

BUDGET FACTS

The purpose of this post is to correct the misinformation and misunderstanding about the Winnebago County Sheriff's budget among elected officials and the general public.

INACCURACIES:

Recently, the county administration circulated a "draft" [Document 1](#) that falsely claimed that since taking office Sheriff Caruana increased the Sheriff's payroll by \$604,374.28. This information is misleading, because it failed to factor in the cost savings resulting from attrition. What the county administration described as a cost increase of \$604,374.28 was really a -\$296,933.90 cost savings. This is a difference of nearly \$1 million.

Another example was reported in a recent article by a local columnist. In that article, the columnist reported that the former Sheriff had a total budget of \$27.8 million in FY 2014. This is inaccurate. In FY 2014, the former Sheriff's (for personnel only) budget was \$28,097,072 and his total budget was \$34,285,051 ([Budget Comparison](#)). The result of this error is that it mistakenly implied that the former Sheriff was able to operate the department on \$27.8 million leaving out the cost of SUPPLIES and CAPITAL.

Finally, certain members of the County Board articulated the erroneous belief that the Sheriff is responsible for only corrections and courthouse security. This is inaccurate. Under Illinois law, the Sheriff is responsible for enforcing the criminal laws and preserving the peace (i.e. law enforcement operations), serving civil process, serving as the custodian of the jail and the chief policy maker for courthouse security.

FACTS:

A more accurate description of the comparison between the former Sheriff's budget in FY 2014 and Sheriff Caruana's budget in FY 2017, is that in FY 2014 the total budget was \$34,285,051 and in FY 2017 the Sheriff's total budget was \$37,992,195. Accordingly, the Sheriff's budget in FY 2017 was \$3,707,144 more than the budget in FY 2014. The reasons for this difference are as follows:

- While the amount of money budgeted to the Sheriff increased in FY 2017, staffing levels did not materially increase. In fact, the average for FY 2017 shows that the Sheriff's Office only employs 1 more person than was employed under the former Sheriff in FY 2014. In addition, and as explained below, the difference in funding was largely the result of collectively bargained for raises.
- The budget for the Sheriff's Office in FY 2017 is relatively the same as it was in FY 2009. This doesn't include the annual rate of inflation that occurred between 2009 and the present, the dramatic increase in violent crime and the increase in operational costs that are incurred as the result of unfunded mandates in Illinois law.
- The previous county administration negotiated significant pay increases in AFSCME's four-year contract that was negotiated in FY2016 by the county administration and included retroactive pay for failing to reach collective bargaining agreements in 2014 and 2015. This collective bargaining agreement (and the retroactive pay) was subsequently approved by the Winnebago County Board.
- It should be noted that under the [arbitrator's ruling](#), the corrections officers received a pay grade adjustment over two years based on a 2008 job study arbitration ruling. The arbitrator said;

When Winnebago County's financial standing has returned to pre-downturn standings, employees in the Correctional Officer positions will receive increases and/or changes as listed below. The financial pre-downturn standing is defined as:

- All County departments have returned to regular 40-hour work weeks, and
- All County departments are in a position to provide wage increases, and
- The annualized General Revenue funds are at or above \$54,000,000, and
- The annualized 1% Public Safety Sales Tax Revenues are at or above \$29,600,000.

That ruling triggered payment of the adjustment when the annualized general fund revenues are above \$54 million and the annualized 1% public safety sales tax revenues are at or above \$29.6 million.

- To summarize, the largest spike in monetary increases will occur to the Sheriff's budget in FY 2016 and FY 2017. This is because former county administration agreed back pay, pay raises, arbitration ordered pay grade study and county administration authorized FOP pay raises all became due in 2016 and were also compounded in FY 2017. All of these increases were negotiated by the former county administration between 2014 and 2015 and approved by the County Board.
- The difference in the two budget years is also explained by Sheriff Caruana's need to hire additional telecommunicators in 2015 because the previous administration failed to adequately staff the 911 Center to answer 911 calls in a timely manner and that the telecommunicators were working 12-hour days, 7 days a week being mandated back to work.
- The difference in the two budget amounts is that in FY 2016 and FY 2017 Sheriff Caruana had to hire 10 correctional officers to attempt to correct the insufficient corrections staffing that resulted in a near riot in the jail in 2016. The hiring of these officers was supported by the former County Administration and approved by the Winnebago County Board. The reader should also note that despite the hiring of these officers, our jail remains understaffed and the subject of a pending AFSCME grievance.

SHERIFF CARUANA CUT COSTS

The Sheriff has implemented programs to cut costs and save taxpayer money, including:

- At the end of FY 2017, the Sheriff's Office finished in the black, by having \$543,915 remaining in the personnel budget.

- Between 2015 and 2017, Sheriff Caruana operated an inmate work crew program that saved public and private entities tens of thousands of dollars in labor
- In 2016, the Sheriff saved taxpayers money by substituting 911 supervision by uniformed patrol sergeants with civilian supervisors. The benefit of this change was compounded by increasing the level of law enforcement supervision on the street. The previous administration assigned 4 sergeants to sit around the clock at the 911 Center in exchange for civilian supervisors who cost half of this amount
- In FY 2016, the Sheriff saved hundreds of thousands of jail commissary dollars by eliminating clothes washers and dryers located in each jail pod and consolidating the jail laundry operations into one central location to eliminate the constant and costly practice of buying new machines to replace worn out machines
- In FY 2017 the Sheriff implemented an automated, payroll and scheduling program to replace an antiquated paper system that was vulnerable to fraud.
- In FY 2017 Sheriff Caruana eliminated across the board raises for supervisors and clothing allowances in 2016.
- In FY 2017 the Sheriff began a program to repair damaged inmate jail jumpsuits instead of buying new jumpsuits.
- Effective 1/1/17 Sheriff Caruana eliminated the 1% county longevity bonus for civilian employees allowing more savings to the Sheriff's budget.

SHERIFF CARUANA INCREASED REVENUE TO COUNTY GENERAL FUND

The Sheriff has implemented programs to increase revenue to the county's general fund including:

- Beginning in FY 2016, housing federal prisoners at an annual revenue of \$800,000 to the county general fund and not the Sheriff's budget
- Beginning in FY 2018, contracting with a new vendor to supply inmate phone service that guarantees a minimum annual revenue of \$904,000 to the county general fund and not the Sheriff's budget
- Recommended increasing towing fees that are deposited in the county general fund and not the Sheriff's budget
- Recommended increasing bond fees that are deposited in the county general fund and not the Sheriff's budget
- For the first time, charging a fee for fingerprinting service that is deposited in the county general fund and not the Sheriff's budget

EXPLANATION OF TABLE:

Attached are two documents. [Document 1](#) provides an incomplete and misleading perception of the Sheriff's promotion process. Specifically, this document on its face, attempted to show that since Sheriff Gary Caruana took office in December 2014, he increased spending on promotions by more than \$600,000. In fact, the Sheriff's Office has reduced spending on promotions by almost \$300,000. This discrepancy distorts the reader's perception of how much Sheriff Caruana has spent on promotions by almost \$1 million.

[Document 2](#) is a complete and accurate explanation of the Sheriff's personnel assignments. The names highlighted in the spreadsheet, are the employees promoted and cited by the Administration in their misleading document number 1. The names that are not highlighted are the employees who either retired or resigned from the Sheriff's Office or were new hires during Sheriff Caruana's tenure in office.

One example of the misleading nature of Document 1 is the listing of two corrections officers who received the highest salary increases and were promoted to sergeant. On its face, they appear to be excessive pay increases. However, these increases were required by preexisting Sheriff's department policy that requires a person in a supervisory position to be paid 5% more than the people they supervise.

Another example is shown by the retirement of a deputy chief. The retirement created a vacancy filled by the promotion of a law enforcement sergeant. This in turn created a sergeant vacancy filled by the promotion of a detective. This in turn created a vacancy in the detective bureau that was ultimately filled by a deputy which created a vacant deputy position. This chain of (3) promotions actually resulted in a cost savings of more than \$40,000. This cost savings domino effect has repeated many times during Sheriff Caruana's tenure resulting in overall cost savings of \$300,000, not an increase in more than \$600,000.

A third example is periodically shown throughout the spreadsheet by the retirement of a senior deputy who was ultimately replaced by an entry level deputy that resulted in an average cost savings of \$40,000.

In sum, if you have any questions, the Sheriff's command staff is happy to meet with you and explain each itemized promotion. Please call 815.319.6000 with any questions or concerns.