



Inclusion Through Diversity

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TWO PAGES

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### Highlights of the **February 20, 2018** meeting of the Tompkins County Legislature

#### **Funds Approved for Two Positions for Jail Mental Health Services**

In two actions related to the County's commitment to providing mental health services to inmates at the Tompkins County Jail, the Legislature in two separate unanimous votes, authorized the transfer of funds from the Mental Health Department to the Sheriff's Office Budget to fund a new position of Jail Psychiatric Physician, and to transfer a Mental Health Forensic Counselor position from Mental Health to the Sheriff's Office.

The Jail Psychiatric Physician measure creates the part-time psychiatrist position (not to exceed four hours per week) at a rate of \$95.00 per hours, which is above the graded salary range, and budgets \$25,823 (salary and fringe) to cover the position for 2018, and authorizes the budget adjustment to continue for future years. The Mental Health Forensic Counselor action transfers the counselor position to the Sheriff's Office and approves the related budget adjustment of \$100,533 (salary and fringe) for 2018 and future years.

Public Health Director/ Mental Health Commissioner Frank Kruppa told Legislators the departments are adapting as they realize the reality of implementing these new programs and decided it made more sense to have a model similar to that used for medical supervision in the Jail. In a briefing memo provided to the Legislature, Undersheriff Brian Robison stated adding the part-time psychiatrist will enable his office to provide mental health diagnosis, evaluations, and treatment to individuals in the facility.

*Contact: Richard John, Chair, Public Safety Committee, 256-9794; Frank Kruppa, Public Health Director/Mental Health Commissioner, 274-6674.*

#### **Funding to Restructure Medical Examiner Services Approved**

The Legislature, by unanimous vote, approved the budget transfers necessary to restructure the County's Medical Examiner Program, operated by the County's Public Health Department. Instead of utilizing a contracted Medical Examiner, employed Deputy Medical Examiners, and out-of-county autopsy services, the new approach shifts to an arrangement with Pathology Associates of Ithaca and Cayuga Medical Center to provide Medical Examiner and autopsy services locally. Briefing information provided to the Legislature notes that the measure shifts resources from transportation costs to improved Medical Examiner professional services.

*Contact: Frank Kruppa, Public Health Director, 274-6674; Shawna Black, Chair, Health and Human Services Committee, 351-7855*

Among other business

County Administrator Jason Molino told Legislators that Dave Sanders, who currently serves the County in the Youth Services Department, has been selected to become the County's new Criminal Justice Coordinator, working out of County Administration, effective March 6. Mr. Molino said that Sanders, who has long attended meetings of the County Criminal Justice Advisory Board (CJATI) as part of his role with Youth Services, will facilitate activities of CJATI as part of new responsibilities as Criminal Justice Coordinator. He will also continue the performance management function that he has performed on behalf of the County while at Youth Services. Administrator Molino noted that much of the Criminal Justice Coordinator's responsibilities involve monitoring and measuring the success of the County's criminal justice programs.

The Legislature authorized acceptance of a \$10,604 grant award from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services to help defray the costs of implementing Leandra's Law and the monitoring of ignition interlock devices, the funding based on an average number of court orders for installation of the interlock devices and a reimbursement rate of approximately \$63 per court order.

The Legislature approved revisions to the County's Administrative Policy to comply with provisions of the State's Environmental Quality Review Act, last updated in 2003.

Three funding agreements were approved, two for construction observation and administration services by C&S Companies of Syracuse for Airport projects—the General Aviation Apron Rehabilitation (\$157,500) and the Passenger Boarding Bridge project (\$96,700), those projects 95% supported by federal and state funds. A funding agreement was also approved with the State Department of Transportation for an up-front funding commitment of the federal and non-federal share the scoping and design phase for the Pine Tree Road intersection improvements (Town of Ithaca), making available \$62,000 from the project's capital account. The County share for design is projected at \$1,550.

The Legislature authorized extension of the County's agreement with Dr. Kenneth Clarke as Special Advisor to the Office of Human Rights, for as long as needed up until December 31, 2018, and appropriation of \$62,400 from the Contingent Fund to support the extension. The prior agreement expired as of February 6.

**- END -**