

**RILEY COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY  
LAW BOARD MEETING  
City Commission Meeting Room  
1101 Poyntz Ave.  
Manhattan, KS  
April 18, 2022 12:00 p.m.  
Minutes**

**Members Present:** Chairperson Linda Morse Vice Chairperson Robert Ward  
Member Kathryn Focke Member John Ford

**Absent:** Secretary Barry Wilkerson Member Patricia Hudgins  
Member BeEtta Stoney Interim Director Kurt Moldrup  
Captain Brad Jager

**Staff Present:** Captain Josh Kyle Captain Erin Freidline  
Captain Greg Steere Captain Derek Woods

**Recorder:** Executive Assistant Nichole Glessner, Riley County Police Department (RCPD or Department)

- I. Establish Quorum:** By Chairperson Morse at 12:00 p.m.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance:** Captain Kyle led the Riley County Law Enforcement Agency (Law Board or Board) in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- III. Consent Agenda:**
- A.** Approval of Minutes
    - 1. March 17, 2022 Special Law Board Meeting
    - 2. March 21, 2022 Law Board Meeting
  - B.** Approve 2022 Expenditures/Credits
  - C.** Juvenile Transport Reimbursement
  - D.** RCPD Related County Expenditures (*Review*)
  - E.** Riley County Jail Average Daily Inmate Population- (*Review*)
  - F.** Revised Seizure Expenditure- (*Review*)
  - G.** Reports- (*Review*)
    - 1. Monthly
      - a) Monthly Crime Report

Chairperson Morse commented on the increase in the inmate population over the last three months. She asked Captain Kyle to provide additional information regarding the cause for the increase.

Captain Kyle responded that the Corrections Division has seen a fairly consistent increase in the inmate population following the opening of the courts and other businesses after the pandemic.

Vice Chairperson Ward moved to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. Member Ford seconded the motion. Chairperson Morse polled the Board and the motion passed with Focke, Ford, Morse and Ward voting in favor, and no one voting against. The motion passed 4-0.

#### **IV. General Agenda:**

**H. Additions or Deletions:** Vice Chairperson Ward wished to correct the page numbering for items O. and Q. on the General Agenda. He suggested the following:

Pages 64-122	O. 2023 Budget Development
Pages 122-167	Q. American Rescue Plan Act Update

Member Ford commented that the page numbering (as presently listed) incorporates all documents related to the 2023 budget development and there is an overlap of documents that relate to the budget and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) discussion.

Captain Kyle apologized for the confusion. He stated that the budget narrative essentially covers both topics. However, he wanted to list the two items separately on the Law Board Meeting agenda to provide a distinct pause following the budget discussion and allow the Law Board to ask questions before moving on to ARPA discussions.

At the request of RCPD Executive Offices Manager Nichole Glessner, Chairperson Morse mentioned the need to change the letters under item N. of the General Agenda to numbers, which would be consistent with the rest of the meeting agenda.

**I. Public Comment:** None.

**J. Fraternal Order of Police Lodge#17 Comments:** Corporal Rachel Pate, President, Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) Lodge #17, reported that the Special Olympics Polar Plunge was held Saturday, March 26, 2022 at the Tuttle Creek Lake. The RCPD Polar Plunge Team raised over \$3,000 to support the Special Olympics Kansas athletes. This was the highest fundraising year.

FOP President Pate addressed the RCPD 2023 budget development and proposed salary survey and cited that many agencies throughout the state have or are scheduled to request pay increases for their employees. Pate commented on the need to keep RCPD salaries competitive to attract and retain quality applicants. She went on to state that the Wichita Police Department is currently advertising starting salaries that are 14% higher than the starting salaries of the RCPD. In addition, they have a contract that implemented a 5.5% increase in 2022 and will implement an additional 1.5% increase to their police salaries in 2023 with a 4<sup>th</sup> quarter bonus of \$1,000 for employees. The Topeka Police Department is presently advertising starting salaries that are 4.5% higher than that of the RCPD. They have a contract that will implement a 7% increase to police salaries that will go into effect July 1, 2022.

FOP President Pate stated that she has been amazed with all RCPD employees and their commitment to the community, especially throughout the many unknowns they have experienced over the past two years. She stated that the employees work hard each day to exude the RCPD core values and provide high quality service to the community. Staffing shortages and rising inflation have taken a toll on employee morale and

it will continue to be more difficult to remain competitive with other police agencies if changes are not implemented in the coming years. Pate thanked the Law Board for their hard work and dedication. She asked that they remember the hard working employees of the RCPD as they make decision regarding the 2023 budget.

**K. Board Member Comments:** None.

**L. National Correctional Officers' Week Proclamation:** Chairperson Morse read the National Correctional Officers Week Proclamation declaring that all citizens of Manhattan and Riley County observe the week of May 1<sup>st</sup> through May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022 as National Correctional Officers Week, in honor of the men and women whose diligence in supervising incarcerated individuals and effectively providing custody and care ensure our public safety. Corrections Lieutenants Jason Deehr and Micheala Harris accepted the proclamation on behalf of their colleagues.

**M. National Police Week Proclamation:** Chairperson Morse read the National Police Week Proclamation declaring that all citizens of Manhattan and Riley County observe the week of May 15<sup>th</sup> through May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022, as National Police Week to commemorate those police officers, past and present, who by their faithful and loyal devotion to their responsibilities have rendered a dedicated service to their communities and, in doing so, have established for themselves an enviable and enduring reputation for preserving the rights and security of all citizens.

She further called upon all citizens of Manhattan and Riley County to observe Sunday, May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022, as Peace Officers Memorial Day in honor of those police officers who, through their courageous deeds, have lost their lives or have become disabled in the performance of duty. Lieutenant Richard Deutsch, Corporal Rachel Pate, and Officer Joshua Berard accepted the proclamation on behalf their colleagues.

**N. RCPD Award Presentation:**

- 1. Letter of Appreciation Presented to Citizen Emily Rose**
- 2. Letter of Appreciation Presented to Citizen Lydia Slagle- *Unable to attend the meeting***
- 3. Commendation Award Presented to Officer Matthew Horne**
- 4. Commendation Award Presented to Officer Stephen Zapata**
- 5. Distinguished Service Award Presented to Officer Jason Krause**
- 6. Distinguished Service Award Presented to Sergeant (Ret.) Doug Wood**
- 7. Medal of Valor Award Presented to Officer Nicholas Coffey**

Captain Steere recognized Officers Matthew Horne, Stephen Zapata, Jason Krause, Nicholas Coffey and Retired Sergeant Doug Wood for their dedication to duty during the morning hours of December 5, 2021, while responding to a single vehicle on fire two miles east of Manhattan on K-18. The vehicle, occupied by five teenagers all under the age of eighteen, had been involved in a collision with a large concrete pillar and the was on fire with occupants trapped inside. Multiple officers with the Riley County Police Department along with other emergency personnel responded to the location to rescue and provide aid to the injured victims. Citizens Emily Rose and Lydia Slagle voluntarily and courageously stopped to provide assistance to first responders and victims of the accident.

For her compassion and quick thinking which greatly assisted first responders and the victims of the accident who were facing their greatest moment of need, citizen Emily Rose was presented with the Riley County Police Department's Letter of Appreciation.

For their outstanding bravery and devotion to duty, Officer Matthew Horne and Officer Stephen Zapata were presented the Riley County Police Department's Commendation Award.

For demonstrating great fortitude in the face of danger and placing their personal safety at risk to save and protect the lives of these young adults, Officer Jason Krause and Retired Sergeant Douglas Wood were presented the Riley County Police Department's Distinguished Service Award.

For his valorous actions in the face of danger and placing his own safety at risk to save and protect the lives of these young adults, Officer Nicholas Coffey was presented with the Riley County Police Department Medal of Valor, the highest award bestowed upon a Department member.

Kansas Highway Patrol Colonel Herman Jones presented Officer Nicholas Coffey, Officer Jason Krause, Retired Sergeant Douglas Wood, and Citizen Emily Rose each with an Honorary Trooper Award for their actions in the above described incident.

**O. 2023 Budget Development:** The Law Board were provided copies of the 2023 RCPD Budget Presentation as part of their packets. Captain Kyle discussed the Department's mission statement and touched on the four long-term (strategic goals), annual planning cycle, and needs assessment developed by members of Command Staff.

Captain Kyle explained that the RCPD in conjunction with the Manhattan-Riley County Coalition for Equal Justice (CEJ) created a Fair and Impartial Policing (FIP) Working Group. The FIP Working Group consistently expressed their desire for the community to have face-to-face contacts with RCPD members, especially with regard to children. He added that there is a generation of children who without the DARE Program may never establish a significant relationship with law enforcement as they grow up. The FIP Working Group and the City of Manhattan's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Task Force expressed in their report a desire for the RCPD to make more face-to-face contacts. Captain Kyle said that face-to-face contacts are important because they reduce bias among members of the community and employees of the RCPD. The FIP Working Group and DEI Task Force recognized that in order to accomplish this, the RCPD will need additional police officers. As a result, RCPD staff were prepared to request additional police officers as part of the 2023 budget proposal. However, that was prior to post-COVID job market issues and increases in inflation.

Captain Kyle recalled the RCPD Salary Survey presentation that was presented by Phil Hayes, Vice President of The Arnold Group, at the March 21, 2022 Law Board Meeting. Mr. Hayes concluded that the RCPD, once a market leader, has since lost its position. Captain Kyle noted that this has resulted in very serious recruitment and retention issues within the RCPD over the past few months. As of March 10, 2022, the RCPD has 22 vacant positions. The overwhelming majority of the vacancies are within the Corrections Division.

Lieutenant Deutsch, a military veteran and member of the RCPD Barbeque and Recruitment Team addressed the Department's significant manpower shortages and ongoing recruitment efforts. Initial

meetings of the Recruitment Team revealed that there are simply not enough employees to be everywhere and involved in everything. Members of the team determined that the best opportunities presently available for them to reach the most applicants are at Fort Riley, Kansas State University (KSU), and the high schools. Lieutenant Deutsch stated that he attends events on Fort Riley, Lieutenant Jason Deehr focuses on opportunities at the high schools, and Sergeant Curt Steel works with those in the KSU criminology programs.

Lieutenant Deutsch stated that he does his best to promote the RCPD when attending job fairs and engaging soldiers who are in the Fort Riley Transition Assistance Program. When speaking with a soldier, the question of compensation is always asked. Lieutenant Deutsch said that he has to tell the soldier that if he/she is interested in corrections or dispatch the RCPD will pay \$36,000 a year, and \$45,000 a year as a police officer (pre-tax). He explained that the pay simply is not appealing to soldiers who are honorably discharged, and in addition to their base pay they receive a Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS) and Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH).

Lieutenant Deutsch said in addition to the pay not being appealing to applicants, it is not competitive with other companies at recruiting events (e.g., ABF Freight Company entry level pay \$28.00 hour, Footlocker entry level Forklift Operator pay \$21.00 an hour). By way of comparison, he noted that Dillon's/Kroger is hiring entry level positions at \$18-21.00 an hour and offering a tuition reimbursement program.

Corrections Lieutenant Jason Deehr discussed post-COVID operations in the jail and how crucial it is to retain the corrections officers who work for the RCPD as well as attract quality applicants to fill vacant positions. He stated that the corrections officers who have stayed with the RCPD are loyal and truly want to work for the agency. The corrections officers believe in the Department's core values like teamwork; however, it is very difficult to do without a team.

Corrections Lieutenant Deehr informed the Board that the Corrections Division is operating on minimal staffing to where if one person calls in sick or goes on vacation it is extremely difficult to function. He touched on safety concerns for corrections officers when working long hours with minimal staffing. He concluded that now is a crucial time to invest in the RCPD corrections officers and give them the help they need.

Captain Kyle explained that during 2023 budget discussions among Command Staff an agency needs assessment was conducted. Command Staff identified areas of underfunding that needed to be addressed which include vehicles, liability insurance, health insurance, training, contractual services, inmate food, medical fees and fuel. Command Staff also identified a need for three additional police officers which include a school resource officer, community resource officer, and crisis intervention team officer. Captain Kyle informed the Law Board that the RCPD will be unable to do any of the above because there is a more pressing need to address a COLA for employees and salary survey.

Finance Manager Jennifer Reifschneider addressed the 2021-2022 base adjustments and implementation of the salary survey as recommended by RCPD Administration. She explained that the results of the salary survey revealed that all positions within the RCPD need an adjustment of some kind. If approved, the RCPD recommends implementing the salary survey over two years (2023 and 2024) with equal steps to meet the "market" salaries across all positions within the Department. The cost to fully implement the salary survey is \$3,400,000.

Finance Manager Reifschneider explained that the first half of the implementation in 2023 would include a 5.1% COLA for employees with up to a 5.9% adjustment to employee salaries. The cost to implement the first half of the salary survey (54%) would be \$1,848,000. The second half of the implementation would be accomplished in 2024 and cost \$1,552,000. Finance Manager Reifschneider stated that it presently unknown what the COLA will be for that year.

Captain Kyle briefed the Law Board on the chart below and commented that the items listed are what is needed to provide the quality services the community has become accustomed to and deserves.

2022 Approved Budget	Items			
	2022 Base	A	B	Total Increase
		COLA (5.1%)	Salary Survey	
\$ Change	\$133,418	\$831,744	\$1,016,242	\$1,981,404
% Change	0.58%	3.61%	4.41%	8.59%
		4.18%	8.59%	8.59%

Chairperson Morse voiced her preference to have all Law Board members present when taking action on the 2023 Budget.

Vice Chairperson Ward moved to table discussions regarding the 2023 RCPD Budget until the next Law Board Meeting or Special Law Board/Budget Meeting. Member Ford seconded the motion. Chairperson Morse polled the Board and the motion passed with Focke, Ford, Morse and Ward voting in favor, and no one voting against. The motion passed 4-0.

**P. Public Comment on 2023 Budget:** Melissa Rundus, Manhattan Resident, addressed the Board not in her professional role, but as a taxpaying citizen of Manhattan, business owner, and parent. She stated that the community has exceptional police officers, corrections officers, dispatchers, RCPD administration, and staff. On multiple occasions she and others have contacted the RCPD to have officers speak to children at the schools, attend fundraisers, and sponsor school events. There is a desire among the community to have children trust law enforcement. Rundus said that although the officers have other duties, other responsibilities, other commitments, they never let the community down. She added that it is most often the officer’s family and home that gets put on hold so that he/she can help the community during what should be their free time.

Rundus explained that although crime is down in Manhattan and Riley County, the number of shootings (gun violence) and mental health crisis incidents that occur in the community is alarming. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, the officers respond to the calls, control the situations, and keep the community safe.

Rundus said that she loves living in this community because of the quality of life which includes a professional, dedicated police and corrections team. They make the community a safe place to live, raise children, and retire. Rundus shared a very relevant quote from Mr. Fred Rogers, *“When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, Look for the helpers. You will always find*

*people who are helping.*” Rundus said it is time to take care of the police department to make sure the employees stay and not go elsewhere. Rundus expressed how thankful she is that the officers are there when they are needed. She feels lucky to have such great helpers in the community.

Joshua Berard, Police Officer, Riley County Police Department, informed the Board that he is originally from California and has been employed with the RCPD for 9 years. Prior to Officer Berard’s employment with the RCPD he was a football player for Kansas State University. Officer Berard said that when he graduated, he chose to stay in Manhattan because he loved the community. Many of his teammates left the area. In 2012, he was involved in a vehicle accident and had his first encounter with a RCPD officer. Officer Berard confessed that he was scared at the time. He came from a place where the officers were not always kind. Officer Berard shared the story of how the officer not only responded to the accident, but impacted his life. Instead of simply working the accident, the officer mentored Berard, shared with him the history of the community, provided information about the culture of the RCPD, and encouraged him to apply for employment with the Department. Berard said that is the type of officers the RCPD produces. They are the best.

Christine Robinson, Human Resources Manager, Riley County Police Department, provided her support and backing to the RCPD Salary Survey conducted by The Arnold Group. She explained that during the first four months of 2022, the RCPD conducted the equivalent number of hiring processes as that which was completed for the entire year of 2021.

Human Resources Manager Robinson said that the RCPD has very dedicated employees and officers who have been connected to the community for many years. Part of being able to do that has been the ability to attract and hire quality applicants. She asked that the Law Board consider the quality of the services that the RCPD delivers that the public has come to expect. It is the kind of service employees want to continue to deliver, but are tired.

**Q. American Rescue Plan Act Update:** At the March 21, 2022 Law Board Meeting Captain Jager provided an update to the Board on the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and needs identified by RCPD staff to expend said funds. At the meeting, the Law Board directed staff to draft a letter outlining the request to be sent to the Manhattan City Commission and Board of County Commissioners following Law Board review.

Included in the Law Board packet were letters to the Manhattan City Commission and Board of County Commissioners requesting Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) be used by the RCPD to institute a hiring incentive of \$5,000 for new corrections officers, police officers, and dispatchers. The new employees will receive \$2,500 on their first paycheck and \$2,500 after they have completed their probationary period. The Department would like to request use of SLFRF for the hiring incentive through 2023.

Chairperson Morse referred to the letters sent to the Manhattan City Commission and Board of County Commissioners in September 2021 (pgs. 119, 120) which list four priorities that the RCPD requested use of ARPA funds to accomplish. She wished to know how many of the endeavors have been achieved and how many remain.

Captain Kyle provided an overview of the four priorities contained in the September 2021 letter which include the 2% pay adjustment in 2021, unreimbursed emergency COVID leave for 2020, E-citations project, and Hazardous Evidence Response Team (HERT) truck. He reported that all endeavors have been accomplished at least in part through use of unused personnel funds and SPARK funding or a derivative of. Senator Moran's Office has provided some indication that they are moving forward with funding for a number of items and the HERT truck might be one of them. Riley County Police Department Administration is not certain at this time if that will come to fruition. However, staff received a letter from the Federal Government which appears to be the first step in the process.

Vice Chairperson Ward moved to authorize the Chair of the Law Board to sign and send the two letters (dated April 13, 2022) to the Manhattan City Commission and Board of County Commissioners. Member Ford seconded the motion. Chairperson Morse polled the Board and the motion passed with Focke, Ford, Morse and Ward voting in favor, and no one voting against. The motion passed 4-0.

**R. Executive Session:** It was determined that an executive session was not needed.

**S. Adjournment:** Vice Chairperson Ward moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Ford seconded the motion. Chairperson Morse polled the Board and the motion passed with Focke, Ford, Morse, and Ward voting in favor, and no one voting against. The motion passed 4-0. The April 18, 2022 Law Board Meeting adjourned at 1:43 p.m.