October 12, 2015

Dear County Board Members,

After a 15-year delay in building out our downtown campus to meet the developing needs of Health and Human Services, the Family Court Program and the Justice System, on August 11, 2015, we formally voted to accept Substitute Resolution 30-2015-16. The major components of this resolution include increasing the overall square footage of the campus, keeping within an estimated budget of $36.7 million, and focusing on our current shortcomings in space, safety, and privacy issues. We know we are on the brink of an increased demand for services for the aging Baby Boomer population; we know our county's overall population is also increasing. We agreed we need to plan ahead to meet needs for the next decade and beyond, to enable greater cooperation and efficiencies between various departments, and to examine and address the concerns raised by the Sheriff's Department in regard to response times.

Criminal justice reform is becoming a subject of national conversation, especially Treatment Alternatives, and Diversion (TAD) programs, mental health issues, and the decriminalization of drug use. As many of you are aware, Outagamie County is the recipient of the Evidence Based Decision Making Phase V Grant through the National Institute of Corrections. The goal of this grant is to examine all phases of our criminal justice system through a data-driven lens, allowing facts and figures to drive our plans and policies rather than traditional strategies. The kickoff event was in June and will take several years of work. What the committee may conclude is still an open question; therefore, we should be cautious about committing ourselves to spending large sums on traditional policing systems and strategies before we can definitively say that they will be the most effective in a law enforcement future that is changing rapidly, not only in technology but in evidence based practice.

I propose we proceed cautiously in moving the Sheriff's Department in whole or in part as we did in the past when we rejected building a Huber Facility and moved to alternatives to incarceration. We are not certain what the future will hold for Outagamie County. We do know that the county's population growth will bring other changes. We know that there's a nationwide push to address addiction and mental health issues differently. How will that affect daily interactions between law enforcement officers and citizens? We are also aware that the State Patrol is considering building a local agency in the Fox Valley. Can we interest them in a joint facility?

In the meantime, we cannot allow these unknowns to hamper necessary improvements to our citizens' safety and privacy as they visit the downtown campus. The most pressing area of concern for the sheriff and the general public are response times in the event of life-threatening emergencies in rural areas. All

of the sheriff's initial proposals include moving most of his department out of the downtown campus and into a new, stand-alone facility near a major highway. However, in light of both possible future changes driven by evidence based decision making and ongoing budgetary constraints, I'd like to propose a compromise.

Currently the sheriff uses the Highway Department located near Hwy OO and Hwy 441. The Sheriff's Department out-of-season equipment is stored there, along with specialty purpose equipment and long-term evidence storage. The 55 one-to-one squad cars are serviced at this facility as well. Plan D for the Sheriff's Department includes an extra 3,500 square feet. If this space was added to the current Highway Department complex, it would enable the sheriff to move as much of the patrol-related staff as he deems necessary to reduce response time, thereby enhancing rural public safety. It would be a lower-cost way to test if response times are reduced significantly, if the "case closed" percentages increase, and if overall citizen satisfaction is increased. The site is large enough for future expansion, including a new jail in the future.

Big changes in criminal justice and law enforcement are on the horizon, whether at the federal, the state, or local level, and we don't know what the consequences will be for our agencies. In the meantime, let's move ahead with developing Plan D and address our pressing safety, space, and HIPAA privacy requirements as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Helen

Helen Nagler

Board Chair