and it cannot go above \$1.27 as set by Ballot Measure 5. They went to the voters and presented the bill with what services would be provided and where the money would be allocated.

- Undersheriff Duncan stated that public safety is the most important thing to every community. The County still has to fund all other services throughout the County, and they have shifted their funding to other areas that need it.
- Captain Smith asked what is the need in public safety that isn't being addressed here? Harrisburg's crime is the lowest of all the contracted cities. If that is the need, does the City need to pay any more to buy more hours or are we trying to buy hours to get ahead? What's the outcome? He stated the challenge is to identify the need and he advises the City to find that out before spending or taking away money or services.
- Thomas replied that she thinks we are here because of what has happened across the state this last year, Harrisburg is a conservative little town, and this came from the desire to prevent crime from coming here.
- Duncan stated that there is always going to be people who think Harrisburg is the worse place in the world because they have been a victim of a crime.
- Messick responded that it is about perception, and you could live in the safest town in the world and if you don't feel safe, you're not safe. He believes we could come to an idea by polling people.
- Crosman stated that people come to him about more law enforcement interaction with the community. He mentioned that Coburg and Junction City have events and LCSO Deputies aren't going to community-based events as far as he knows.
- Undersheriff Duncan responded that she feels that's not a fair statement and they just did Shop with a Cop event, and she can't think of a time when Harrisburg asked them to participate in a community event and they said no. Crosman stated that the ties are just stronger in smaller town police agencies. Messick responded that you pay for that with more tax dollars.
- Undersheriff Duncan stated that if they were to give cities two deputies, you might be getting more hours, but the City would be paying for vacation time and total cost. The City would be getting less service and there would be weeks at a time when they get no service due to vacations. LSCO is aware of what our budget needs are, and they don't want us to pay more, and this is the model they can do it in. She understands the benefits of having a resident deputy, but sometimes it can be uncomfortable, and they can't require it. She commented that LCSO participated in National Night Out and got great feedback.
- Crosman commented that he can't get people to come in here and voice their opinion which is the most difficult part.
- Captain Smith responded that the City receives information from LCSO, and he has spoken with the City about having that information available for residents online, through a distribution email or in a newsletter. He feels communication is the key and wonders how much of their questions would be answered if they knew what was going on.
- Caughey stated that people in town don't know that there is information available online, through Facebook or in the City Administrator weekly email distribution. He thinks it's a great idea and asked Crosman if he knew a way to get residents in those audience chairs for meetings, as we would love it. Caughey encouraged people to contact Eldridge about getting on the email distribution list.
- Chief Larson stated that in the past, Coburg had tried communicating with residents in the Tri-County Tribune and in the water bill with no response. The biggest asset

Coburg has is the Community Charter School. They started a Parents Night Out event which is a requirement for his entire police staff. They babysit children from 6pm to 10pm, one night every December. They started with 18 kids and this last year they had 80. It's been tremendous way to have a relationship with the community.

- Undersheriff Duncan commented that is a benefit of having a police department. The Sheriff Department is dependent on the communities they serve to engage them in community events.
- Eldridge asked if anyone felt the value of sending out a survey in the next utility bill? Chairperson Duncan thought it was a good idea. Downey asked if Eldridge could do a poll on Facebook? Eldridge answered yes and Undersheriff Duncan gave Eldridge some examples of questions the Sheriff Department had asked on their Facebook page for the levy. Thomas commented that we should do a paper survey or Survey Monkey along with Facebook as not everyone does social media. Captain Smith also gave some suggestions for the survey as well.
- Chairperson Duncan thanked everyone in attendance and said there was a lot of good information shared. Eldridge stated that a crime forum is very important to get back into to get people involved. She also mentioned getting a budget together for Neighborhood Watch again.
- Undersheriff Duncan stated she would reach out to Michael Mattingly and see where they are with Harrisburg Neighborhood Watch and that it would be great to have some direction or input from the City Council for their meetings.

**ADJOURN at the hour of 8:18pm**

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**Mayor**

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**City Recorder**

1. Welcome everyone to the second meeting of the Law Enforcement Ad-Hoc Committee! This is an Ad-Hoc Committee created by the City Council to explore what kind of options we have available to strengthen the types of law enforcement services we have in Harrisburg.
2. This Committee charged with recommending options to the City Council which will strengthen the law enforcement services we desire.
3. We want to make it clear that we deeply appreciate our agency partners; this process doesn't reflect on the services that they provide. It is an exploration that we owe to our Citizens, to determine how to pro-actively increase or strengthen the law enforcement services we have available.
4. **We are limiting the meeting to 8:00 tonight, if possible. The order of proceeding is to first have staff present the report for this evening, and then to allow discussion between committee members, as well as input from LCSO and the City of Coburg. The final fifteen minutes of the meeting will allow for public input. We ask that you please limit your comments to three to five minutes, as well as asking that you don't repeat information that another person has already provided.**
5. **Please bear in mind that only the City Council is authorized to make any changes in relation to the law enforcement services that the City has available.**
6. **Thank you for coming. If a recommendation is not provided this evening, the next meeting will be held on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022. The City Council will be meeting to hear the recommendation on January 25, 2022.**