

INGHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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VICE-CHAIRPERSON
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BOARD LEADERSHIP WILL MEET ON THURSDAY, MAY 25, 2023 AT 6:00 PM IN CONFERENCE ROOM A OF THE HUMAN SERVICES BUILDING, 5303 S. CEDAR, LANSING. A VIRTUAL LINK HAS BEEN PROVIDED FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT <https://ingham.zoom.us/j/86246962326>.

Agenda

Call to Order

Approval of the January 30, 2023 Minutes

Additions to the Agenda

Limited Public Comment

1. Discussion Regarding the Capital Area Transportation Authority
2. Update on Youth Center Replacement
3. 2024 Budget Update

Public Comment

Adjournment

A QUORUM OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS WILL BE IN ATTENDANCE

BOARD LEADERSHIP MEETING

January 30, 2023

Draft Minutes

Members Present: Cahill, Celentino, Grebner, Johnson (Arrived 6:03 p.m), Lawrence, Maiville, Morgan, Pawar, Peña, Polsdofer, Ruest, Schafer, Sebolt, Trubac, and Tennis.

Members Absent: None.

Others Present: Scott Wriggelsworth, Patrick Ibarra, Feliz Rodriguez, Bradley Richman, Gregg Todd, Becky Bennett, Teri Morton, Jill Bauer, Jared Cypher, Heidi Williams, Dan Verhougstraete, Kaitlyn Hetfield, Madison Hughes, and others.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Sebolt at 6:00 p.m. in Conference Room A of the Human Services Building, 5303 S. Cedar Street, Lansing, Michigan. Virtual Public participation was offered via Zoom at <https://ingham.zoom.us/j/89160266022>.

Chairperson Sebolt reminded those present that Board Leadership meetings were a chance for the Board of Commissioners to come together and discuss issues. He further stated that it was an open meeting, but there would be no votes.

Approval of the October 26, 2022 Minutes

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER MORGAN, SUPPORTED BY COMMISSIONER GREBNER, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 26, 2022 BOARD LEADERSHIP MEETING.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Absent: Commissioner Johnson.

Commissioner Johnson arrived at 6:03 p.m.

Additions to the Agenda

None.

Limited Public Comment

None.

1. Strategic Planning

Chairperson Sebolt asked Board Members to keep in mind that a Task Force would be created for Strategic Planning. He further stated he would be asking for members to volunteer that were willing to serve on that Task Force.

Patrick Ibarra, Meiorando Group Co-Founder and Partner, provided a presentation regarding Strategic Planning Services.

Commissioner Cahill asked how many people would be on the Task Force.

Chairperson Sebolt stated the Board would like to keep the Task Force to under eight members.

Commissioner Peña recommended Chair seats with some other, multi-county agencies. He further asked if Chairperson Sebolt had considered incorporating the multi-county agencies into the development of the Strategic Task Force.

Chairperson Sebolt stated that, as mentioned in the presentation, engaging stakeholders would be a part of this.

Chairperson Sebolt stated that Task Force members were needed. He further stated the deadline to volunteer was February 3, 2023, and to notify himself or Becky Bennett, Ingham County Board of Commissioner Director, via email.

Commissioner Cahill asked when the Task Force would meet.

Chairperson Sebolt stated that would be something the Task Force would figure out, along with Meiorando Group's availability.

Chairperson Sebolt stated he would volunteer people if nobody was interested.

Discussion.

Chairperson Sebolt stated they would follow up with people throughout the rest of week. He further stated this was important as the County moved forward, and it would inform the decisions that would be made.

Chairperson Sebolt thanked Mr. Ibarra for his presentation. He further stated the Board would get the Task Force sorted out and get this process rolling.

Mr. Ibarra thanked the Board and stated he was looking forward to working with the Task Force.

2. Discussion Regarding the Safety of Animal Control Officers

Discussion.

Heidi Williams, Ingham County Animal Control Director, and Dan Verhougstraete, Ingham County Animal Control Deputy Director, provided a presentation regarding the Safety of Animal Control Officers.

Commissioner Morgan left at 6:19 p.m.

Commissioner Morgan returned at 6:26 p.m.

Commissioner Peña asked if the video presented occurred in the City of Lansing.

Ms. Williams stated the incident from the video occurred in Hillsdale County. She further stated it was important to recognize that these types of calls were responded to on a daily basis.

Commissioner Trubac asked if Animal Control Officers were recognized as Law Enforcement Officers, but if it was the agency that was not recognized as Law Enforcement within State Law.

Ms. Williams stated that was correct. She further stated access to Criminal Justice information was more restrictive and was a complicated issue.

Commissioner Trubac stated that it was more of a cognitive dissonance in the Law based on the way it was described.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated by FBI policy, Animal Control was classified as a Criminal Justice Agency, not a Law Enforcement Agency. He further stated the term Animal Control Officer was used in Statute to be able to enforce the Dog Law, and was also referred to under Chapter IX of the Michigan Penal Code.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated Animal Control Officers were not regulated by Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards. He further stated Animal Control Officers operated in a gray area in the State of Michigan, where it's often left for Animal Control Officers to be Deputized by the local Sheriff or empowered by local ordinance.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated there was no set uniform standard on how the Animal Control Officer would enact the authority that State Law allowed them to perform.

Commissioner Peña stated the Ingham County Treasurer's Office managed Dog Licenses for Ingham County. He asked if the dog from the video presentation was licensed in Hillsdale County.

Ms. Williams did not know the status of that dog's Dog License.

Commissioner Peña asked what precipitated the visit from the Officer in the video. He further asked what the circumstances were that led to the encounter in the video presented.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated to his knowledge the call was simply for a dog-at-large in the neighborhood. He further stated the Hillsdale County Deputy responded to the address and attempted to make contact with the dog owner to address the general issue.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated that when the suspect opened the door he was met with the dog owner's dog, which then latched onto the Deputy's arm. He further stated this led to the Deputy shooting the dog.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated it was a routine call. He further stated that Ingham County Animal Control Officers responded to several dog-at-large calls a day.

Ms. Williams stated it was important to note that a dog-at-large was a misdemeanor in the State of Michigan.

Commissioner Peña asked if there was a fence around the yard.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated there was no fence.

Commissioner Peña asked how close the nearest house or neighbor was.

Ms. Williams stated she did not know.

Commissioner Celentino asked if the 55 Michigan Counties mentioned in the presentation that provided their Animal Control Officers the ability to carry a firearm were in the mid- Michigan area. He further asked if Eaton, Clinton, and Jackson Counties were of those Counties.

Ms. Williams stated the counties that allowed Animal Control Officers the ability to carry a firearm were all over the State of Michigan. She further stated Eaton and Clinton Counties fall under the authority of the Sheriff.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated that the closest County, to Ingham County, with armed Animal Control Officers was Livingston County.

Commissioner Peña asked if there drugs, or anything other than the animal running around involved in the video presented.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated that he was not able to obtain the results of the Michigan State Police investigation.

Commissioner Peña asked if there was a rough estimate of the proportion of calls within the City of Lansing that might have other things going on besides an animal control issue.

Ms. Williams stated that Animal Control did not track that information internally. She further stated they did not have the authority to enforce those laws and that would be up to the local Police Department.

Ms. Williams resumed the presentation.

Commissioner Morgan asked if this would allow Animal Control Officers with a Concealed Pistol License (CPL) to have an exemption from prohibited premises.

Ms. Williams stated Animal Control Officers with a CPL would only be exempt while they performed the functions of an Animal Control Officer. She further stated their Concealed Pistol License would not be valid for pistol-free zones while they were off duty.

Commissioner Morgan stated confirmation that the Animal Control Officers would not receive the prohibited status on their Concealed Pistol License.

Commissioner Ruest asked how many Animal Control Officers would be Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES) certified.

Ms. Williams stated they had no MCOLES certified Animal Control Officers.

Commissioner Ruest asked if they would have any Officers MCOLES certified in the future.

Ms. Williams stated no.

Commissioner Lawrence stated though Ms. Williams stated this was not a gun control issue, in her mind, pretty much everything done in this Country was a gun control issue. She asked Ms. Williams to clarify what she meant by Animal Control Officers being Law Enforcement Officers.

Ms. Williams stated they enforced a very specific set of Laws, Michigan Dog Law of 1919, and Chapter IX of the Michigan Penal Code allowed them to enforce certain Laws. She further stated that this portion had been frustrating for her and Mr. Verhougstraete as they had learned more and waded through all of this.

Ms. Williams stated Animal Control Officers were stuck in the 1960s days of the Dog Catcher. She further stated over the last 50 years the Animal Control Officer role had evolved into more Law Enforcement function but their certification standards were still with the Michigan Department of Agriculture.

Ms. Williams stated their certification standards required 100 hours of certification to become a Michigan Certified Animal Control Officer. She further stated they took that a lot further in Ingham County, which included a formalized Field Officer Training Program and approximately four to five months' worth of training, and this was far more extensive training than other Animal Control Officers got in the State of Michigan.

Ms. Williams stated that almost every Law Enforcement Agency in Ingham County wanted nothing to do with Animal Law or animal investigations, and that Sheriff Wriggelsworth could speak more eloquently to that. She further stated that Animal Control Officers are happy to take that responsibility on, and the Animal Control Officers have done an exemplary job.

Ms. Williams stated Animal Control Officers are not Dog Catchers anymore, but knows the public still looks at them as such. She further stated that Animal Control has evolved into much more of a Law Enforcement role.

Commissioner Lawrence asked if Animal Control Officers were going through firearms training currently.

Ms. Williams stated Animal Control Officers go through yearly firearms training to carry shotguns in their trucks. Ms. Williams further stated Animal Control Officers have been carrying shotguns since 1988 and it had been approved by Board Resolution.

Commissioner Lawrence asked how many current Animal Control Officers there are.

Ms. Williams stated there are nine Certified Animal Control Officers which included herself and Mr. Verhougstraete.

Commissioner Lawrence asked for more information on the type of training the Animal Control Officers would go through if the Board were to go with Ms. Williams' recommendation.

Ms. Williams stated Animal Control Officers would pursue Firearms One, Two, and Three courses on their own, which is an advanced firearm certification process. She further stated that training would be with a company called Keene Training that is operated by retired Police Officers and Range Instructors from the City of Lansing.

Ms. Williams stated Animal Control Officers would be required to obtain their Concealed Pistol License, which requires a training element to obtain. She further stated requirements would include a legal update, use of force, force continuum, weapons retention, defensive tactics, and that there was a lot more to carrying a firearm than just being handed a firearm and a holster.

Ms. Williams stated there would be yearly certifications with the required trainings. She further stated after the initial process, the Command of the Ingham County Sheriff's Department would then certify the Animal Control Officers to MCOLES training standards, which is the same exact standards and qualifications that the Sheriff's Office trained to.

Commissioner Lawrence asked if it would be yearly certification.

Ms. Williams confirmed.

Commissioner Lawrence asked if the psychological and background checks referenced in the presentation would be retroactive for current Animal Control Officers.

Ms. Williams confirmed. She further stated that all of the Animal Control Officers had been thoroughly background checked and that was part of getting their certification from the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Ms. Williams stated they had instituted a full Law Enforcement background check two years ago.

Commissioner Trubac stated he appreciates the work that Ms. Williams and Mr. Verhougstraete did, the weight of the work, the danger they were in, and bringing it to the Board to speak about it openly. He further stated there was a lot to digest here and he certainly had questions.

Commissioner Trubac asked if there was a licensing authority for Animal Control Officers if they were not MCOLES certified.

Ms. Williams stated the Michigan Department of Agriculture was the licensing authority for Animal Control Officers. She further stated that there is a 100 hour requirement to become a Michigan Certified Animal Control Officer.

Commissioner Trubac asked if any of the requirements would be similar to what one might experience going through the Police Academy in terms of the training.

Ms. Williams stated it is not similar. She further stated that the requirements through the Michigan Department of Agriculture was woefully inadequate in her opinion, and is why their Department requires additional training before Animal Control Officers go out on their own.

Commissioner Trubac stated there would be a need to assume the training within the Department if they were to go in a direction like this where taking on roles and carrying firearms, similar to what we think of for Police Officers, since they would not receive that prior to coming to Ingham County.

Ms. Williams stated confirmation. She further stated that the training she referred to with Commissioner Lawrence previously would be the training assumed.

Commissioner Morgan asked due to the definition Law Enforcement Officer stated previously, if a City of Lansing Code Compliance Officer would be considered a Law Enforcement Officer.

Ms. Williams stated she did not know.

Commissioner Grebner stated that Code Compliance is probably not criminal.

Commissioner Morgan stated his clarity that enforcing criminal law is how you define Law Enforcement Officer. He further stated his thought that considering what Code Enforcement Officers do, why they should not be armed, but if that was not the case he rested further questions.

Commissioner Peña asked how often the psychological testing would occur.

Ms. Williams stated it would occur prior to hire and that was it. She further stated it was basically a fitness for duty, assuring the employee is capable of performing the functions and would not have a concerning underlying issue.

Commissioner Peña asked if the coagulation medicine is carried on the Officer's body or in the vehicle.

Ms. Williams stated QuikClot was carried on the body of each Officer, in the same location, so another Officer can utilize it in the event an Officer is bleeding.

Commissioner Celentino asked if there were specific restrictions or specific uses for the shotgun carried in Animal Control vehicles as he had not read the Resolution that was mentioned by Ms. Williams previously. He further asked why the shotguns were not sufficient enough.

Ms. Williams stated that the shotguns are kept in the vehicle in a lock. She further stated that the ability of an Officer to get to the vehicle to defend themselves when ambushed or faced with a deadly threat, is not going to happen.

Ms. Williams stated that if an Officer is presented with an ambush or a deadly threat, it would happen immediately, and the Officer would not have the ability to go back to their vehicle.

Commissioner Celentino asked for confirmation that the shotgun is required to stay in the vehicle and was not able to be carried with the Officer.

Ms. Williams stated she did not like those optics, and that Officers carrying a shotgun was not something they wished to display. She further stated that the shotgun is to be used for defensive purposes.

Commissioner Johnson asked, with the current climate of police brutality, what plan there was to address the community in the event of a police brutality incident involving an Animal Control Officer.

Ms. Williams stated in light of what recently happened in Memphis, Tennessee it has to be in the forefront of all of our minds. She further stated that the difference with an Animal Control Officer and a Law Enforcement Officer or Police Officer is they would not be effecting arrest, and would rarely be going hands-on to get someone compliant or take them into custody.

Ms. Williams stated they would seize the dog or cat and move on. She further stated if it would escalate to a physical altercation, their Officers are trained to back up, drive away, and call the Police.

Ms. Williams stated that their Officers will not engage, but will defend themselves. She further stated that would be what the sidearm is for, just to defend themselves.

Commissioner Johnson asked how much it costs per year for the shotguns.

Ms. Williams stated the shotguns were purchased upfront, so there are no annual costs.

Commissioner Johnson asked how much the pistols were expected to cost.

Ms. Williams stated it would cost approximately \$700 for the gun and another approximately \$500 on top of that for a holster, body worn cameras, and ammunition for certification. She further stated she could provide a cost breakdown.

Commissioner Johnson asked if Ms. Williams had seen positive results from other Counties where Animal Control Officers are armed, other than peace of mind.

Ms. Williams referred to Mr. Verhougstraete to respond to that question as he had spoken to other Counties.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated they did not know what had been deterred by the presence of a weapon, whose mind had been changed, and what harm had been avoided. He further stated reference to the Hillsdale County Deputy in the video that was presented previously, who was attacked by a large pit bull, that those attacks were often fatal when not provided with a means to defend themselves.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated years ago an off-duty Lansing Police Officer was attacked to the point where an appendage was lost when they were not able to subdue the dog. He further stated the lack of a viable weapon to stop a large dog could prove deadly.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated another incident in the personnel that was killed nationwide was a Health Department worker down South that was killed by a pack of dogs when doing a rabies quarantine check-back, which was a function Ingham County Animal Control Officers performed. He further stated it was hard to quantify the amount of instances that were avoided because a firearm was present.

Commissioner Johnson asked what he thought it would do for him personally.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated it would allow him to get a vote in the equation if he was ambushed similar to the Hillsdale County Deputy, and allow him to get home to his family.

Ms. Williams stated that she had been shooting since she was 13 years old. She further stated that her father was a Police Officer and believed in teaching her to be safe. She further stated she did not classify herself as a gun-toting whack-job but knows how to use one.

Ms. Williams stated that she had a Concealed Pistol License and carried when she felt it necessary. She further stated that asking Animal Control Officers to do this work and not providing them a way to defend themselves was a big ask, but they have done it and they have done it well.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated in 2001 he worked security at the CATA bus station on Grand Avenue in Lansing, it was a very violent place. He further stated he performed an unarmed security function at the bus station.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated it was approximately 6:00 p.m. when he was approached by two women who said they had been harassed by an intoxicated man. He further stated he had approached the man and asked him to leave.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated that the man pointed a pistol at his face and pulled the trigger. He further stated that staring down the barrel of a pistol was something you never quite got out of your mind.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated it was not a fun thing to recount now. He further stated the only reason the gun did not go off was because it was a rusty, garbage pistol.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated luckily there was a Lansing Police Officer right outside that had pulled up for another issue. He further stated the Officer tackled the man and took him into custody.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated he had been on the other end of an armed encounter where he was just going to ask the man to leave. He further stated it was not fun to be on the other side of the equation when the other person decided that they wanted to kill you, and there was nothing you could do about it.

Commissioner Trubac asked if there were other Michigan Counties with armed Animal Control Officers.

Ms. Williams confirmed that Saginaw and Oakland Counties were two of the more comparable Counties to Ingham County that have armed Animal Control Officers. She further stated that Saginaw and Oakland County Sheriffs issued Special Deputy Status to their Animal Control Officers, which were in an independent standalone agency from the Sheriff's Office.

Commissioner Polsdofer left at 6:55 p.m.

Commissioner Trubac confirmed that what Ms. Williams was proposing would essentially mirror what Saginaw and Oakland County were doing.

Ms. Williams stated that this had been done for years and was not a new concept.

Commissioner Grebner stated he wanted to get back to cost, there was a question on the cost of the firearm that he believed was a very minor part of it. He further stated he would really like to know an estimate of the cost including the reclassifications which would certainly result from this.

Ms. Williams stated the Union has not asked for reclassification.

Commissioner Polsdofer returned at 6:56 p.m.

Commissioner Grebner stated the Union had not requested reclassification yet. He asked if the Union would put in writing that the Union would not request reclassification after requiring firearm certification for these Officers.

Ms. Williams stated the Union would.

Commissioner Grebner confirmed that the Union would put in writing that they would not in the future request reclassifications.

Ms. Williams stated she would let the Executive Director of the Capital City Labor Program address that, as he was in attendance. She further stated that it was her understanding from the Union President that they had no intention of asking for more money, they just wanted to protect all the Officers.

Commissioner Grebner stated that would suggest that the County's personnel system will red circle these people and would not allow the new qualification for the position to be taken into account when establishing salaries.

Ms. Williams stated she would argue that they were already carrying firearms.

Commissioner Grebner stated that the Officers were not carrying firearms, but had firearms that are available in very rare circumstances. He further stated that he believes the number of times the Officers had taken the shotguns out of the lock is approximately one time a year per Officer.

Ms. Williams stated that would depend. She further stated the shotguns are mostly used to put down animals.

Commissioner Grebner stated confirmation, that it was not that the Officers carried the shotguns, and they were not MCOLES certified. He further stated that he was quite certain that this would raise their qualification level and certainly entitle them to a substantial increase in their supervision.

Commissioner Grebner stated he would like that made very explicitly. He further stated that he was not satisfied with a phrase such as "they are not seeking more money."

Commissioner Grebner stated that the County had a personnel system that they try to make consistent and is supposedly not made dependent on the identity of the person who was holding the position, or what deals had been made off to the side. He further stated he would like to have this seriously worked up by Human Resources to examine this, he guessed that it is near a quarter of a million dollars per year.

Commissioner Grebner asked of the 55 Counties with armed Animal Control Officers, how many of those Animal Controls are a subordinate section of the Sheriff's Department, and was it the great majority of those 55 Counties.

Mr. Verhougstraete asked to clarify if Commissioner Grebner was asking for the amount of standalone agencies.

Commissioner Grebner stated that he was not referring to standalone but there were many Sheriff's Departments that include an Animal Control Department or an Animal Control function within the Sheriff's Department. He further stated that was particularly small counties and if you count the number of those, that Animal Control was a function of the Sheriff's Department.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated that in the agency authority breakdown that had been done, 29 of the total agencies were standalone and 52 of them fell under the Sheriff's Office. He further stated Wayne County did not have a dedicated Animal Control that is regulated in Michigan, as well as one other agency.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated that statistically, the majority of the authority of Animal Control Agencies fall under the direct supervision of the Sheriff's Office.

Commissioner Grebner stated that Ingham County Animal Control was a branch of the Sheriff's Office roughly around the years 1972-1974, but was separated as the Board of Commissioner's decided to remove them from the Sheriff's Office. He further stated that until then, Animal Control Officers were simply sworn deputies under the Sheriff's Office.

Commissioner Grebner stated when Animal Control became a standalone agency, and not under the control of the Sheriff's Office, they were no longer Law Enforcement Officers.

Commissioner Cahill asked if Animal Control Officers would be included in the Sheriff's Office's training, or if their training would be additional.

Ms. Williams stated there would be no fees, and the Sheriff has agreed to train the Animal Control staff exactly how the Sheriff's Office staff is trained.

Commissioner Cahill asked if Animal Control would have secure storage of their firearms, similar to what the new Justice Complex has.

Ms. Williams stated there was currently a safe for shotguns, there would be a safe for the firearms, and the Officers would only take the firearms home if they were on-call status for the night.

Mr. Verhougstraete added that Animal Control would be paying the Firearms Training One, Two, and Three Certifications for the Officer which would get the Officer to the point they would be trained by the Sheriff's Office.

Commissioner Pawar asked if there was any data from the last five to ten years showing violent encounters Animal Control encountered while responding to a complaint.

Ms. Williams stated that there was not, as there was not a way to track that. She further stated that approximately one year ago Animal Control switched to a statewide record management system, which is what all other Law Enforcement Agencies in Ingham County utilize, and that there was no way to track that information prior to utilizing that system.

Ms. Williams stated that nationally, that was not information that was typically tracked because a lot of places do not recognize Animal Control Officers as Law Enforcement Officers.

Commissioner Pawar asked Ms. Williams to estimate, based on her experience with the Agency, how many encounters per month or per year would be violent in Ingham County.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated that he had been with Ingham County for just shy of three years. He further stated that first year was difficult to state, due to COVID-19.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated that anecdotally, they had seen three to four calls per year where their Officers had to retreat or were approached by a subject that had threatened them with a firearm, or deadly force object, to where their Officers had to pull back and return with a Local Law Enforcement Agency to address the issue. He further stated that the presence of a firearm would not replace the Officer's training to retreat from the situation.

Commission Celentino left at 7:03 p.m.

Commissioner Pawar asked if de-escalation training would be a required part of training.

Ms. Williams confirmed it would.

Commissioner Pawar asked what kind of de-escalation training Officers would go through.

Ms. Williams stated that Scott Wriggelsworth, Ingham County Sheriff, would be able to speak to that better as she believed it was a part of the Sheriff's Office annual training.

Scott Wriggelsworth, Ingham County Sheriff, stated that instructors were brought in, and that de-escalation was something that was talked about often. He further stated that last year they had implemented training with Capital Region Integrated Critical Skills, which was scenario-based training that involved injecting an Officer or Deputy into a situation and potentially utilizing de-escalation to resolve it.

Sheriff Wriggelsworth stated that the training utilized PowerPoint, text book, and scenario-based formats.

Commissioner Pawar asked in what ways the community was being educated on the role of the Animal Control Officer.

Ms. Williams stated their website had information on what Animal Control can and cannot enforce. She further stated they were in the process of developing a Citizen's Academy, where the community could shadow Animal Control Officers, go for a ride-along, and get to know what Animal Control does.

Commissioner Polsdofer asked for a timeline assuming the approval of the request.

Commissioner Celentino returned at 7:05 p.m.

Ms. Williams stated it would be nine to twelve months by the time psychological evaluations were completed, firearms trainings completed, obtaining Concealed Pistol Licenses, training with the Sheriff's Office, Use of Force Training, developing policies, and purchasing body worn cameras.

Commissioner Grebner stated his surprise when he heard Animal Control's Dispatch responsibilities were going to be transferred to the 911 Center. He further stated that Animal Control had freed up some personnel to do other work, however the 911 Center had picked up 1.5 full time employees (FTE's).

Ms. Williams stated that the Animal Control Administrative Field Support Assistant would continue to perform the Dispatcher role Monday-Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., as the 911 Center would only be answering Animal Control phone calls outside of that time. She further stated that the Administrative Field Support Assistant would also continue to perform their other job functions.

Commissioner Grebner was surprised to learn that the 911 Center had picked up a half FTE of responsibility without the Board noticing. He further stated if you had ever wondered why the 911 Center costs so much, it was because occasionally a department could shift \$50,000 to \$100,000 of responsibility to them without telling the Board.

Commissioner Schafer asked if Ingham County Animal Control Officers carried firearms before 1972.

Commissioner Grebner stated he was not here at that time but that the Officers were Sheriff's Deputies that were assigned to Animal Control in the same way someone would be assigned to some other specific function, such as the Marine Division.

Commissioner Schafer stated the biggest thing that stuck out to her was the number of murders committed in Lansing had increased 50% from 2020-2021. She further stated that 66% of Animal Control calls are in the City of Lansing.

Commissioner Schafer applauded Animal Control for going in and taking those calls when you knew the risk had increased so much, without the protection other than the rifle in the back of the vehicle.

Chairperson Sebolt asked if the holster removal trigger with a 30 second pre-record was the same standard that the Sheriff's Office utilized.

Sheriff Wriggelsworth stated the Sheriff's Office used a continuous-record, and their body cameras were always recording. He further stated when the button is pressed, the body camera would go back 30 seconds.

Mr. Verhougstraete stated that the body worn cameras would be constantly recording, unless the button or the trigger from the holster is engaged, then it would grab the previous 30 seconds of record and saves it.

Ms. Williams stated they would not be utilizing body camera footage the same way the Sheriff's Office utilized it. She further stated that not every encounter would be recorded, but only be used in case of a violent encounter.

Chairperson Sebolt asked if there was a plan, and how Freedom of Information Act Requests would be handled.

Ms. Williams stated they had a FOIA Coordinator at the Animal Control Shelter, and would utilize the same process for those FOIA requests.

Chairperson Sebolt stated that he imagined that video FOIA could be more complicated.

Ms. Williams stated that her previous job with the City of East Lansing was the FOIA Coordinator. She further stated she also had implemented the Axon Body Worn Cameras as well as the In-Car Camera Systems.

Ms. Williams stated she was intimately familiar with the amount of man hours FOIA takes, however the amount of requests would be substantially lower, and she was not concerned.

Commissioner Tennis asked why you would not want to utilize continuous record. He further stated it seemed to him that the most important contextual piece of body cam footage is what happened before the weapon was drawn, not after it was drawn.

Ms. Williams stated the body worn cameras constantly record in a loop. She further stated that when the body worn camera is activated, whether with the button or through the holster activation, it automatically records 30-seconds back.

Commissioner Tennis stated to confirm that you may record the 30-seconds prior, but may miss what happened prior to that.

Ms. Williams stated that, from her experience watching thousands of hours of body camera video throughout her career, that 30-seconds would be plenty of time.

Commissioner Pawar asked if it was possible to have local Law Enforcement as their coordinated back up when they would be responding to a potentially violent encounter.

Ms. Williams stated that was not possible. She further stated that Lansing Police Department was operating on a skeleton crew most days, and if her Officers were to call for backup in South Lansing, backup would not be coming right away and it may take a while.

Ms. Williams stated it would not be feasible to have Law Enforcement standing by for every call necessary. She further stated that it was not that department's job, but they would call for assistance when needed.

Scott Wriggelsworth, Ingham County Sheriff, stated that he spoke with William Federspiel, Saginaw County Sheriff, and Michael Bouchard, Oakland County Sheriff, as they had Special Deputy status for Animal Control officers for years. He further stated that this had worked flawlessly in the two counties.

Sheriff Wriggelsworth stated that Ingham County used to have Special Deputies in different units that were disbanded after the George Floyd situation. He further explained that the individuals were volunteer citizens who dressed in uniform, with a hat, badge, and gun.

Sheriff Wriggelsworth stated the volunteers were put through a basic academy, but were not on the job every day. He further stated that Animal Control officers are working five days a week, 40 hours a week and that this had been a conversation for some time now, though the COVID-19 Pandemic paused those discussions.

Sheriff Wriggelsworth stated that a decision would need to be made soon. He further stated that he had his reservations, as does Ms. Williams and Mr. Verhougstraete, but that he also had reservations about Animal Control officers performing their duties without the proper tools to defend themselves.

Sheriff Wriggelsworth stated that there had been a call on his way to the Board Leadership meeting regarding a dog fight that had injured the dog owner. He further stated that he did not know the status of that call, but further stated that this incident would have required the shotgun or a potential sidearm to disengage the dogs from further attacks.

Sheriff Wriggelsworth stated that, with reservation, he was willing to move forward with the plan. He further stated that he would use the very narrow Special Deputy oath.

Bradley Richman, Capital City Labor Program Director of Operations, provided a brief statement to the Board Leadership. The statement has been included in the minutes as Attachment A.

Mr. Richman stated that if Commissioner Grebner was insisting to pay the members of the Union more money, there would be no objection. He further stated that there would no request for a reclassification as a result of this change, and that he would be able to put that into writing.

Mr. Richman stated that money was not the most important aspect to the members of the Union. He further stated that the safety of the membership would not be leveraged to allow the members to make more money.

Mr. Richman stated that Capital City Labor Program believed this plan should be supported to ensure what was best for the long-term safety of the members. He further reiterated that they would be happy to put that in writing.

Chairperson Sebolt stated that no decision would be made at the Board Leadership meeting. He further stated that this would most likely be referred to the Law & Courts Committee first.

Chairperson Sebolt asked Commissioner Polsdofer what his thoughts were regarding this.

Commissioner Polsdofer stated that he was supportive of the work of Moms Demand Action and the Advanced Peace Process. He further stated that the proposal seemed to be well thought out and that he was in support of it.

Commissioner Polsdofer stated that he understands that there was a concern of safety issues for the employees. He further stated that Animal Control was behind the times and this would advance this to get the conversation moving.

Commissioner Grebner stated that the specific discussions should be held for the committee meetings and that the Board Leadership meeting was not the place to do so. He further stated that he had grave doubts about the wisdom of the proposal.

Commissioner Grebner stated that the rate of injury or death by an officer could dramatically increase and be more likely if Animal Control officers began carrying a firearm. He further stated that a decision would need to be made, but not during the Board Leadership meeting.

Commissioner Grebner stated that there was another side to this issue that should also be considered. He further stated that rigorous analysis of the actual safety of officers in public did not lay in favor of arming additional officers.

Chairperson Sebolt stated that the discussion should not be debated, but the process to have this on the agenda was needing to be discussed.

Commissioner Trubac stated his interest in the proposal and further stated that there had been a lot of work and thought put into it. He further stated that he understood why this was brought to the attention of the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Trubac stated that he had many questions and concerns regarding this proposal. He further stated that he believed there were not any Department Heads reporting to the Board of Commissioners whose employees are authorized to carry guns and use legal force.

Commissioner Trubac stated that a concern such as this required careful thought and a lot of respect for the weight of the situation. He further stated that he would be happy to see this as a discussion item for the Law & Courts Committee and he would have many questions at that time.

Commissioner Morgan stated agreement with the process. He further stated that he had spent too much time around idiots with firearms as a Concealed Pistol License (CPL) holder, who believe they were immune to danger because they had a firearm.

Commissioner Morgan stated that, though this could be a valid request, there was not an incident or statistical need for this. He further stated that he shared the same concerns as Commissioner Grebner.

Commissioner Peña recommended that the proposal should be referred to the Law & Courts Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Human Services Committee regarding the psychological testing component.

Chairperson Sebolt stated that the proposal would begin in the Law & Courts Committee. He further stated that Commissioner Polsdofer and Ms. Williams should work together to decide when to add this discussion item to a Law & Courts Committee agenda.

Commissioner Morgan stated that he would like to see what the \$600 holster looked like that Animal Control was planning to purchase for the firearm.

3. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Presentation

Feliz Rodriguez, Ingham County Diversity Equity Inclusion (DEI) Director, provided an overview regarding the DEI Department. The overview has been included in the minutes as Attachment B.

Commissioner Tennis asked what Ms. Rodriguez's thoughts were for the future of the Racial Equity Task Force.

Ms. Rodriguez stated that the Racial Equity Task Force had adopted the Black Agenda, which included four pillars that would be broken down. She further stated that the employees would be divided into sub-groups and would pick from the 20 to 30 requests that were available to complete in 12 months.

Commissioner Tennis asked what the four pillars were.

Ms. Rodriguez stated that the pillars included criminal justice reform, youth assistance, community investment and black reform.

Commissioner Johnson asked what goals Ms. Rodriguez had for the DEI Department in 2023.

Ms. Rodriguez provided an overview of her goals for the DEI Department. The overview was included in the minutes as Attachment C.

Commissioner Johnson asked if the de-escalation training would be provided for Animal Control as well.

Ms. Rodriguez stated that they would be delighted to have them.

Commissioner Peña thanked Ms. Rodriguez for all of her work. He further asked if there had been instances at Potter Park Zoo that initiated the need for de-escalation training.

Ms. Rodriguez stated that she was a member of the Potter Park Zoo DEI Committee and there had been various concerns regarding patrons in the zoo and not having the adequate training to handle a situation if it were to arise.

Commissioner Peña stated that there was an issue at Potter Park Zoo.

Commissioner Johnson stated that he would like to ask Animal Control an additional question. He further asked if Animal Control decided who would keep goats and chickens.

Ms. Williams stated denial and further stated that Animal Control did not determine the types or numbers of animals, as that was a local code issue. She further stated that Animal Control would determine if the animals were being properly cared for.

Commissioner Johnson reminded those present that there was a woman who was very concerned about her chickens.

Commissioner Grebner requested that Gregg Todd, Ingham County Controller, and Ingham County's Attorney would evaluate the representation of the Union to determine if it would be binding. He further stated that he hoped there was a serious attempt to work this out, as there was a quarter of a million dollars at stake.

Mr. Richman explained that his word was binding and that Mr. Todd would attest to this.

Public Comment

None.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.