



PORTAGE COUNTY

MEETING MINUTES

JUDICIAL/GENERAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

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

Tuesday, September 28, 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: 159 647 95, 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 04:45 PM

Members Present In-Person: Vinnie Miresse, Dennis Raabe, Stan Potocki, Matt Jacowski, Dave Medin

Staff Attending In-person: County Clerk Filen, Register of Deeds Wisinski, Clerk of Courts Roth

Staff Attending On-line: Corporation Counsel Ray, Justice Programs Director Behnke, Finance Treasury Coordinator 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

Chair Jacowski stated that there were no minutes to approve. Two sets of minutes would be approved at the next meeting.

REPORTS

1. Vendor Invoice Lists
 - a. Vendor Invoice Lists August 2021

Chair Jacowski stated that any questions on the reports could be addressed during the office and budget update for the respective department.

DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION

2. 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
3. Clerk of Courts
 - a. Office and Budget Update

Clerk of Courts Roth provided the following report:

Budget Update:

Current budget status:

Expenses = 61.7% (End of September would be approximately 75%)

Department Update:

Two of our staff have transferred to the Child Support Agency.

We have been very busy working with Human Resources on recruitments. Further updates on staffing and recruitment.

As mentioned in the past, operating minus 1.5 FTE positions (from one year ago) and holding one of those open for the time being and choosing to eliminate the other .50. With this, I have opened up discussion regarding passport services and the prospect of letting this service go in lieu of refilling one full time position that remains vacant. I checked with other clerks of court in the 71 other counties.

Most clerks of court have let this service go to another department (most always the county clerk), to the post office, or abandoned it completely. This service is not a function of the courts, it is not statutory. This service crowds our counter and takes a great deal of time. I have opened this discussion up with Chris Holman and asked for Finance input. Passport and passport photo revenue is roughly \$45,000 to \$55,000 per year. The cost of a full time deputy clerk position at step one is \$67,000. Other departments may be interested in this service who need further duties to justify a new position or half time position.

4. Justice Programs
a. Office and Budget Update

Justice Programs Director Behnke provided the following report:

Since September 28, 2021, Justice Programs has expended 64% of its allotted budget.

Justice Programs budget has not yet been finalized so the proposed changes to pretrial programming are still on hold.

Treatment Court has 7 active participants and 4 pending referrals.

The TAD grant application was submitted on September 23, 2021

Treatment Court Oversight Committee was held on September 13, 2021. Agenda items of interest were the complete revision of the participants handbook and the Time Task Plan that gives recommended improvements to our Treatment Court.

Judge Baker is now the presiding Judge of Treatment Court as of September 7th.

The Justice Coalition Executive Committee was canceled. Nothing to report.

I met with two individuals from the Central Wisconsin Hmong Professionals and we discussed the training opportunities for the Justice Programs staff to receive training on how best to provide services to individuals from the Hmong culture and also educate on the services provided through Justice Programs.

Justice Programs is working with two social work professors from UW-Stevens Point to evaluate 2015-2018 day report/pretrial program to determine if using an assessment sparingly had an impact of court appearances and pretrial rearrest.

5. Veterans Services
a. Office and Budget Update

Veteran Services Director Clements was not present but provided a written report that was included in the agenda packet.

6. Corporation Counsel
a. Office and Budget Update

Corporation Counsel Ray provided an office and budget update to the committee.

7. Register of Deeds
a. Office and Budget Update

Register of Deeds Wisinski provided the following report:

Current Budget: Expenses are down, and revenue is up. We are seeing an increase in documents being electronically filed. This saves staff time and money. We don't have to physically touch the document and there is no mail involved as is automatically is returned to the sender in a matter of minutes.

PRIA Conference-Property Records Industry Association This conference was held in Milwaukee. This is a National conference that made its way to Wisconsin this year. Wisinski briefly explained some of the information she learned.

Office staff have starting to attend in person conferences/meeting.

b. Update on Mechanic/Construction Liens on Deeds

Register of Deeds reported to the committee that there is no County in the State of Wisconsin that does this type of research prior to recording documents. That is an Abstract/Title Companies duty. Atty David Ray concurred that this is not a duty of the Register of Deeds office.

8. District Attorney
 - a. Office and Budget Update

No one was present from the District Attorney's office to provide an office and budget update.

9. County Clerk
 - a. Discussion/Possible Action Re: Authorizing a Contract Between Portage County and MSA Professional Services, Inc. for Environmental Inspections for a 5-year Term

A motion was made by Vinnie Miresse, seconded by Dennis Raabe, to approve the resolution. Motion to approve carried by voice vote, with no negative votes.

- b. Civic Clerk Update

Clerk Filen provided a brief update on CivicClerk. Portage County IT continues to work with CivicClerk to address voting issues. Supervisors were reminded to restart their computers when they arrive for the County Board meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

NEXT MEETING DATE

ADJOURNMENT

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.