



Public Safety Committee
February 16, 2023 9:00 a.m.
Via ZOOM

STAFF PRESENT: Scotty Hancock, *Committee Chair, Board of Commissioners*
John Blalock, *Committee Chief of Staff, Public Safety Division Director*
Katy Walters, *Director, P.A.W.S.*
Gene Proctor, *Coroner*
Tim Herrington, *Director, EMA*
Sommer Robinson, *Director, E-911*
Troy Brock, *Chief, Rome-Floyd Fire Department*
Cathy Taylor, *Sergeant, Rome-Floyd Metro Task Force*
Mark Wallace, *Chief, Floyd County Police Department*
Mike Long, *Warden, Floyd County Prison*
Jody House, *Captain, Floyd County Sheriff's Office*
Rick Flanigen, *Chief Safety and Security Officer, Floyd County Schools*
Jamie McCord, *County Manager*
Amy Dawkins, *Assistant County Clerk/Marketing & Communications Specialist, County Manager's Office*

NOT PRESENT: Greg Webb, *Chief, Cave Spring Police Department*

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Hancock called the meeting to order, and led the committee in prayer.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

REVIEW OF THE MINUTES

The minutes from the December 15, 2022 meeting were approved by common consent.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

I. P.A.W.S.

P.A.W.S. Director Katy Walters thanked everyone for giving her the opportunity to be here. She stated they have approval for a Vet Tech position, and this will help Dr. Nepp. She stated a dumpster was brought in to clean up the facility. She stated the Prison and Facilities are helping to get projects done with fencing and dog kennels, cabinetry, etc. She stated she has one officer in the academy, and will be back next month, making them fully staffed. She stated they are still maintaining a 95.06% live outcome. She stated once repairs are done and things have been cleaned, they will open for extended hours to the public. Commissioner Hancock stated he would like to see extended hours so more animals can be adopted. Ms. Walters stated Correctional Officer Cliff is doing test runs now with inmates to open at 11:30 a.m., closing at 4:30 p.m., and 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

II. CORONER

Coroner Gene Proctor presented his report for 2022. He stated there were 613 total cases in 2022, with the highest percentage being natural deaths. For 2023 he reported 40 natural deaths, three (3) Covid deaths, 17 accidental deaths (falls, drugs, wrecks). He stated the new lift came in for the morgue, and he is working with the Warden to add braces to help lift the bodies.

III. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

EMA Director Tim Herrington presented his report stating that year to date numbers are up. He stated a warming shelter opened in December for the colder temperatures. He thanked the Pastor at Trinity Methodist for providing a space for the shelter, and FCSO for staffing the shelter. He thanked the Salvation Army for assisting. He announced Tom Bowen's retirement. For the January report, Mr. Herrington reported we went under a tornado watch January 12. He stated they are working with Georgia Highlands to conduct their spring exercise, which involves a plane crash. He stated he is working with the Airport on an exercise later this year, also working with Pirelli for an Active Shooter exercise. He stated digital sign boards are up about COVID safety and being prepared for the winter. Mr. McCord stated the position is posted for Asst. EMA Director. Mr. Blalock stated the training and experience evaluation is completed. He stated Mr. Herrington is assigning scores, and they will move into interviews. He stated hiring will take place mid- to late March.

IV. E-911

E911 Director Sommer Robinson stated they are still on track with their SPLOST renovation. She stated numbers still the same with call stats, dispatched calls. She stated they are six positions short, but they are not hiring unless POST certified due to lack of space for training. She gave a tour of the center renovations and the break room with vending machines and a kiosk to purchase items through Five Star Vending. She stated the setup was free; employees just pay for what they want to purchase. Mr. McCord stated the Tax Assessor's office, Tax Commissioner's office, and three lower courts will be able to access it as well once moved into the law enforcement center. Commissioner Hancock stated this may be something we can do in other areas.

V. FIRE DEPARTMENT

- a. **Department Update**
- b. **Manpower**

Chief Brock stated for December and January, the Fire department had a total of 744 calls, with 13 structure fires. He stated they just entered their 5th week of rookie cadet school, and they will be fully staffed after the graduation. He stated the Chief Training position has been vacant for three (3) months, and they will be accepting applicants soon. He stated Philip Little has been filling the position in an interim capacity. Mr. McCord stated the EOC operational agreement is expired, and needs to be renewed. Chief Brock stated they are back in Station One (1) since the middle of January. Mr. McCord stated there are a few issues with the 411 location, but station 11 needs to be in the 411 corridor, in the vicinity of the bypass. He stated they have not made a final

decision. Commissioner Hancock stated they need to have a conversation with SPLOST coming up. He stated it would be nice to have a fire station in the industrial park. Chief Brock agreed, it would need to be in the bypass area.

VI. METRO TASK FORCE

Sergeant Cathy Taylor stated for the month of January, the task force executed 21 search warrants that included locations, as well as cell phones. She stated 34 arrests were made, including one juvenile. She stated there were 95 felony charges, and 16 misdemeanor charges. She stated 90 grams of cocaine were seized, 5.5 lbs. of marijuana, 4 oz. of methamphetamine, and 558 fentanyl tablets. She stated the street value of those drugs is \$217,230. She stated they seized 16 firearms, and assisted other agencies 17 times. She stated they had 212 surveillance hours for January. She also stated Investigator Misty Pledger had 22 arrests. She stated Investigator Pledger had one case on Maple Street at East 20th, where there was a lot of drug activity between a store and a house next door. She stated SWAT, Rome City Police, and Floyd County Police assisted, which resulted in 13 arrests, with the recovery of two (2) firearms. She stated quantities of meth, marijuana, and suspected Fentanyl were seized as well. She stated they are still short one SO Investigator position. She stated they are waiting on the Investigator position to be released from the City, as he is still training a K-9 Officer.

VII. FLOYD COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief Mark Wallace stated they have six (6) vacancies. He stated Corey Wright filled the vacant position of Amy Nails. He compared 2021 stats to 2022, stating that motor vehicle accidents were down, and injuries and fatalities were down. He stated calls for service and traffic citations were up. He stated traffic warnings were up 142% and Code enforcement calls up 20%, CID arrests up 60%. He stated clearance rates for burglaries, felony theft and auto theft were up significantly, about 42% increase from 2021 to 2022. He stated they have their 2nd Annual 7 Hills Rubicon Jeep Festival coming up on April 15 at the Airport. He stated they had a good showing last year, and expect a bigger crowd this year. He stated the SRO Smokehouse BBQ fundraiser is going on now, and the funds go to award one student from each high school a \$1,000 scholarship to each of 4 recipients.

VIII. PRISON / WORK RELEASE CENTER

Warden Mike Long stated they are down from 20 to 10 vacancies. He stated this has allowed for promotions in the last month. He stated the increase in staff gave ability to put more on litter detail, which has resulted in increased litter pickups. He stated they have coordinated on projects with Animal Control, Public Works, and Parks and Recreation, and the Coroner's office. He stated they have an increase in inmates due to courts opening back up and increasing since COVID. For community projects, he stated they built and painted a tractor to deliver to Camp Sidney Dew. He stated Deputy Warden Betty Bailey-Dean retires at the end of the month, and they prepared a dinner prior to her departure with a small reception. Mr. Blalock asked for the effects seen from detention increase. Warden Long stated they had 18 applications for the entire year last year, but they brought back two (2) employees who left, and are interviewing at least two (2) per week. He stated they have been able to assist Public Works with filling

positions if they find out the applicants are not a good fit for the Prison. He stated between the Prison and Public Works, they have had at least 12 people attend the academy since the detention pay interjection.

IX. SHERIFF'S OFFICE / JAIL

Captain Jody House stated the Metro position depends on hiring progress per Sheriff. He stated they had 550 inmates booked in January with a 561 average daily count. He stated they had 106 electronic prints, 56 ink prints, 20 sex offender prints, 493 background checks, and processed 18 sex offenders. He stated the Warrants division had 58 arrests, 193 attempts, 67 warrants served, and 245 warrants were registered. 7,434 miles driven, 9,507 miles out of town, 39 miles on out of town trips. He stated they had 86 hours in training, and 144 hours in new hire orientation. He stated they have six (6) to seven (7) positions starting Monday, and four (4) positions starting in two weeks. He stated this leaves them with four (4) open positions. He stated for Courts, Judge Niedrach stated jurors report back to courthouse April 3. He stated they will be out of Forum except for Grand Jury. He stated roofing begins on the historic courthouse on the 24th. Mr. McCord stated that is correct and buildings are transitioning. He stated Leigh has Grand Jury in the Forum through end of the year, but they are trying to get events coordinated with Tourism. Mr. McCord stated the plan is January of 2024 the Forum will be a City facility.

X. FLOYD BOE

Chief Safety and Security Officer Rick Flanigen stated the SRO Smokehouse deadline is February 17. He stated this is further indicative of the positive influence the school resource officers (SROs) have on our community. He stated he sees the results of their work to build the bridge between law enforcement and students. He stated it provides a better perspective of law enforcement for students at a young age. He thanked them for the positive influence. He stated yesterday was National SRO Day, and they are valuable to schools and community. Mr. McCord stated he is working on a cleanup on Van Tassel at Pepperell and a speed hump request.

Commissioner Hancock asked for information from Chief Wallace about the manhunt mentioned by a citizen at the Board of Commissioners meeting. Chief Wallace stated she brought up a point about having dogs, but state patrol helicopters were there and had no signal of where the suspect may be. He stated the hunt ended well, with the suspect ending up on someone's front porch asking for water. Commissioner Wallace stated she felt like the citizen's biggest complaint was that the neighborhood was not brought up-to-speed on what was happening.

XI. CAVE SPRING POLICE DEPARTMENT

Not present.

XII. COUNTY MANAGER

County Manager Jamie McCord stated the County Health Clinic was approved, and transitional information is coming out. He stated the new location is adjacent to Regions

Bank and Turner McCall. He stated they are looking at a larger space. He stated this is a big benefit to County employees, and information is forthcoming. He stated there are two (2) weeks left at the AdventHealth Clinic, and March 1 we will be at Atrium.

XIII. CHIEF OF STAFF

Chief of Staff John Blalock stated he is glad positions are being filled at the Prison and Sheriff's office. He stated they took some positions they had not been able to fill and abolished those positions. He stated they have used savings to address the vacancies. He stated the idea to address those vacancies came from himself, Warden Long, and the Sheriff. He stated they are getting applications, but filling other positions if necessary. He thanked Warden Long and his employees for their work at P.A.W.S. on cleanup and extra building. He stated they put up new cabinets that look brand new in the armory and the total cost was \$135. He stated it is a lot safer and tightly controlled to keep their tools.

XIV. CHAIR'S REPORT

Commissioner Wallace stated she is thankful for the opportunity to work with everyone. She stated the upcoming changes with moving law enforcement, helping 911, are valuable and she appreciates what they do. Commissioner Hancock stated he echoes that. He stated there are a lot of moving parts with the changes with Fire, and the huge change with Police in 6 months. He stated he is glad everyone willing to work with them and being patient. He stated Jamie and his team have worked on this for a while, including Ms. Elrod who has played a big role as well.

XV. OTHER BUSINESS

XVI. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned.

**Next meeting March 16, 2023*