

**Law Enforcement & Public Safety Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes**

DATE & TIME: April 15, 2020 – 5:15 PM
LOCATION: Powered by Zoom Meeting by Dialing (646) 558-8656
Meeting ID: 100 222 866
PRESIDING OFFICER: Chairwoman Eve Walter
LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Jay Mahler, Deputy Clerk
PRESENT: Legislators Haynes, Heppner & Parete
ABSENT: Legislator Fabiano
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes

OTHER ATTENDEES: Legislator Bartels, Sheriff Figueroa & Under Sheriff Benjamin – UC Sheriff’s Office, District Attorney Clegg – UC District Attorney’s Office, Deputy County Executive John Milgrim – UC Executive’s Office

Chairwoman Walter called the meeting to order at 5:15 PM.

Motion No. 1: Moved to **APPROVE** the Minutes of the March 4, 2020 regular meeting

Motion By: Legislator Haynes
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Heppner

Discussion: None

Voting In Favor: Legislators Haynes, Heppner, Parete & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 4
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Minutes APPROVED**

Motion No. 2: Moved to **APPROVE** the Minutes of the March 17, 2020 special meeting

Motion By: Legislator Haynes
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Heppner

Discussion: None

Voting In Favor: Legislators Haynes, Heppner, Parete & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 4
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Minutes APPROVED**

Resolution No. 149: Approving The Execution Of A Contract Amendment Causing The Aggregate Contract Amount To Be In Excess Of \$50,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Visual Computer Solutions Inc. – Ulster County Sheriff

Resolution Summary: This resolution approves the execution of a contract amendment with Visual Computer Solutions Inc. in the amount of \$11,926 to extend the term of agreement and increase funding for police/corrections officer scheduling software and hardware support and maintenance through May 31, 2021.

Motion No. 3: **Moved Resolution No. 149 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Heppner
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Haynes

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Haynes, Heppner, Parete & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 4
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 163: Authorizing The Chair Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute A Grant Application With The Department Of Justice Bureau Of Justice Assistance Grant For The Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, And Substance Abuse Site-based Program (COSSAP) – Sheriff's Office

Resolution Summary: This resolution authorizes the Chair to execute a grant application with the Department of Justice for (COSSAP) grant to identify, respond to, treat and support those impacted by illicit opioids, stimulants and other drugs of abuse.

Motion No. 4: **Moved Resolution No. 163 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Parete
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Haynes

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Haynes, Heppner, Parete & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 4
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 164: Authorizing The Chair Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute A Lease Agreement With The Town Of Wawarsing For A Substation Of The Ulster County Sheriff's Office – Department Of Public Works (Buildings And Grounds)

Resolution Summary: This resolution authorizes the Chair to execute a five year lease agreement with the Town of Wawarsing for the Sheriff Substation located at the Joseph Y. Resnick Airport, Ellenville, from May 1, 2020 through April 30, 2025 for a cost of \$312 annually.

Motion No. 5: **Moved Resolution No. 164 FOR DISCUSSION**

Motion By: Legislator Heppner

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Haynes

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Haynes, Heppner, Parete & Walter

Voting Against: None

Votes in Favor: 4

Votes Against: 0

Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 170: Appointing Member To The Ulster County Fire Advisory Board

Resolution Summary: This resolution appoints Corey Kiernan to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of John Heppner on the Fire Advisory Board as the representative of the Town of Saugerties.

Motion No. 6: **Moved Resolution No. 170 FOR DISCUSSION**

Motion By: Legislator Heppner

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Haynes

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Haynes, Heppner, Parete & Walter

Voting Against: None

Votes in Favor: 4

Votes Against: 0

Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Chairwoman Walter recognized District Attorney Clegg to discuss Intimate Partner Violence Initiative (IPVI) funding.

See attached transcript.

Chairwoman Walter updated the members on facility tours.

See attached transcript.

Adjournment

Motion Made By: Legislator Parete
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Heppner
No. of Votes in Favor: 4
No. of Votes Against: 0

TIME: 6:06 PM

Respectfully submitted: Jay Mahler, Deputy Clerk
Minutes Approved: May 6, 2020

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PRESIDING OFFICER: Chairwoman Eve Walter
LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Jay Mahler, Deputy Clerk
PRESENT: Legislators Haynes, Legislator Heppner & Parete
ABSENT: Legislator Fabiano
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes

OTHER ATTENDEES: Legislator Bartels, Sheriff Figueroa & Under Sheriff Figueroa Benjamin – UC Sheriff Office, District Attorney Clegg – UC District Attorney’s Office, Deputy County Executive John Milgrim – UC Executive’s Office

Chairwoman Walter: It is 5:15. District Attorney Clegg will be joining us, but he’s on the agenda at the end, so I’d like to move on before we get to him. Is that okay with everybody?

Is there anyone we know is calling in that we should wait for?

Deputy Clerk Mahler: I have the District Attorney right now he should be ...

Chairwoman Walter: Okay. So I'm going to call the meeting to order. Can I have a motion to approve the March 4th minutes? I guess I'll do them separately. The March 4th minutes?

Legislator Haynes: I'll make that motion, Heidi.

Chairwoman Walter: Second

Legislator Heppner: Second

Chairwoman Walter: John, Legislator Heppner. All in favor.

Legislators Haynes, Legislator Heppner, Parete & Walter: Aye

Chairwoman Walter: Okay, motion to approve the March 17th special meeting minutes.

Legislator Haynes: I'll make that motion, Heidi

Chairwoman Walter: Second

Legislator Heppner: Second

Chairwoman Walter: All in Favor?

Legislators Haynes, Legislator Heppner, Parete and Walter: Aye

Chairwoman Walter: I'll just say in favor, opposed, just so we can go through it, and abstain. That way if Jay misses anything, she'll have a chance.

Chairwoman Walter: Okay, so the first resolution we have is Resolution Number 149 approving the execution of a contract amending, causing aggregate contracts. So this is for the visual computer solutions by the Sheriff, a motion to discuss.

Legislator Heppner: Moved

Chairwoman Walter: Second

Haynes: Second

Chairwoman Walter: Okay. Any discussion? Juan is there anything you want to talk about this? I know it's a continued, continuous funding, but

Sheriff Figueroa: It's our payroll program. That we use for members of the office.

Chairwoman Walter: Anyone have anything else they want to discuss? If not, all in favor of resolution number 149.

Legislators Haynes, Legislator Heppner, Parete and Walter: Aye

Chairwoman Walter: All opposed. Abstain. So that's all in favor.

All right, next we have Resolution Number 163 authorizing the Chair of the Legislature to execute a grant to the Department of Justice Bureau. This is for comprehensive opioid stimulant and substance abuse site plan program for the Sheriff Figueroa's office. This is just to allow the Sheriff Figueroa's office to apply. A motion to discuss?

Legislator Parete: I'll move it

Chairwoman Walter: Okay, so John moved it, and Heidi seconds. Juan is there anything you want to share about this?

Sheriff Figueroa: I just, we actually put in for a similar grant last year, we had this great team that we put together. So it's the same grant, and I, I sent an email earlier to Jay in regards to the overdoses compared from last year to this year, we're at a 49%. You know, increase for the last three months during the month of January, February and March, as you can see. And so this epidemic of overdoses is continuing. And I think if we can get it like this, it's a collaborative effort under one roof rather than having many tentacles that you can't control, it'd be a benefit to the County. We're doing as much as we can here with ORACLE. Most of those people that you see that are not able to overdoses, we have cops are either individually talking to them, or putting them in a rehab just in a rehab. So the purpose of this of this grant is to put a unified, Criminal Justice law enforcement face to it. And we're hoping that we'll get this grant this time around.

Chairwoman Walter: Any other comments or discussion, from other members?

Legislator Parete: It's a major problem. It's just terrible. It's not going away Juan. I, I wish you well, I just don't think anything's working right now. Maybe someday offline I'll chat with you about it. It's a mess.

Sheriff Figueroa: I know, John, and I know that I know that you care, I saw you in Delaware County. And I know you're involved in it. And I know that this is something that's affecting all of us. So I'm just trying to do something to make a change, and I appreciate you. Thank you.

Legislator Haynes: Actually, I do have a question for the Sheriff Figueroa. It's Heidi.

Sheriff Figueroa: Go ahead Heidi

Legislator Haynes: Where were you able to get them into a facility it was Arms Acres, Conifer Park, or you said you sent two because I know that we've had ...

Sheriff Figueroa: I think it was out in Pennsylvania. I don't know the name of the place. But we can get that information to you.

Legislator Haynes: No, that's okay. I just know that we've had some shifting around or services regarding the detox being, you know, some people went to different areas, over in Dutchess and whatnot. And I know that some people in the recovery community has some pretty big concerns regarding this. So I just want to make sure that there is really anyone in need, in immediate need, and we're able to place them wherever they need to go.

Sheriff Figueroa: We've been pretty successful, and people have been pretty good. Just going back to this particular grant. They change the verbiage on it, it encompasses not just opioids, but any substance abuse. So that's what the difference is with this particular grant which is going to kind of expand on what we're looking to do here. So as you know, since I have a second OASAS, there was a grant that that that was a actually a funding item by the state last year it was \$50,000 that OASAS controls and has to give to the Department of Health. And we can utilize here for any type of expenditures on actual drugs that we're giving, in regards to, you know, rehab we have here in this facility, and we're working on getting that, you know, rolling the next couple of months or so. And I will talk more about that as I find out but just want to throw that out there.

Chairwoman Walter: So, Juan are you thinking of adding like meth to this so that, with the hotline. So it's not just for opioid overdoses, but also other overdoses.

Sheriff Figueroa: So meth is a big issue up in Delaware County. And I think at some point, they come down here, so I'm trying to keep in front of the different drug issues that may be coming our way. And so this encompasses that, and as you know, we got a an email back what was wrong with the grant last time. So we're gonna identify those shortcomings and try to beef it up and be more reasonable because I think some of the numbers that we kind of put out there for the budget side of it, we're not really reasonable. So we're going to look at redo it, and hopefully we'll get it done.

Chairwoman Walter: So in full disclosure, I wrote with the with the Sheriff Figueroa's the other grants, and I'm happy to help you with this. I'm not on it. I don't receive any money for it. So I don't have, I think it's reasonable for me to vote on it because I don't gain anything one way or another. I just assist in the process and I'm happy to continue to assist.

Sheriff Figueroa: Thank you

Chairwoman Walter: Any other discussion. All in favor of approving resolution 163.

Legislators Haynes, Legislator Heppner, Parete and Walter: Aye

Chairwoman Walter: Any opposed? Abstain? So that's all in favor.

Thank you. Next we have resolution 164 authorizing the Chair to execute a lease agreement with the town of Wawarsing for a substation, to the Ulster County Sheriff Figueroa's Office. Again, this is a continuation, what is it, like 300 a year or something like that? Motion for discussion, to open discussion.

Legislator Heppner: I'll move it, this is Legislator Heppner.

Chairwoman Walter: Second

Legislator Haynes: Second

Chairwoman Walter: Haynes second. Okay. Any discussion? A motion to approve Resolution 164.

Legislator Haynes: I'll make the motion

Chairwoman Walter: All in favor, Aye.

Legislators Haynes, Legislator Heppner, Parete and Walter: Aye

Chairwoman Walter: Against, abstain? Okay, so everyone's in favor. Thank you. Next we have Resolution 170 appointing a member to the county fire advisory board. Motion to open discussion?

Legislator Heppner: I'll move, Legislator Heppner.

Chairwoman Walter: Legislator Heppner, and Heidi seconds. Any discussion on this? I'll say we didn't get the specifics, but we got a really good email for describing the person and we didn't get a resume. But we got the email, right?

Legislator Haynes: Did you get a name?

Chairwoman Walter: Yeah. Jay do you have the name? And the person came very, with a very good reference. We can't hear you.

Deputy Clerk Mahler: Wow. Tech support. Um, we actually did get a resume last minute. I don't know if maybe you downloaded your materials before I added it and then re uploaded. So, he, he did come at the recommendation of the Saugerties Fire Departments and then the Fire Advisory Board.

Chairwoman Walter: And the name?

Deputy Clerk Mahler: Is Chris... um... Kiernan. He's replacing John Heppner of the Saugerties John Heppner variety

Chairwoman Walter: John

Legislator Heppner: So do we have to make, this Resolution I have just has Cory Kiernan. Do we have to make an amendment to add that name?

Deputy Clerk Mahler: No that's the name

Legislator Heppner: Corey Kiernan?

Chairwoman Walter: Right. I think it came after. Okay all in favor of approving the member to the Ulster County Fire Advisory Board?

Legislators Haynes, Legislator Heppner, Parete and Walter: Aye

Chairwoman Walter: Against, abstain

Legislator Parete: Aye

Chairwoman Walter: John, are you against, or just a delayed in favor

Legislator Heppner: Delayed

Chairwoman Walter: Oh no sorry, Parete

Legislator Parete: I raised my hand when I saw you raise your hand

Chairwoman Walter: Everyone's in favor. I'll ask slower. Okay. So, next we have the District Attorney is going, if you all recall, the funding for IPVI got stopped through DCJS really stopped through the federal government halting payment to DCJS. And this was very unexpected. And we agreed to make a change in the resolution that it didn't have to stop the programming right away. But we also had the understanding that the District Attorney would present to us the benefits and make an argument in favor or against the continuation of this type of programming. So I'll turn this over to you.

Unmute. By making your volume higher. Do you know if your speaker if your volume is on? So the other choices you can try dialing in on your phone. I'm gonna give Dave a chance to regroup and just check if there any other new business that anyone else wants to talk about. Tracey. We're just going to have a while Dave figures some stuff out. Tracey.

Legislator Bartels: Okay, thank you so much. It's a question for both Dave when he comes back and, and for the Sheriff Figueroa. I was just wondering if you Sheriff Figueroa could give us an update in terms of the jail population, and if we're doing anything I've heard about communities across the state that are doing things to allow for early release for people who are close to release and, etc. because of the risks of COVID in a confined population.

Sheriff Figueroa: Sure, I could definitely add to that. So our population is 118. We actually released at the request of the District Attorney's Office and the County Court, Judge McGinty, I submitted a list to them, of folks that had less than 30 days and had underlying medical conditions. And they had relatively minor charges like DWI, and, you know, and they were released. The Court, remember, I don't have the authority to release unless the court releases so I sent the list to the District Attorney Dave Clegg, who in turn worked with the Public Defender's office and the sitting county court judge McGinty. We had eight individuals that were released under those auspices and two that were released via parole. These, again, were folks that had minor parole violations and were released. I gave an entire list to the District Attorney, but most of the other individuals that were on there waiting state time with underlying conditions, and we are not, the State is not accepting anybody at this point because of the Coronavirus. So we, we have them here. Now there is a stipulation that if they're here more than 10 days, and they belong to the state that they eventually have to pay us for that. So we'll wait to see when that happens. But all the governor has to do his wave that and of course we're not going to be able to do that.

So, the safety of the population, I was one of the first ones in the Hudson Valley to shut down visitation when we only had one coronavirus in the County. All the employees at the Law Enforcement Center have to wash their hands when they arrive and get their temperature checked. All the Corrections Officers have to wear a mask. Any of the inmates that come in will be in isolation for ten days. They go through a questionnaire and get a temperature check. We've also given \$5 per week, there was one week I gave \$10 per week for phone calls. We're bringing in more DVDs so they are able to watch some movies. Again it's about protection of our people as well, not just entertainment, because also programs were ended as well. Now if it's an emergency clergy or legal visit, those are still going on, but they'll be non-contact visits. We've also started virtual court, and we're averaging about 3-6 arraignments here at the Ulster County Law Enforcement Center for all the agencies in the county because a lot of them didn't have the equipment and business Skype. The way it works is the police agency makes the arrest, one of the seven judges that are able to do these arraignments, there was a list of the judge selected, and there's a list of them, because they have adjoining towns and they were able to do the arraignment and they have accounts via business Skype. The Judges would be put in contact with the prosecutor, and defense attorney or the Public Defender's Office and send an invite out, a Business Skype invite, that we get, and the agency calls us to come down to the training area where we have the equipment set up on the jail side. We've also done hearings in regards to county court for those that are incarcerated here as part of the population. And we've done parole hearings, probation hearings, all within the facility. So we have two different sections, one that's open to the public with the Skype for arraignments. And then we have court hearings along with probation for those that are incarcerated here, and they're all up and running. And we did that within two weeks, got authorization from OCA to do that. We worked in conjunction with Judge Kessick, who's the president of the Magistrates of Ulster County.

Chairwoman Walter: One of the interesting things, this is under the category of silver lining, that will come out of this pandemic is allowing us to try things that are directions we really needed to go in anyway. For those who knew when the Hurrell-Harring lawsuit, this was all about finding a better way to have counsel on arraignment and having centralized arraignment. And here we are already testing a mechanism that will allow for that kind of thing. So that when this pandemic is over, we know that we can do this kind of thing. And this will really improve our capacity to have counsel at arrangements for perpetuity because we were forced to test it now we're doing it. But I have one quick question, is there any circumstances or conditions on these releases? Or is it just viewed as they're they've served their time and their gone?

District Attorney Clegg: They've served their time.

Chairwoman Walter: Tracey

District Attorney Clegg: Yeah, so, the people that we've let go, they've served their time.

Legislator Bartels: And if I could ask just to follow on to the to that question. So you said that you had provided the list, Sheriff Figueroa, to the DEA and the courts with for those that were under 30 days, are you going to going to reevaluate if this time gets extended out? Or are you confident that, that given the look over of the list that everyone who is within, fits that category has been ...

Sheriff Figueroa: Well it was several things in the category, medical underlying conditions, and under 30 days, and depending on the charges. I don't have the authority to release that up to the court and I need a court order to release and the District Attorney's office that was spearheaded by the District Attorney.

Legislator Bartels: I want to just thank you both for all you've done, and even, even the \$5 that you provided to the inmates. I know when I read about that, I was, I was really happy that you had done that. I'm someone who has spoken about the commissary fund for years and years and years and I could actually say that from my perspective, that that was an example of actually using it for what it was intended for. So, thank you very much for that. And thank you to the DA for, for moving on these early releases for the protection of our citizens.

Chairwoman Walter: Legislator Parete

Legislator Parete: Yeah, um Sheriff Figueroa. If I heard you right you're what, about 30-35% of capacity right now?

Sheriff Figueroa: That's correct.

Legislator Parete: How's the staff doing, alright? Because it's gotta be weighing on everybody's mind a little bit.

Sheriff Figueroa: While you know, we're actually down with the people that are retiring, and resigning. We're down about, at the end of the month, down 14 corrections officers. As you know, there's a freeze on hiring right now. But everything seems to be, thank god, nobody has contracted the virus here at the at the facility. We did have two deputies, though that did that test positive, but they're back to work. So it's been minimal, and we have protocols in place to safeguard, we set up two five man teams that have all PPE equipment in case they have to deal with somebody that has the coronavirus. As you know, or you may not know, but there's some people that say, because they were arrested, that they have the virus that we have to automatically put them, we want to put everybody on isolation anyway. But then we do the homework in contact with the foreman out to find out if they actually telling us the truth. And in most instances, they're not.

Chairwoman Walter: Um, Tracy, anything else with that?

Legislator Bartels: Just in terms of that, that portion we just brought up, but do you have the capacity, or have you tested incoming inmates at or had them tested by the health department?

Sheriff Figueroa: If we find enough, remember, there's a questionnaire. They're in isolation. And the nursing staff checks them, and we check their temperature. If there's any symptoms then, obviously, there's protocols in place where contact, we're in contact with the Department of Health, and we're able to get a test right away to get the individual tested. Thank God, we didn't have, we didn't have to do that. Yeah.

Legislator Bartels: Just, I'm just, I'm just wondering, and again, it's food for thought given the anecdotal end tested information out there from other municipalities and even other countries that have done broad testing with the number of people that are asymptomatic and positive. Have you thought about testing every incoming inmate just given that it's a moment in time and they're going to be in an isolated population?

Sheriff Figueroa: If we if we had the ability to do that, and I don't think the county does, to test everybody, then obviously we would. I think just like our first responders, if they're symptomatic, then we're gonna, you know, move forward to get them tested right away. The county health department does have tests put aside, just for these reasons, and they, I commend them for that. But there's still a shortage of tests, even here in Ulster County, and, and to utilize them on people that don't have symptoms it's just not the practice at this time. However, if we do have enough, absolutely, I'd love to do it.

Legislator Bartels: Yeah. Okay, thank you.

Chairwoman Walter: Okay. Ah, District Attorney Clegg. Would you like to,

District Attorney Clegg: Yes, I apologize for my lack of sound here. I just want to follow up on what we were just talking about. The office continues to receive requests, and we, we vet them. If we have anybody that we hear at jail that is coming up to the end of their sentence we ask the defense attorneys to contact us. And we have a willing county court, acting County Court judge who we can get in and we can satisfy their sentence quickly and get them released. Just so you know.

So let's talk about the IPVI program. Just so you understand the background, it is a focused deterrence approach. And that's based upon the concept that 1% of the perpetrators commit 60% of the violent acts. So that if we focus on the people that are identified as potentially chronic problems with respect to domestic violence, we can intercede in that in that upward and more violent approach that may happen in the future.

So the IPVI program's been involved in Kingston for the last three years. Every year there's been a reduction in domestic incident reports. And specifically, with the people that we work with, what happens is we identify them initially. We provide them with notice of the consequences of continuing to do that. We provide immediate support, and with crime victims, for the victims and let them know that there's support out there for them. We have four different categories. If, if a person re-offends we go back, and there's a more structured approach to it. The second time around, they are prosecuted, charged and prosecuted. If there is a probationary period, they are supervised during that period, but also there's a relationship that continued once they were identified up to that point with Law Enforcement. And we're good? I just saw something on my phone. Sorry about that.

So anyway, what we have found we work with the national organization out of John Jay College, it's a National Network for safe communities. And they have examined the statistics that we've maintained over the last three years. And they say, they tell us, that we have the best results of any place in the country. And they were amazed at how good it was. We actually had a 50% reduction in the domestic incident reports from level one to level two, which is beyond what they've experienced at any other program throughout the country. So it's a program that's, that's having great benefits to our community. What it does, ultimately, is provide us with a mechanism for deciding who to take most seriously, so as you move through these categories, you get to category three, and and we have to then focus more deterrence. So that may well be incarceration, elevating the charges that are brought against them, and trying to, once again, do everything we can with all the resources involved to communicate that this conduct can't continue. If you get to the A level, that's the most serious and most violent, and that's the fewest, thankfully. But at that point in

time, what this program suggests is that we do everything we can from a law enforcement standpoint, to mess them up, basically. If we have a charge that we can bring, we bring it, we bring the most serious charge we can bring and we also use incarceration as punishment. We also can target them in different ways. Like there are times when these people who are the most serious violators are also involved in drugs, or involved in other kinds of crimes, where we can target them in whatever way we can, whether it be petit larceny, dealing drugs, or whatever it might be that we target them and make sure that they know that we're going to be watching them, that we're going to be there to prosecute them at whatever level we can, and letting them know that this kind of conduct can't continue. So it's, it's an approach that requires all the attention that we can give it. It is successful at a level that I've now learned is better than anywhere else in the country. So we want to pursue this. As I said before, I'd love to bring this on a countywide level because it's having such success. So I'll open it up to questions right now.

Chairwoman Walter: So I have two, and they kind of relate. So in terms of your plan to expand, you have a specific plan of how, how you want to expand it? And then the second is just wondering, like how much FTE is required just for the program implementation, so not the people who would be doing the things that they would do with or without the program, but just to allow the program to happen, what is the FTE burden? And again, that might change with expansion, I don't know. But that's why I've kind of coupled the two together.

District Attorney Clegg: Well, just to talk about expansion, initially, what we have to do is, is do an outreach to all the different law enforcement agencies in our county. So it takes two. So we work right now with the Kingston police force, we would have to do that with each town, police force etc. and that would take some, some effort, but that would be the starting place. In terms of organization we have right now, somebody who supervises the program. And we have one investigator that, that does all the contacts with the with the offenders. And we would have to expand that, obviously, at a level of, right now, based on what I'm seeing, we probably need another three or four investigators to be involved.

Chairwoman Walter: But just to be clear with that, if the program didn't exist, that investigator would still be investigating domestic violence calls, correct? Or would that, is that only because there's IPVI?

District Attorney Clegg: So, the investigation of the domestic violence incident is done by the local law enforcement agencies. The follow up is initially done by them but the secondary and third level and fourth level of contact with these offenders is made by the people who come out of this program. So that would be the investigators themselves that right now are employed by the District Attorney's office.

Chairwoman Walter: Other questions?

Legislator Parete: Is there money involved with it? Costs? Are the incidents that the District Attorney is talking about, are they increasing, rapidly, leveling off? We want to do everything we can to curtail this. Whether, if I, if I heard it right there might, the DA might need two or three or four more bodies in his staff, which, if in fact that's necessary, that's what the issue is.

District Attorney Clegg: The point here is that this is such an effective program. And as you say, it's very targeted, we focus on the people who are most violent, and who are heading in the wrong direction. And that intervention can save lives, can save law enforcement time and can also save, you know, the families. So there's a great deal of benefit to this program. What's remarkable here is, as they said, we've had a reduction of domestic interventions over the last three years based upon the contacts that have been had. And that the fact that the level one folks have not gone on to level two, three and four, at the same rate as they have in other studies throughout this country, show that we're

having a great deal of success of making that initial intervention. So yes, I think it's a, it's a very worthwhile program. If we have the manpower to expand it throughout the county, because obviously it's needed throughout the county, we could do a lot good.

Sheriff Figueroa: I'd like to add a comment, if I may. About 30% of law enforcement responding to domestic violence issues are killed throughout the country. And that's a pretty high number. I think a program like this is beneficial to the county. Most of the people that are involved in domestic violence, they don't want the individual arrested to begin with. They're loved ones. They just want the person to get help. And, and you're talking about probably the person that is the breadwinner. They may be the father of kids and so there's a lot of tension in a relationship like that. And having a program like, like this really does help alleviate a lot of the potential issues that can happen if they're if they're wasn't an intervention. So I'm a big fan of the program.

District Attorney Clegg: Thanks Juan. One of the things that that this program provides, and most do not, is that it's both a carrot and a stick. That these people are there to one, start a relationship, get to know the folks, get the let them know from a very straight up point of view, where you're heading if you're going in the wrong direction, where this is going to end up. That seems to have a lot of effect, and success. So it also obviously avoids the continuing stopover of every law enforcement agency within that jurisdiction to deal with the later offenses. So I think that it would save a great deal of money overall in the county, and it will also save lives and families.

Legislator Bartels: So the question that I have, thank you, is do you, District Attorney collect, do you know what the cost would be to expand the program? Have you have you run those numbers out? And the follow on to that is are you talking about it for next year, the expansion for next year? Or have you come to the committee to talk about expanding it for this year?

District Attorney Clegg: No, I don't think we're ready to expand it this year, we're in the middle of the plague, as you know. And I think that that would be a little too ambitious. But right now, I just want the committee to understand how important this program is. It's something that we want to build on. I can start to do that, that foundational work right now, if the committee thinks that it's something that they'd be interested in, moving forward with. Obviously, you won't know whether you're going to do that or not until you get all the details, but I can work on my end to give you those details at the next meeting.

Legislator Bartels: Okay, can I ask one follow up question? Thank you. Um, and it's, it's not specific to the program, but relevant to now and to the situation we're in. Are you noticing, this both for the Sheriff Figueroa and the District Attorney, increased complaints? It's something that I've heard about anecdotally and across the country. And given that people are in a confined state and circumstance, are you getting more calls? It's something I worry about on a regular basis.

District Attorney Clegg: Right, right. I know on our end, it doesn't seem to be increasing, but there might be reasons for that. What, what I'm told is, a lot of times when these offenses are taking place, the person has an opportunity to go to a friend or somebody else's house, to call to get help to let the law enforcement community know this is going on. That may not be happening right now, because of the social distancing requirements that everybody has. So it may be something that's going on that's unrecorded. But as far as I see where the charges come in, it, it has not been a significant increase.

Sheriff Figueroa: And I would agree with the District Attorney. I have not seen an increase. It's been relatively, eerily quiet actually, in some instances. We have seen an uptick in, in business burglaries, robberies, we just had the Stewart's

right down the street here, robbed, the other night, Saturday night. So we're seeing an uptick in those type of crimes, people leaving their cars unlocked, and their stuff being stolen. We've been telling the businesses to take their cash out of the register and leave the register open because people are going in and within, in one instance, within 30 seconds, they went in, grabbed the register and ran out because there was money in it. So those are the some of the crimes that we've seen an uptick on.

Chairwoman Walter: Really, I mean, it's so, it's so interesting and obvious, and it seems obvious now that you mentioned it, is the idea that the ability to report goes down in these circumstances. And so, I imagine it really is going up, we just haven't been hearing about it. Legislator Heppner. Your volume, your mute.

Legislator Heppner: On the domestic violence issue, I know the state has expanded their domestic violence hotline, is a number that the governor has been pushing out almost daily now. Just for you guys's reference. They've expanded their volunteers and mental health and domestic violence experts. Going back to, Tracy kind of asked my question regarding what District Attorney Clegg was talking about, which was kind of like a timeline and but based on your response to that, I think it would be valuable long term if you do keep us, you know, updated and just keep in touch with us on this program so that when you and your team do feel you're in a better position. As you know, the more you know, an we're kind of continuing to talk about it, and the more you guys come up with, more information, I think it's better, you know, for us to operate. Especially going into the financial situation, you know, already currently in and, you know, the extent and the difference in the process that's gonna, you know, probably look like this year. Just a point, I think there's no reason why we can't use opportunities like this evening to continue to discuss the details and, you know, and, you know, for you to follow up.

District Attorney Clegg: That would be my pleasure.

Chairwoman Walter: So, I think what I would hope, you know, I think that we you probably could do some kind of estimation of how much money is being saved, because if John Jay's been identifying the reduction in the highest two levels, which do involve more criminal justice response, putting some kind dollar sign on how much is saved as a result of this would be really useful. And then also, if you can really kind of map out what that initial, what the cost would be to maintain it, so we can balance it to the savings. And then just, even an idea of how you might unfold it in the future. I mean, the next time we meet is a whole month from now. So it gives you time to think about once the pandemic is over what goals might be. But I do think that having some idea of the other side of how much money is being saved, because I think we've all, it sounds very clear that money is being saved by this, but having real dollar amounts, real with quotes around it, having dollar amounts that are attributed to people not having higher level offenses would be very helpful, I think.

District Attorney Clegg: Great. I'll do my best.

Chairwoman Walter: I'm sorry, go ahead. Any other comments? All right, so we're looking forward to hearing more about this. Like I said, I imagine domestic violence is, is increasing. We just aren't hearing about it. I think that there's probably potentially other funding that maybe we can help you work on to support this as well, outside the county because I think it's very fundable. And I'm happy to help you in any way with that as well.

Any new business?

Okay. So in terms of old business, obviously, we are putting on hold our tour of the jail. For, no way of saying how long, but obviously when the time is right, we will all be happy together, there together. And hearing, is there anything else Anyone felt they want to mention before we adjourn?

Legislator Parete: Could I, Madam Chair, just for a minute.

Chairwoman Walter: Yeah

Legislator Parete: You know, probably late last year, there was a little spate of crimes, serious crimes, in Kingston and in the press, they talked about you and the office pitching in to help with the situation in Kingston. And I know one of your former colleagues, Bobby Nuzzo told me the cooperation between law enforcement agencies, the Sheriff Figueroa's Department in Ulster County has not been replicated in New York State. It's the best in the state. I'm just wondering in that news release when they're asking you folks to come in what more could you do? I know you had bike patrols. I know you guys are quick patrols. I know you had four wheeler patrols. In the news article, what more could you have done, or do, that you're already doing?

Sheriff Figueroa: I think the important thing is we had a double unit that was working C line for several month up until we got the pandemic. And they were working four to twelves, working for KPD. They were doing calls, and they were helping them with their calls, this way they had their own detectives work cases because they didn't have the manpower. We also sent detectives over there to help and we also assigned the new member, so they have two members now, one full time, one part time, in their SIU which is their narcotics unit. Myself and the District Attorney are still working to revamp URGENT to include KPD. And so that's something that we're still working on and we're hoping that they'll come on board. And the relationship is still great amongst all of the agencies in the county. So I'm very happy to continue that. And, and it's been going well, so far. Chief Tinti's got my number, and so does the Mayor. If they need something, all they gotta do is pick up the phone and call and we're there.

Chairwoman Walter: John, is John on? Who's on from the County Executive's Office.

Deputy County Executive Milgrim: Yeah, John's here. Sorry.

Chairwoman Walter: I just wanted to follow up because I got a call from the Office of Indigent Legal Services. It was several days ago but wanting to confirm that the contracts are going in. Because, do you know if the contract were sent?

Deputy County Executive Milgrim: I will check on that.

Chairwoman Walter: Okay. So it was about four or five days ago, but he said he hasn't seen him yet. So hopefully we can get those in Tracy.

Legislator Bartels: Sorry. Takes me a moment to unmute. They were signed earlier this week.

Chairwoman Walter: Okay. Thanks. All right. Ah, with that, I'll take a motion to adjourn.

Legislator Parete: Yeah, could I just ask, Chairlady, for a second. I do know from what I read that in Albany in the budget, through the negotiation, there were some some reforms made to the criminal justice laws that were passed.

Did you ever get any notification or communication from any were able to write a letter to our representatives in Albany as to what their thinking was on, on that issue?

Multiple unintelligible speakers

District Attorney Clegg: Both Juan and I spoke to both the New York State Senate and the Assembly. And made known the concerns that we had with the criminal law reforms that were in place. There's two sides to that obviously, there's bail reform and discovery. I know I sat next to Juan and we spoke to Carl Heastie, and a number of Assemblymen about the concerns we had. So we had very direct input into what was going on. And, and as I say, I was very pleased that they did listen, they did hear, and did make some important changes.

Sheriff Figueroa: And then just to add on to that, we got a seat at the table. There was no other Sheriff Figueroa except for myself, and NYPD had one of their Chiefs there when we spoke to Assembly Speaker Heastie who really was against any type of reform at all, it just wasn't gonna happen. But after, you know, I give him credit because he sat there and listened for a meeting that was supposed to go for one hour went for close to three hours. And, and so it was District Attorneys throughout the state, including our own District Attorney. And it was a, you know, a pretty interesting debate. And we explained the unintended consequences that that the law had and how it just wasn't good for the victims and the people of our county. And that they shouldn't use a broad brush to paint everyone in the criminal justice system in the same way, as in New York City, because we're, we're all different counties, and we're a lot different than than New York City. And I also had the opportunity to speak to seven senators at the at the Majority Leader's conference room. And again, I was I was able to, to, first of all, I was astonished at how young so many senators were, but, but it was a it was a good conversation. And, you know, having the experience of living in a great county, like Ulster County and working for the state police and working in New York City, explaining why researchers, and research is good, but realities is what happens when we're the frontline law enforcement folks, that have to knock on the doors like we do. January 1, I get a phone call from a mother asking why somebody that was responsible for the death of her daughter was released. And I had to sit and explain that to her. And I used that example and several other examples to the assembly speaker and the senators. And I believe a lot of those changes were due in part to all the people that were there that made their points, including our District Attorney and myself in regards to the bail reform, you know, inconsistencies and issues and unintended consequences and discovery.

And I don't remember any time that Albany made a law in January and may changes four months later, ever. So I'm happy that they did it. But I can tell you, they did it. And we were able to have a seat at the table because of folks like Senator Metzger. And Senator Skoufis, Assemblyman Cahill, who were able to coordinate us having a seat at the table.

Chairwoman Walter: To the question, yes, so we had talked about a month ago., having that more open communication with the state representatives, unfortunately, the pandemic got in our way. But the good news is that changes have been put through and without that conversation. But yeah, so, I appreciate you reminding us about that. But luckily, things went the right direction.

Anything else? Yeah

Legislator Parete: Just on a lighter note to the Sheriff Figueroa. I see your new duties now, with the social spacing and making sure everything is copacetic with the folks on the street, I might just suggest that you get like an Humvee and mount a water cannon on the back of it. And your troops can take care of it instantly and you won't have anything to worry about.

Sheriff Figueroa: So, I actually, I'm gonna, I'm gonna add to that, because I know what you're saying. You know, I'm a Marine, you know, I support the Constitution. The Governor's orders are not the law, and individuals still have rights. And this is still a free society. But I had asked the people at that, at that conference the other day was that if we could just social distance until this, this pandemic passes, then we can get together all we want afterwards. And it's really a safety thing, but of course, it's common sense. And, you know, the last, last resort would be to somebody to take a risk. I mean that

Legislator Parete: The only reason I brought it up is I got a water cannon for sale, that's all.

Chairwoman Walter: And with that, I'll take a motion to adjourn.

Legislator Parete: We adjourn.

Chairwoman Walter: Motion. Is that your motion John?

Legislator Parete: Yes, ma'am.

Chairwoman Walter: Second

Legislator Heppner: I'll second

Chairwoman Walter: Legislator Heppner seconds. All in favor.

Legislators Haynes, Legislator Heppner, Parete and Walter: Aye

Chairwoman Walter: Opposed, abstained. Thank you all. Stay safe. Stay away. Stay home. If you can, wash your hands.