

June 2023

Sheriff Fletcher:

We continue working with your office to comply with the County Board action from earlier this year regarding budget and staffing to ensure full transparency and consistency in our collective work.

From a process perspective, I want to make sure you know that I have a monthly summary meeting to receive updates on this work and the information emanating from it. That summary meeting includes the Chief Financial Officer, Chief Human Resources Officer, Deputy County Manager, and the Chief Compliance and Ethics Officer. This meeting occurs after work has been directly done with your office to gain greater understanding of monthly spending and budgeting, staffing complement status, and other programmatic issues that may be raised as we work together. In short, this is a significant amount of work that we are all putting in to make sure we understand the dynamics of your office and how they relate in budget and/or staffing issues, and it will continue forward throughout at least the rest of this year to ensure that I am providing transparent and accurate information to the County Board and broader public.

As a final step of this process every month, you can expect that I will be sending a memo to you with key topics and questions that remain unanswered that I want to make sure you are getting a chance to address. The goal of these questions is to allow you a chance to see where I want to better understand your work and you can help clarify areas so that we may work together from a place of common understanding. This information should be straightforward for you to provide and therefore should not require significant effort. Finally, I want to let you know that I will be posting these memos on our website every month so that they are available to all interested parties. I believe transparency and accountability to be important in how we approach this work, and I believe that publicly posting the memos will build public confidence in how we are working to address budget, staffing and programmatic issues with your office. If you have other ideas for how you would like to ensure we are working collaboratively together on this important work, please let me know.

Follow-up Topics/Questions for June 2023

1. I want to acknowledge that inflationary costs associated with food and body camera costs are a budgetary pressure for your office in 2023 that will continue beyond this year. They will be addressed in the 2024-25 budget process to ensure we are on a sustainable path moving forward, and they are an issue for your office this year that I will continue to work with you to address. I am carefully tracking costs with this area through our third-party auditor and will use her figures – developed in partnership with your staff and the County's finance department – to determine the final inflationary impact during the year. It is important that you ensure that you are transparently sharing financial figures with her each month to make sure there is no disagreement on the final budget impact.
2. Costs to board incarcerated individuals are also a budgetary pressure for your office in 2023. Due to the Department of Corrections interim order to reduce the daily population at the adult detention

center, you are incurring higher than budgeted costs to board individuals outside of Ramsey County until you are able to bring the adult detention center back into compliance with state requirements. I will continue to work with you to address these issues during the rest of the year, and I ask that you provide a brief update on this topic each month as a response to this memo so that we ensure we are working together in a collaborative fashion. I am carefully tracking costs with this area through our third-party auditor and will use her figures – developed in partnership with your staff and the County’s finance department – to determine the final inflationary impact during the year. It is important that you ensure that you are transparently sharing financial figures with her each month to make sure there is no disagreement on the final budget impact.

3. HR is waiting for employee records for new hires and promotions that are required to be retained as part of each personnel file. It is my understanding that this was requested in March and is necessary to confirm that all employees hired or promoted met the minimum qualifications for the job. This is an immediate issue that needs to be addressed this month to ensure all employees are being correctly accounted for across our systems.
4. The staffing compliment report for the Sheriff’s Office needs to be cleaned up to provide transparency as to the current status of Sheriff’s Office staffing. The use of double filled positions and dual classifications has resulted in difficulty in determining the number of vacancies, thereby causing delays in approval to post positions, as well as your concerns that I cannot fully understand your staffing complement and deployment. There have been delays in correcting employee status to comply with labor agreements due to these issues, and it is important that we get them addressed.
5. An in-depth analysis of April payroll records for the Adult Detention Center showed it to be over compliment by four FTEs. This overstaffing appears “top heavy” in higher ranking positions. I would appreciate any information that you can provide to help me fully understand this dynamic and your stated position that you are “understaffed” in this facility.
6. It appears from our analysis that approximately 10 employees who are part of the adult detention center compliment are not on recent work schedules and/or are not working there at all. Please help me understand this dynamic or what information I am not seeing that would address this issue.
7. It seems that the Sheriff’s Office has bank accounts that are outside the county’s financial tracking system. These accounts must be reconciled and reported to Finance. These reconciliations are overdue and needed by our auditors to ensure all public funds are fully accounted for.
8. Contracts for Adult Detention Center Commissary and Video Visitation are expired, and no RFP has been created for a replacement contract. Please provide an update on your plans moving forward on these contracts.
9. The County Board has previously requested workshops with you on a variety of topics, and your office has yet to offer any dates of availability for those conversations. They include:

- Contract Cities Policing
- Drone Use Policy
- High Speed Chase Policy
- General Training, Employee Wellbeing and Culture
- Bail reform implementation efforts and projected impact on population levels at the adult detention center.

Please work with my office to get these important conversations scheduled.

I look forward to your help in addressing these topics so that I can remove them from next month's list and I can better understand the ongoing work of your office. Thank you in advance for working to help me answer questions that require your insight and expertise.

Sincerely,



Ryan T. O'Connor
County Manager
Ramsey County