

Citizens Budget Advisory Committee
Multnomah County Sheriff's Office
Fiscal Year 2013
Speaking Notes

- Thank you Chair Cogen and Commissioners for the opportunity to speak with you and also for the opportunity to again provide input and feedback through our written report.
- The Sheriff's Office CBAC meets approximately 10 months out of the year with the help of Fiscal Manager Wanda Yantis and Chief Deputy Drew Brosh. We appreciate their help, and also that our questions have been addressed by various MCSO personnel and the Sheriff. Our visits to facilities such as the Multnomah County Detention Center and Central Booking have proved insightful.
- As you know from our written report we have been concerned that this year may be a significant one for the MCSO, in that it will be forced to make cuts that will be widely felt throughout the county with reductions to statutorily-mandated services.
- Chair Cogen we thank you for restoration of MCIJ Dorm 4. Funding Dorm 4 keeps 1310 beds in the system, which has actually been operating above 95% occupancy for several months. We have noted that monthly forced releases have increased dramatically since August 2011. In the 392 forced releases over the past 34 months, 69% (271) have occurred since August 2011.
- A question might be, are 1310 beds enough? With increased forced releases, it follows that the most violent and hardened criminals are occupying open beds. With jails beds full, does it also follow that sanctions will have to be lessened for more criminals? What impact will that have on the safety of our community?
- We would also like to acknowledge the work the Sheriff is doing to restore MCIJ Dorm 4, Turn Self In Program, and the In-Jail Human Trafficking Deputy program offers, through reconstruction of his existing budget and anticipated operational savings during the budget year. We recognize the need and coordinated benefits these services provide and appreciate the importance he places on them.
- In light of the cost and strain on jail beds, funding the Turn Self In Program makes good sense financially and for the individual. Since it is a formal sentencing alternative to incarceration, it allows individuals to maintain their employment and family obligations within the community.
- Since the County is getting more successful in putting traffickers in jail, the In-Jail Human Trafficking Sergeant becomes increasingly valuable. The intelligence gathered by this Sergeant has saved lives and is information that law enforcement and others would never get on the street. We understand that gangs who had previously been working against each other are now finding it beneficial to work together to profit from human trafficking. They also continue to do this business while in jail.

- We are relieved to see that core services such as Patrol (including River Patrol) were maintained at current levels. Our comment to you last year, which continues to ring true, is “that the Sheriff’s Office is very effective at Community Policing and is a necessary and welcomed part of the communities it serves. The Sheriff provides frontline services to its communities which encompass much more than just law enforcement and can be, in some circumstances, the only service provider”. Community Policing is different. The Sheriff’s Office is different. MCSO contributes to public safety in incorporated and unincorporated areas alike, in areas such as Rosewood, Sauvie Island, and Corbett. The impact MCSO and Deputy Graziano has had on the Corbett community, for instance, by establishing the Citizen Patrol program has been dramatic in reducing crime.
- To continue to provide current levels of these core services to our communities, the Sheriff has developed strategic resource-sharing partnerships with other agencies, such as Clark County Sheriff, Washington County Sheriff, and Portland Police. We applaud these efforts as all of us benefit from this type of service coordination.
- We are all aware that Federal grant dollars are diminishing. One expiring grant of particular importance to the citizens of Multnomah County is for an SIU detective. This position that investigates crimes involving sale, distribution and manufacturing of dangerous drugs is now out of target. MCSO has the only drug investigation unit in East Multnomah County and as reported, heroin related deaths are on the rise. This is not a good time to lose a position.
- Another program out of target is for two investigative support positions, one for INTERCEPT (INTERCEPT investigates crime against children) and one for Detectives (which includes elder abuse, human trafficking, jail investigations, Metro, etc). These positions are the only support staff assigned to these units, and have responsibility for complex administrative duties. Without these individuals, Detectives and Deputies must do the work, which doesn’t seem like an efficient or cost effective use of their time and skills.
- Again we ask you to consider that total compensation (salaries and benefits) is the single largest expense to the County and is an area where you can negotiate a significant impact.
- One last comment is, given the unprecedented number of corrections deputies retiring this year, recommendations from Grand Jury reports, and the significant savings in over-time dollars, we believe your use of “one-time only money” for Corrections Deputy hiring and training is timely and prudent. The projected \$1.1 million savings over three years after complete cost recovery is a perfect example of thinking outside the box. As with the Sustainable Jail Project, these decisions save the agency money and continue the improvement of the jail management system.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sheriff’s Office CBAC Members:

Ethan Atkinson, Julie Cieloha, Ray Davenport, Ron Saroff, Phyllis Thiemann