



PORTAGE COUNTY

PORTAGE COUNTY ANNEX
CONFERENCE ROOM 5
1462 STRONGS AVENUE
STEVENS POINT, WI 54481

MEETING MINUTES

JUDICIAL/GENERAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, February 23, 2021

4:45 PM

REMOTE ATTENDANCE & COMMENT

To attend this meeting by telephone : dial 1-608-338-1399, after dialing the number you will then be asked to enter in a meeting number. Use the following meeting number: 768 921 38, then press #

To attend this meeting by video: [Click here to join the meeting](#)

Due to COVID-19 and the potential risk to members of the public who attend meetings in-person, any person who plans to attend the meeting remotely, but wishes to comment on an agenda item can send their comments via email to jentzl@co.portage.wi.us. The deadline for sending comments by email is 48 hours prior to the start of the meeting. Emailed comments will be delivered to committee members at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. Remote comment by the public during the meeting will be at the discretion of the Chair.

CALL TO ORDER

The Judicial/General Government Committee meeting was called to order at 4:46 PM

Members Present:

Attending In-Person: Matt Jacowski, Dave Medin

Attending Online: Vinnie Miresse, Dennis Raabe

Members Excused: Stan Potocki

Staff Attending: County Clerk Filen, Clerk of Courts Roth, Justice Programs Director Behnke, Corporation Counsel Ray, District Attorney Molepske, Veterans Services Director Clements, Bill Hlavac

PUBLIC NOTICE

Members of the public who wish to address the Committee on specific agenda items must register their request at this time, with such comments subject to the reasonable control of the Committee Chair as set forth in Robert's Rules of Order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. December 22, 2020 Minutes

A motion was made by Dave Medin, seconded by Dennis Raabe, to approve The December 22nd, 2020 minutes. Motion to approve passed by unanimous voice vote.

REPORTS

2. Vendor Invoice Lists

DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION

3. Discussion/Possible Action Re: Regarding Special Meeting Attendance (Portage County Ordinance 3.1.47 & 3.1.48)

- Request for special meeting attendance
- Approval of attendance of special meetings
- Special meeting attendance reports

9. Register of Deeds

a. Office and Budget update

Register of Deeds Wisinski requested to be moved up on the agenda. Chair Jacowski granted the request.

Register of Deeds Wisinski provided the following report:

2020 Budget- The department was able to return money back to the County as we brought in more revenue than expenses.

2021 Budget- we are doing well and appear to be a little ahead of where we should be at this time of year.

Office has been busy moving files off the AS400. This requires data entry to do and can be time consuming. We have moved 1164 Assessment rolls and 2500 vital records. We still have a few months' worth of work to complete on this.

December and January this office assisted the Treasurers department with collecting taxes. We handled their mail during busy times.

Member Stan Potocki was added to quorum at 4:49p.m.

4. District Attorney

a. Office and Budget Update

District Attorney Molepske provided the following report.

Hired new ADA Brian Pfeil office is now at full staffing of allocated prosecutors (6 positions).

Due to Covid 19, law enforcement referrals were cut in half in 2020 and the number of jail terms was also down as LE did not want to cause further covid-19 issues in the jail.

The DA office has approximately 50 pending jury trials as jury trials were suspended in 2020 and won't begin until approximately September of 2021.

The DA office returned money to the general fund in 2020 of approximately 60,000 as we had an open unfilled position due to covid 19 slow down. That position will be filled in 2021. Currently, the DA is hiring for a new office manager position.

5. Clerk of Courts

a. Office and Budget Update

The following report was provided by Clerk of Courts Roth:

Budget Update:

2020 Budget:

Current \$18,000 surplus for 2020, still one other grant to add which will increase the amount (estimate by \$3000 range)

Highlights to 2020 surplus:

- work force reduction (using FEDERAL funds, not county)
- unfilled retirements (saving wages and benefits)
- sending two full time staff to contact tracing under FEDERAL funding

Current budget status:

Expenses = 11% (based on several full-year encumbrances)

Revenues = 3.3% (Will see a jump when court funding, state and federal grants are received in July and January.)

Department Update:

Four retirements in the past four months. Only one of those positions has been re-filled and was by internal transfer from the Clerk of Court. Clerk of Courts is currently operating two FTE short and Branch I has not refilled a vacancy as of yet.

One vacancy is being held open for the time being. Duties have been absorbed by current staff. It's safe to do this for now as we are not doing jury trials as of yet. Judges are now looking at delaying bringing in jurors until September 2021.

As to the other internal vacancy, this position assists the Family Court Commissioner (FCC) generally half time approximately .50 FTE.

At this time, I'm working with Laura / HR to completely move .50 FTE out of the clerk of courts budget giving the .50 FTE to FCC for budget, hiring and supervision.

The balance of the position, the other 50%, in lieu of filling that, I'm asking to step up one of my current deputy clerk's to a lead position which will be designated to training and development of new and current staff. This is not a change to the position's grade, or step. It adds .70 cents to their current rate of pay. At this point, I'm essentially giving up 50% of a position which is favorable to HR and Finance.

As a part of this, we will be asking and working with Facilities to divide off a portion of our office to be dedicated to FCC and 20 hour assistant position.

How to accomplish the space needs for this change:

Purchasing has assisted me with listing a high density movable file system online with Wisconsin Surplus. Large unit no longer needed. Once sold and removed, use space for a larger training and conference room opening up our current conference room on the east end of the office to the FCC staff.

Earlier this month, attended the Wisconsin Clerk of Courts Institute. Since it was virtual, we set up the entire conference to be viewable for all staff to attend as time allowed throughout the day right in our office.

This week: Attending (COC and Chief Deputy) UW-Green Bay Governmental Affairs Master Academy for Civic and Public Affairs virtual classes. This will then complete 48 hours of courses required for being accredited with Certificate of Court Executive Development / Leadership in Circuit Court Administration

Judge Patricia Baker was sworn into office January 4th with a formal investiture January 8th. Finished up three week mentoring program and is currently busy handling intake court, Judge Flugaur's passed-on case load and new cases assigned to her branch. The transition has gone extremely well.

COVID-19 continues to impact the court with video and telephone appearances. Some cases are postponed because individuals report to be in quarantine. Eviction moratorium extended.

We are currently taking passport applications and handling photo service. So, ALL passport services have resumed yet continue to be very slow.

Currently working on department personnel evaluations.

All of our department staff is currently working in the office.

6. Justice Programs

a. Office and Budget update

Justice Programs Director Behnke provided the following report:

In 2020, Justice Programs has expended 78.7% of its allotted budget.

Pretrial Programming:

DOJ denied sending the FBI our request for NCIC access

A change needs to be made to the JusticePoint contract indicating that the Pretrial Services Subunit (criminal justice agency) is supervising JusticePoint

Andrea met with Corp Counsel to discuss language for the contract

Cannot move forward until NCIC access is approved.

2020 Pretrial Stats

Day Report: 74 people on average
Pretrial Supervision: 23 people on average
Post Supervision: 13 people on average

UA/Swabs: 767
Positive: 125

PBT: 5265

Positive: 15

Treatment Court has 10 active participants and 3 pending referrals.

Two graduates will take place in the next two months.
One participant passed from an apparent drug overdose.

2020 Treatment Court Stats

Graduated: 6

Terminated: 6

Ineligible: 6

Deceased prior to sentencing: 1

DA & LE Denial: 1

LE Denial: 1

DOC withdrew offer: 1

Does not meet residency requirements: 1

Risk Level too Low: 1

Declined Participation: 1

Administrative Discharge: 1

Portage County Treatment Court was asked to participate in a racial and ethnic disparities (RED) Assessment Tool pilot assessment and the results were presented to the Wisconsin Association of Treatment Court Professionals Equity and Inclusion Committee. All pilot sites have been asked to continue to participate on the committee which Portage County will do.

7. Veterans Services

a. Office and Budget update

Veterans Service Director Clements provided the following report:

Office update

The office is open and staffed during normal business hours M-F.

The Veterans Service Director submitted the annual County Veterans Service Grant on January 13, 2021 to the Wisconsin Dept of Veterans Affairs. As of 02/15/2021, the grant application is still being processed by the state. Grant amount is \$11,500.

A private citizen donated \$10,000 to the Portage County Veterans Relief Fund during January, 2021. The donation was deposited with the County Treasurer.

Office walk-in traffic continues to be at about one half the normal monthly rate. The Veterans Service Director believes this is attributable to COVID-19.

Budget status report

As of 02/15/2021, the Veterans Service Department has expended 6.6% of its allotted budget for 2021. The budget is on-track as forecast.

8. Corporation Counsel

a. Office and Budget update

b. Discussion/ Possible Action RE: Authorization of Exception to Portage County Ordinance 3.11.5.2 Procedure-Limited Term Employee-Assistant Corporation Counsel LTE position for additional hours.

Corporation Counsel Ray provided the following report:

- Budget—approximately 9.6% expended year to date.
- In-office Protocol—We increased the number of our staff working in the office on any given day to just over half on most days. In-person court appearances are increasing slightly too, with the remainder of hearings being handled remotely.
- One of our Legal Associates, Rhonda Stauss, retired in early January 2021. We are advertising that position and hope to

interview candidates in early March;

- Key projects our department is working on include:

Continuing to process the sale of county-owned Tax Deed properties. The second round of the online auction with Wisconsin Surplus begins February 24, 2021 and will continue for 30 days;

Working on a possible offer to purchase for one of the few remaining parcels for sale in the Business Park;

Continuing to monitor state level COVID-19 legislation and DHS handling of vaccinations, etc.;

Assisting the Health Care Center with transitioning to a new vendor for cleaning and laundry services at their facility;

Working with the Solid Waste Director on revisions to portions of the solid waste disposal and recycling provisions of the county's ordinance;

Working with Highway Department on getting vendor to remove, relocate/reinstall fiberoptic cable initially installed in the wrong location and also working on matters related to the recently adopted ATV ordinance (Sheriff's Office as well);

Working with Sheriff's Office and DA's office on court ordered sale of seized items in a criminal case (proceeds to go to the crime victim);

Continuing to handle our schedule of child support enforcement, Chapter 51 Mental Health cases, CHIPS/TPR, and child support enforcement files; and

Currently in the process of filing and/or handling Planning and Zoning Department lawsuits and matters involving:

--Septic System Maintenance Enforcement small claims lawsuits (multiple cases);

--A zoning ordinance violation enforcement lawsuit involving junked vehicles and solid waste disposal; and

--A Memorandum of Understanding with Delta Dental of Wisconsin, Inc. regarding construction of a segment of the Multi-Purpose Trail along the west edge of Delta Dental's complex along I-39, south of the Skyward complex.

Discussion/ Possible Action RE: Authorization of Exception to Portage County Ordinance 3.11.5.2 Procedure-Limited Term Employee-Assistant Corporation Counsel LTE position for additional hours.

A motion was made by Dave Medin, seconded by Stan Potocki, to approve the resolution. Motion to approve passed by unanimous voice vote.

10. County Clerk

a. Office and Budget Update

b. Discussion/ Possible Action RE: Referrals of Resolutions and other Items Received by the County Clerk

County Clerk Filen provided the following report:

Budget

County Board per diem budget is at 11% and mileage at 5% for 2021

Revenues are at 5% for 2021 with a slow start to the year with marriage license issuances

Election operating budget is at 25% for 2021. We have a few more small invoices to pay for the February primary for municipal media buys. We are on track for the 2021 election budget.

Elections

The February primary was quiet with a 9% turnout.

Preparation is underway for the April Election.

There have been a number of proposals by legislators this week to put additional requirements on voting such:

1. Requiring absentee voters to submit their photo ID for each election they request a ballot for
2. Requiring what amounts to a doctor's note to be placed on the indefinitely confined absentee ballot list
3. Requiring an additional application to be completed for voters who come to vote early in-person absentee

Governor Evers has also proposed changes to voting laws in his recent budget release including:

1. Automatic voter registration via the DMV,
2. Processing absentee ballots the day before the election
3. Eliminating restrictions on in-person absentee voting availability.

Discussion/ Possible Action RE: Referrals of Resolutions and other Items Received by the County Clerk

County Clerk Filen stated that on occasion the County Clerk receives resolutions approved by County Boards throughout the State. Currently resolutions received are either forwarded to the entire Board or not passed on at all at the discretion of the County Board Chair. I would like to implement a process where the resolutions are sent to a committee whose scope the resolution falls within. By sending it to a related committee, there is more of a chance that the resolution would produce something fruitful for Portage County. The committee chair would then have discretion over adding it to a future agenda. Referrals could also be reported to the entire County Board via correspondence at a subsequent meeting.

A motion was made by Dave Medin, seconded by Dennis Raabe, to direct the County Clerk to refer resolutions received from other counties to the appropriate committee at the discretion of the County Clerk. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote. It was further discussed that the County Clerk would report any referrals made to the County Board as a whole as part of correspondence at the next County Board following any referral.

CORRESPONDENCE

NEXT MEETING DATE:

March 23, 2021 at 4:45p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Vinnie Miresse, seconded by Stan Potocki, to adjourn. Motion carried by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 05:46 PM

NOTICES

Notice: Any person who has special needs and plans on attending this meeting in-person or remotely should contact the Facilities Office at 715-346-1598 as soon as possible to ensure that reasonable accommodations can be made.

Notice: A quorum of the Portage County Board of Supervisors, or any committee thereof, may be present at this meeting.