

**RILEY COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY
LAW BOARD MEETING
City Commission Meeting Room
1101 Poyntz Ave.
Manhattan, KS
June 21, 2022 12:00 p.m.
Minutes**

Members Present: Chairperson Linda Morse Vice Chairperson Robert Ward
Secretary Barry Wilkerson Member Kathryn Focke (Attended Virtually)
Member John Ford Member Patricia Hudgins
Member BeEtta Stoney (Attended Virtually)

Absent:

Staff Present: Interim Director Kurt Moldrup Captain Brad Jager
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: Interim Director Moldrup led the Riley County Law Enforcement Agency (Law Board or Board) in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Consent Agenda:

- A. Approval of Minutes
 - 1. May 9, 2022 Special Law Board Meeting
 - 2. May 16, 2022 Law Board Meeting
- B. Approve 2022 Expenditures/Credits
- C. 2022 Adjusted Financial Journal Entries
- D. Juvenile Transport Reimbursement
- E. RCPD Related County Expenditures (*Review*)
- F. Riley County Jail Average Daily Inmate Population- (*Review*)
- G. Seizure Expenditure- (*Review*)
- H. Reports- (*Review*)
 - 1. Monthly
 - a) Monthly Crime Report

Chairperson Morse commented that June 14, 2022 was Flag Day commemorating the adoption of the flag of the United States. She added that it is important to recognize citizens of other countries and their devotion to their flags as well.

Captain Freidline addressed the Monthly Crime Report for May 2022 noting that aggravated assaults continue to be an area of focus for the Investigations Division. A total of 11 aggravated assaults/batteries were reported during the month of May; three of which were domestic violence related. Of those reported, roughly half involved an object (e.g., knife) and the other cases involved a firearm. Captain Freidline stated that when the public hears of an aggravated assault, they often associate it with a firearm, which is not always the case. Presently, the Department is seeing a hodgepodge of both. There were arrests in 6 of the incidents.

Vice Chairperson Ward inquired about Voucher #6018 payable to Grant Petroleum, Inc. in the amount of \$45,111.97 (total expense for mid-April through mid-June) which is an increase from previous months. He wished to know if that was due to the increase in fuel costs.

Interim Director Moldrup said that is correct. The Department has felt the impact of the increase in fuel prices.

Vice Chairperson Ward moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Secretary Wilkerson seconded the motion. Chairperson Morse polled the Board and the motion passed with Ford, Hudgins, Morse, Ward, and Wilkerson voting in favor, and no one voting against. The motion passed 5-0. There was no response from virtual attendees Member Focke and Member Stoney.

IV. General Agenda:

I. Additions or Deletions: Interim Director Moldrup requested the removal of item S. Affirmation or Revocation of Discipline from the General Agenda. Chairperson Morse added there would be no need for an Executive Session and requested item R. be removed from the General Agenda as well. The Board had no objections to the suggested deletions.

J. Public Comment: Melissa Rundus addressed the Board not in her professional role as Chief Prosecutor for the City of Manhattan, but as a resident of Manhattan, Kansas. Rundus stated that she had the privilege to participate on the community panel for the Crisis Intervention Training recently hosted by the RCPD. She explained that she learned quite a bit from the officers who took part in the class and other panel members. She was impressed with the desire of the RCPD officers to better serve individuals in mental health crisis and their families and the empathy the officers displayed throughout the training. Rundus added that it is typical of the RCPD to lead the charge in serving others with compassion, knowledge, and empathy. There were other law enforcement agencies represented at the training, who do not have similar initiatives, but were able to return home with new information and ideas for improved responses in their communities.

Rundus commented on the 2023 RCPD budget observing that the Crisis Intervention Training is just an example of how the RCPD goes above and beyond to serve the community. The quality of life, safety, officer response time, and service the employees provide is worth paying for in the form of fair wages.

K. Fraternal Order of Police Lodge#17 Comments: Corporal Rachel Pate, President, Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) Lodge #17, informed the Law Board of the Law Enforcement Torch Run scheduled for Sunday, June 26, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. Athletes with the Special Olympics Manhattan Team will run with representatives from the RCPD and Kansas State University Police Department (KSUPD) starting at the

Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art and ending at the City Park. The Torch Run will be followed by a 1-Mile Fun Run for community members wishing to donate and support the local athletes. The Fraternal Order of Police Lodge #17 donated \$750.00 towards the event and the RCPD Team raised \$445.00.

Corporal Pate spoke on behalf of the FOP Lodge #17 and employees of the RCPD regarding the 2023 budget. She commented on the stress felt by RCPD employees specifically with regard to inflation and manpower shortages. She conducted a comparison of RCPD employee starting salaries with other local law enforcement agencies in Kansas. She reported on a handful of local agencies that are currently advertising positions with a starting salary higher than that of the RCPD which include the Lenexa Police Department (12%), Lawrence Police Department (11%), Bonner Springs Police Department (2%), and Salina Police Department (1%). Corporal Pate stated that all of the aforementioned police departments are also seeking raises and a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) in the upcoming budget cycles.

Corporal Pate reported that the starting officer salary for the Topeka Police Department 4.5% higher than that of the RCPD and they have approved the implementation of a 7% raise for employees starting July 2022. The starting officer salary for the Wichita Police Department is 14% higher than the RCPD, they have implemented a 5.5% raise for employees in 2022, and plan to provide an additional 1.5% raise in 2023. The Wichita Police Department is also giving officers a \$1,000 fourth quarter bonus.

Corporal Pate observed that the Consumer Price Index, Midwest Region for May 2022 was 8.8%. She emphasized the need for the RCPD to be in a position to recruit and retain quality officers, corrections officers, dispatchers, and staff. It is her belief that the implementation of the salary survey and COLA will help do just that. Corporal Pate expressed her appreciation to the Law Board for the work that they do for the RCPD and community.

L. Board Member Comments: Member Ford thanked employees of the RCPD and other emergency services for their prompt response and subsequent cleanup efforts following the June 11, 2022 severe thunderstorm and tornado events.

Chairperson Morse provided a brief update on the RCPD Director selection process. She reported that the position has been advertised on various police executive career forums and other job sites, several of which will renew the advertisement for an additional 30 days. The Screening Committee plans to meet in July and August to go over the applications received. The desired goal is to have a sufficient number of applications or pool of applications from which the best selection can be made for the new RCPD Director.

M. Community Advisory Board Update: Brent Riffel, Chairperson, Community Advisory Board (CAB), briefed the Law Board on CAB activities to date. Since his last update to the Law Board, the CAB has discussed RCPD employee needs, recruitment efforts, hiring incentives, the 2023 budget and salary survey, as well as recent active violence events throughout the country.

Community Advisory Board Chairperson Riffel informed the Law Board and listening audience that meetings of the CAB are open to the public and held on the first Tuesday of every month at 11:30 a.m. The CAB typically meets at K-State Office Park, 1880 Kimball Avenue, Manhattan. However, the July 5, 2022 meeting will be rescheduled for either July 12th or 14th to allow the CAB to observe training coordinated by the RCPD. To view upcoming meetings of the CAB visit rcpdcab.org.

CAB Chairperson Riffel noted that at the March 21, 2022 Law Board Meeting, Chairperson Morse requested a list of those who serve on the CAB along with a schedule of upcoming meetings. The requested information was subsequently provided to the Law Board by RCPD Executive Offices Manager Nichole Glessner.

N. U.S. Department of Justice COPS Grant: In 2021 the RCPD was contacted by the office of U.S. Senator for Kansas Jerry Moran regarding a possible funding opportunity for essential department items that could not be funded through normal budgetary means. The RCPD provided Senator Moran's Office with a list of needs for consideration. Interim Director Moldrup advised the Law Board that Senator Moran's Office approved the purchase of a Hazardous Evidence Recovery Team (HERT) in the amount of \$440,000. The funds will be administered as a grant through the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Office. Interim Director Moldrup stated that he and the employees of the RCPD are very appreciative of Senator Moran's Office for awarding the grant.

Member Ford recalled that in 2020, RCPD tried to acquire funding for the HERT truck through the original Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act but was unable to because the order for the truck had to be placed or something of that nature. He acknowledged that the RCPD has been working on identifying funding for the truck for quite some time.

Interim Director Moldrup said that is correct. According to the CARES Act, the RCPD had to have the truck purchased and there was no way the company could manufacture the truck in such short amount of time. As a result, RCPD staff began looking at other avenues for funding. Senator Moran's Office approached the RCPD with this opportunity which worked out well.

O. American Rescue Plan Act Update: On May 16, 2022, at the direction of the Law Board, RCPD sent the Manhattan City Commission and Board of County Commissioners letters requesting Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) be used to institute a hiring incentive of \$5,000 for new corrections officers, police officers, and dispatchers through 2023. To date, the RCPD has not received a response. Captain Jager stated there was no update at this time.

Member Ford explained that the County has dedicated SLFRF to accomplish 4 different, extremely important projects. He is not overly confident that those funds will cover all of the expenses. However, he is hopeful that perhaps some of the items will come in under what was projected. Maybe there will be a few free dollars towards the end. They will just have to keep their fingers crossed and have those discussions at that time.

Chairperson Morse thanked Member Ford for the update. She commented that she did not have an update from the City regarding the RCPD's request for funds.

P. Public Hearing for 2023 Budget: At the May 16, 2022 Law Board Meeting, the Law Board approved RCPD 2023 Budget Draft 1 for publication which represents an 8.366% increase over the 2022 approved budget when the carryover is applied. Members of the Law Board were provided copies of the condensed 2023 RCPD Budget Presentation as part of their June meeting packets. Captain Kyle discussed the Department's original and revised needs assessment developed by members of Command Staff, ongoing recruitment and retention challenges, and the Departments weakened market position with regard to employee salaries.

Finance Manager Reifschneider briefly discussed the results of the salary survey which revealed that all positions within the RCPD need an adjustment of some kind. 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. At present, the cost to fully implement the salary survey is \$3,400,000.

At the May Law Board Meeting, Member Focke requested staff provide an estimated COLA to serve as a placeholder when discussing the 2024 budget with the hopes that it would provide the Law Board a better picture of what the overall increase might look like. Finance Manager Reifschneider and staff researched the matter and returned with an estimated COLA between 5.0-8.2% for budget year 2024. Finance Manager Reifschneider explained that budgetarily, it could cost between \$800,000 to \$1,300,000 to implement a COLA for 2024. The cost to fully implement the salary survey along with the estimated COLA for budget year 2024 could range from 4.2-4.7 million dollars. She cautioned that the projected COLA is just that, an estimate. They do not know what the COLA will be for next year.

Captain Kyle and Finance Manager Reifschneider discussed the cost benefits and efficiencies that come with being a consolidated law enforcement agency. Such benefits include having only one agency, one main facility, one director and one assistant director. As a result, there is no duplication of services. Captain Kyle stated that typically in a community there is a sheriff’s office and city police department that don’t always provide information to each other which can impact the quality of services they provide, criminal intelligence sharing, and crime control. As a consolidated agency, the RCPD communicates well between divisions, other public service organizations, and emergency services.

In addition to the benefits noted above, Captain Kyle informed the Board that the RCPD has fewer officers (1.49) per 1,000 residents than the national (2.4) and state of Kansas (3.74) averages. He stated his belief that consolidation allows the RCPD to be efficient and effective because as one organization there are a lot of synergies that allow everyone to communicate and coordinate. That is not necessarily true of other organizations that are divided and have different interests.

Captain Freidline provided the 2020 crime statistics for the RCPD compared to the state of Kansas and similar jurisdictions/counties which include Saline, Butler, Leavenworth, and Douglas. The 2020 crime index comparison shows that the RCPD has 19.7 Part 1 Crimes per 1,000 residents and the state of Kansas has 29.7. She noted that the FBI will not release the 2021 statistics until later in July.

Captain Freidline emphasized that the RCPD serves an outstanding community because they call the police when they witness a crime. She credited the employees of the RCPD, particularly case detectives, for the quality follow-up with victims of crimes. With the crime rate being lower in this area, detectives are able to take their time to produce quality cases that are prosecutable. As a consolidated agency, the relationship with organizations such as Community Corrections, Court Services, and the prosecutor’s office is more streamlined. The staff of those organizations get to know the employees of the RCPD and are able to reach out for follow-up information. They never have to guess who to call at the RCPD. It is one phone call to the Patrol Division or Investigations Division Commander who can usually resolve any issues the other organization may have.

Finance Manager Reifschneider briefed the Law Board on the cost benefits of consolidation by comparing law enforcement services of the RCPD to 4 counties similar in population. These counties are the next

lowest and highest in population to Riley County. In an effort to at least partially answer the question of what law enforcement should cost, she compared the budgets (county and cities combined) for Saline, Butler, Leavenworth, and Douglas to that of the RCPD. When conducting the comparison, she looked specifically at law enforcement services or the total percent of the budget that makes up law enforcement services. The comparison revealed that law enforcement services in Riley County costs less than the counties previously sited.

Captain Kyle restated that the RCPD is in a highly competitive job market. The Department is finding it difficult to keep positions filled and attract talent that will provide the professional services the community is accustomed to and deserves. Riley County Police Department staff believe that the salary survey, which has been years in the making, will help address those issues. He reiterated that the RCPD has fewer officers per 1,000 residents than the national average and less than half the officers as the state average. The RCPD continues to be able to maintain crime control and keep costs down compared to other similar size counties. He recommended the Law Board approve the proposed 2023 RCPD Budget.

Q. Approve 2023 Budget: Vice Chairperson Ward moved to approve the proposed 2023 RCPD Budget as published on June 9, 2022. Secretary Wilkerson seconded the motion.

Chairperson Morse opened the public hearing for the 2023 RCPD budget. Hearing no comment, she closed the public hearing.

Member Focke stated that the increase in the 2023 RCPD budget is primarily due to personnel costs and benefits which is what the County experiencing as well. She agreed that there is a need to attract and keep good employees in both organizations. Over the past year, the RCPD has utilized unused personnel funds to pay for items that could not be covered by the budget. She expressed her desire for the RCPD to apply unused personnel funds to help offset the 2024 budget increase brought about by the anticipated COLA and implementation of the second half of the salary survey.

Chairperson Morse referenced an article in The Wall Street Journal regarding current inflation. According to the June 13, 2022 article, U.S. inflation reached 9.1% in June, its highest rate in nearly 41 years. She noted that the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that prices for food at home increased 11.9% in May compared to the same period last year. Food away from home, like restaurants, was up 7.5%. Tyson Foods reported that the price of beef has increased roughly 24%. Chairperson Morse stated that the increases are significant. This is an unusual year. The City and County received American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds and the RCPD did not. In her opinion, there is a need to make sure that the RCPD is funded to the level that they can continue to provide high quality policing.

Secretary Wilkerson addressed the question that was posed regarding how much law enforcement should cost and responded that it costs money to do things right. He explained that it can cost *more* money *not* to do it right whether it is in the form of someone getting hurt or fewer crimes being solved because of insufficient manpower. The RCPD is behind the market with respect to pay. Secretary Wilkerson shared that he has the advantage of working with many of the men and women of the RCPD on a daily basis. The officers, detectives, and corrections officers are not doing the job simply for the money. They do it because they care. Secretary Wilkerson said he has witnessed the heartache of some officers and detectives when they could not get the result they wanted in regards to a criminal case. He added that it is going to cost money to attract and keep good people. In order to be competitive, pay will need to be increased. He

expressed his appreciation to RCPD staff for presenting the statistics to the Law Board and voiced his support of the 2023 RCPD Budget as proposed.

Member Focke said as a taxpayer, she would hate to see the mil levy increase if it is not necessary. However, she believed this was necessary to keep the consolidated district together as well as hire and retain the right people. That said, she feels there exists the need to educate the public on the rationale behind the increase.

Member Stoney agreed with the statement made by Member Focke. Stoney stated that she too does not want to see an increase in the mil levy. However, she understands that there is a need to appropriately fund the RCPD in order to continue services, and for that reason, she was in support of the 2023 RCPD Budget as proposed.

Member Ford stated that the overall percent increase in the RCPD budget is rather large. He commented that the County is in the midst of developing their 2023 budget which includes a portion of the RCPD's budget. The same holds true for the City. He added that County employees are struggling with the same increases that were mentioned in The Wall Street Journal article. Everyone is experiencing issues with affordable housing, childcare, utilities, and groceries. He asserted that it is a struggle that is felt throughout.

Member Ford said he appreciated the work and efforts of RCPD employees. He agreed with Captain Freidline's statement that Riley County has an excellent community. As he mentioned earlier, the RCPD and all other emergency services are on top of things. Emergency service personnel are there when the public needs them most and even when they don't. Nevertheless, there is a larger picture. From his standpoint, costs and affordability are going to be the new quality of life standard. Member Ford said he feels the need to try to hold back some things for a while until inflation comes down and everyone can take a more foundational approach for both the short-term and long-term. Over the past 2.5 years there has been some basic panic with respect to decision making. That type of decision making process can lead to some not-so-good long-term consequences. Member Ford stated that this increase will be a struggle for him. It will be a struggle for him when he delves deeper into the County budget process as well.

Chairperson Morse informed the Board that the City has conducted a salary study. She asked if the County has completed theirs.

Member Ford explained that the County's Human Resources and Budget and Finance team completed an internal review of employee salaries. The County plans to use unused personnel funds to cover the 2022 mid-year increase. How the County approaches the budget next year is unknown at this time. They continue to work through that process.

Member Hudgins thanked the employees of the RCPD for their service and hard work over the years. Member Hudgins said she views the increase in the 2023 RCPD budget like buying insurance. The public wants to be assured that law enforcement is there when they are needed. At the very minimum, there needs to be the assurance of knowing that the employees are there and they can be retained.

Member Hudgins addressed the high turnover rate that is being experienced throughout the labor force in many professions. She expressed curiosity in how the RCPD is attempting to reach and gather more viable, quality candidates for employment. She was aware that the RCPD participates in recruitment events and

speaking engagements at the Kansas State University. However, she would like to see the RCPD expand upon that and recruit in different ways that will hopefully fill more vacant positions. She stated that she would be happy to visit about possible recruitment strategies with RCPD staff if desired.

Chairperson Morse polled the Board and the motion passed with Focke, Hudgins, Morse, Stoney, Ward, and Wilkerson voting in favor, and Ford voting against. The motion passed 6-1.

Member Ford requested RCPD staff update the Law Board on the COLA, merit increases, and unused personnel funds next year as the figures become less of an estimate and more practical. This will help with discussions on how to balance the 2024 budget so it is not as large as the budget this year, but still accomplish the needs of the Department.

On behalf of the men and women of the RCPD, Interim Director Moldrup thanked the Law Board for their comments and efforts during the budget development process.

R. Executive Session: This item was removed from the agenda.

S. Affirmation or Revocation of Discipline: This item was removed from the agenda.

T. Adjournment: Secretary Wilkerson moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Ford seconded the motion. Chairperson Morse polled the Board and the motion passed with Focke, Ford, Hudgins, Morse, Stoney, Ward, and Wilkerson voting in favor, and no one voting against. The motion passed 7-0. The June 21, 2022 Law Board Meeting adjourned at 1:21 p.m.