



## Minutes

### DSD Reform (Staffing and Performance Optimization)

July 16, 2015, 2pm-4pm

Location: Wellington Webb Municipal Building, Room 1.D.1

#### Present:

- Brendan Hanlon – Budget and Management Office
- Shawn Smith - Safety Administration
- Stephanie O'Malley – Safety Administration
- Laura Wachter – Safety Administration
- Mark Valentine – Denver Sheriff Department
- Jennifer Jacobson – City Attorney Office
- Sheriff Elias Diggins – Denver Sheriff Department
- Sergeant Ilya Telesin – Denver Sheriff Department
- Captain James Johnson - Denver Sheriff Department
- Deputy Annette Grimes - Denver Sheriff Department
- Dr. Mary Davis – Citizen Oversight Board
- Rory Regan – Budget and Management Office
- Steve Bohn – Budget and Management Office
- Kate May – Budget and Management Office
- Division Chief Venessie Brown – Denver Sheriff Department
- Robert Davis – Hillard Heintz (present via phone)
- Brenda Welch – Hillard Heintz (present via phone)
- Dr. Alex Weiss – Hillard Heintz (present via phone)

#### Agenda:

1. Review meeting minutes from 7.9.16 session
2. Review post matrix methodology
3. Define civilianization
4. Outline & discuss each civilianization proposal

#### Discussion:

Mr. Hanlon distributed draft meeting minutes from the 7.9.16 session. Ms. O'Malley offered a motion to approve the minutes; once seconded by Mr. Valentine, the minutes were put to a vote and were unanimously approved.

Mr. Regan presented powerpoint slides covering the definition of a post matrix and how this tool informs required staffing levels within the Denver Sheriff Department. A summary slide of a recently completed baseline post matrix indicated that 458 posts are currently maintained within the department. Attendees were told to expect the forthcoming distribution of this post matrix.

Sheriff Diggins and Mr. Hanlon agreed that a formal tracking mechanism be established to capture any changes to this post matrix. A quarterly meeting was offered as one such method.



Mr. Hanlon presented a fictitious example of an approved civilianization situation. He explained that by civilianizing uniform posts, sworn individuals could be re-assigned to areas which are currently backfilled via overtime usage. The example demonstrated that 1) vacancies of existing posts could be addressed; 2) overtime needs could be alleviated; and 3) layoffs of existing staff would not occur. Captain Johnson clarified that this scenario would result in the permanent elimination of two uniform posts.

The session turned to the civilianization proposals put forth by Hillard Heintz. Mr. Hanlon clarified that voting over the proposals would occur in a future meeting. Focus would rest on understanding the background behind each and logging any questions that arise.

#### Civilianization of Mailroom Functions:

- Hillard Heintz explained that because the deputies assigned to these roles have only incidental contact with inmates, it might be more prudent to pursue civilianization. Further, that small amount of contact might be reduced further if mail was delivered to a central location and distributed by deputies making periodic rounds. It was noted by Hillard Heintz that mailroom duties are an administrative function which can be performed by civilians just as effectively as sworn staff, provided proper training is given. By turning these duties over to civilian staff, the department can refocus its attention to the main focus of its mission: the care and custody of inmates. Hillard Heintz noted that the Cook County Juvenile Detention Center is an example of a successful civilianization of mailroom functions.
- Sheriff Diggins offered counterpoints, noting that deputies provide several essential and specialized functions, including screening for contraband, interpreting mail for gang-related correspondence and dealing with inmates who are prone to act aggressively towards the mail staff. He mentioned that material contained in the mail has been used in several District Attorney-led prosecutions. The Sheriff also noted that serving as a deputy should not be construed as simply staffing a pod or corridor – there are other duties that are required above and beyond that narrow impression.
- Captain Johnson mentioned that the recommendation to convert mailroom duties to security specialists should be reviewed, as that position classification may not allow for contact with inmates.
- Follow-up: research other jurisdictions to see if adult detention facilities have civilianized mailroom functions – to what extent, when and how.

#### Civilianization of Technology Management Unit:

- Hillard Heintz offered a comment that the field of information technology is so specialized that the need for professional expertise in the department is paramount. Hillard Heintz also mentioned that most law enforcement agencies in the nation have civilianized these functions long ago.
- Sheriff Diggins agreed that civilianization is appropriate, but he suggested that all technology services staff remain Denver Sheriff Department employees. As this approach runs counter to standard procedure – technology services employees are employees of Denver Technology Services – Ms. O'Malley asked why the Sheriff would argue for an exception. The Sheriff responded that 1) the data needs of the department are large and critical; and 2) the department's facilities operate 24/7, necessitating an on-demand technical response.
- Ms. Wachter mentioned that the needs of the Safety Department as a whole require some manner of staff versed in technology – not so much database technicians, but rather administrators that operate and maintain the department's critical systems.



- Follow-Up: secure and distribute a comment from the City's Chief Technology Officer, Frank Daidone, regarding his thoughts and observations.

#### Accreditation Unit

- Hillard Heintz explained that accreditation compliance requires mechanical processes – i.e. standard, orderly and repetitive forms of work – that do not require the involvement of sworn personnel. Understanding the standards required to maintain accreditation can be done through education and training; in other words, there is nothing innate to sworn staff that would prevent a civilian from doing this duty.
- Sheriff Diggins responded that this function can and should be civilianized, but clarified that two deputy posts are currently assigned to this unit (not 3 as indicated on the powerpoint) and that position classifications other than administrative support assistants are most appropriate.
- Captain Johnson asked whether civilianizing these functions would push work on to the operations staff; Hillard Heintz commented that they did not believe it would.

#### Juvenile Work Program

- Hillard Heintz commented that several jurisdictions with which they are familiar operate successful youth diversion programs without the involvement of uniformed staff. The civilian personnel they encountered are highly trained and experts in conflict de-escalation, specifically.
- Mr. Valentine stated that the deputies assigned to these functions provide an incalculably positive impact on the youth they encounter. He also suggested that the image of the department is burnished by their presence.
- Sheriff Diggins also stated his belief that deputies are the most appropriate personnel for this function, as they can head off potential fights better than a civilian might. Also, the flight risk of youths is less, since a uniformed presence may be seen as more authoritative than a civilian's. The Sheriff also mentioned that the County Court Judges are in favor of continued involvement of deputies.
- Mr. Bohn asked whether Sheriff or Safety Department staff have current recidivism figures for the program; he was told this information is currently unavailable.
- Ms. O'Malley summarized the discussion by stating that the program is deemed essential but the best method for conducting is unclear.

#### Scheduling Unit

- Hillard Heintz stated that after interviewing and observing this work group, they noticed a good amount of data entry performed by uniform staff. They also believe that the scheduling process is not beyond the abilities of an adequately trained civilian.
- Sheriff Diggins explained that having uniform staff perform scheduling duties is beneficial, because uniform personnel understand the work expected of deputies as well as their personalities and skillsets; this knowledge equates to a better distribution of assignments.
- Ms. Wachter stated that the implementation of Telestaff, which is scheduling software set to replace the current system used by the Denver Sheriff Department in late 2015, may alleviate some of the data entry workload currently experienced by staff. Ms. Wachter explained that there is a civilian employed by the Denver Police Department who administers Telestaff; a 2016 budget expansion request has been submitted by the Safety Department for a full-time Telestaff administrator for all departmental needs.



#### Department Orders, Post Orders and Policy Review

- Robert Davis from Hillard Heintz explained that most jurisdictions he has worked with or observed in California have civilianized these functions.
- Sheriff Diggins clarified that there are two deputy posts assigned to this work unit and not one as communicated on the powerpoint used for the presentation. The Sheriff also mentioned that these posts have been centralized in the research and data division of the department. He stated agreement that the duties should be performed by civilians, but disagreed that only one civilian – as recommended by Hillard Heintz – could manage the workload.

#### Security Posts

- Hillard Heintz commented that the various posts at issue – 303 W. Colfax Avenue, the City and County Building, and Treasury Department at the Wellington Webb Building – evolved into permanent assignments at unspecified points in time.
- Ms. Wachter commented that employees at 303 W. Colfax Avenue feel substantially safer now that deputies have been assigned to that facility.
- Sheriff Diggins commented that deputies provide security within the courtrooms at the City and County Building. He reminded attendees of his belief that courtroom security is a core function of the Sheriff Department. The Sheriff also explained that there are courtrooms located at 303 W. Colfax; in addition, the fact that individuals on probation regularly visit that facility increases the need for an armed, uniformed presence. He also stated that deputies are permitted to handcuff individuals and detain them in a holding area until the arrival of police officers. The Sheriff believes that transferring functions for the Treasury Department security to the Denver Police Department would be cost-inefficient to the City.
- Mr. Hanlon offered the idea of temporarily filling the posts not associated with courtroom security with Denver Police Officers. By doing so, those deputies assigned to the security posts could fill vacancies within the jails, thus alleviating some of the burnout issues faced by Denver Sheriff Department staff. Sheriff Diggins warned that some, seeing a further retreat in the department's scope, might interpret this message poorly, leading to further attrition.

#### Vehicle Impound Facility & Records Management Unit

- As the time allotted for this meeting had elapsed, attendees decided to table discussion on these topics until next week's meeting.

#### **Action Items:**

1. Distribute baseline post matrix to the sub-committee members.
2. Research other jurisdictions to see if adult detention facilities have civilianized mailroom functions – to what extent, when and how.
3. Follow-Up: secure and distribute a comment from the City's Chief Technology Officer, Frank Daidone, regarding his thoughts and observations.

**Next Meeting: July 16, 2015, 2:00pm – 4:00pm**  
**Wellington Webb Municipal Building, Room 1.D.1**