



PORTAGE COUNTY

MEETING MINUTES

JUDICIAL/GENERAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

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

Tuesday, August 24, 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: 304 384 454, 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: Vinnie Miresse, Dennis Raabe, Stan Potocki, Matt Jacowski, Dave Medin

Staff Attending in person: County Clerk File, Register of Deeds Wisinski, Clerk of Courts Roth, Justice Programs Director Behnke

Others Attending in person: Christopher Protrowski

Staff Attending remotely via Teams: Assistant Corporation Counsel Sweeney, Veterans Services Director Clements, 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

1. June 22nd, 2021 Minutes

REPORTS

2. a. June 2021 Vendor Invoice Lists
b. July 2021 Vendor Invoice Lists

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

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
4. Discussion only Re: Mechanic/ Construction Liens on Deeds

Christopher Protrowski spoke regarding concerns he has with Deeds being recorded by the Register of Deeds' office that have liens. Mr. Protrowski indicated he believed this was a Portage County issue as he has not had the same issues with other counties. Register

of Deeds Wisinski stated that the liens are filed with the Clerk of Courts and that information is not connected to the land records. It is the responsibility of a title company to do a proper search on a parcel to determine if there are any liens, not the Register of Deeds. Chair Jacowski asked Assistant Corporation Counsel Sweeney to research the issue and report back at the next meeting of the Committee.

5. Justice Programs
a. Office and Budget Update

Justice Programs Director Behnke provided the following report:
Since August 24, 2021, Justice Programs has expended 61% of its allotted budget.

Budget hearing occurred last week.

Asked for additional funding to revamp the pretrial programming to be more evidence-based.

Will ask for an increase in TAD grant funds.

Asked for a part-time recovery coach contracted position for Treatment Court.

Health and Human Services received grant funds for an Overdose Fatality Review Committee which I will be one of the committee members. Today I participated in the Overdose Fatality Review Training.

Treatment Court has 7 active participants and 2 pending referrals. One graduation will take place next week.

The TAD grant application opened today and needs to be submitted by September 23, 2021.

Treatment Court Oversight Committee will be held on September 13, 2021. Several items on the agenda.

Treatment Court team attended a two-day Operational Tune Up Training through the National Drug Court Institute. A Time Task Plan was developed to assist in improving our current Treatment Court.

Judge Shannon announced that he will be stepping down as Treatment Court Judge either August 30th or September 6th. Judge Baker will be presiding over Treatment Court once Judge Shannon steps down.

b. Discussion/Possible action to approve 2022 contract above \$25,000 but less than \$100,000 with JusticePoint (Treatment Court)

A motion was made by Vinnie Miresse, seconded by Stan Potocki, to approve the contract. Motion to approve carried by voice vote, with no negative votes.

6. Veterans Services
a. Office and 2021 Budget Update

Veterans Services Director Clements provided an office and budget update to the committee.

b. 2022 Budget Report

Veterans Services Director Clements reported on the proposed 2022 budget as provided in the agenda packet.

7. Corporation Counsel
a. Office and Budget Update

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

NOTE: Supervisor Miresse was excused at 5:22p.m.

8. Register of Deeds
a. Office and Budget Update

Register of Deeds Wisinski provided the following report:
Register of Deeds Wisinski reported that the 2021 budget is on track. Revenue is high and expenses are low.

b. 2022 Budget Report

Register of Deeds Wisinski provided the following report

2022 budget review was held by Finance and the County Executive. She shared copies of the proposed budget with members of the committee. Increase is reflected in recordings and transfer fees for next year in addition to searching and copy fees from online programs. Since book repair is only done every other year, the line item for this expense has been increased as it is difficult to get

someone in that can a small amount of work. Wisinski went through each line item in budget and entertained any questions the committee had.

9. District Attorney
a. Office and Budget Update

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

b. 2022 Budget Report

No one was present from the District Attorney's office to provide a 2022 budget report.

10. Clerk of Courts
a. Office and Budget Update

Clerk of Courts Roth provided the following report:

Budget Update:

Current budget status:

Expenses = 54.5% (End of August would be 67%)

Savings in staffing, jury, gal and court appointed atty costs

Department Update:

Filled the fiscal deputy clerk vacancy in our office. Susan Burant accepted the position and has been doing extremely well through the training process.

As of last week, we have a new vacancy, which is currently posted for recruitment. This is our family/paternity clerk and court clerk due to a transfer over and promotion to the Child Support Agency at Human Services.

Jury trials did finally resume in August. We have had two so far. Over the next 3 months, we have over 30 cases set for jury trial.

Judge Baker will be presiding over the Adult Treatment Court next month...taking over from Judge Shannon.

b. 2022 Budget Report

Clerk of Courts Roth provided the following report:

2022 Budget:

Revenue:

Budgeting approximately the same funding from State Grants – Circuit Court Payments (up 1.5%), Guardian Ad Litem Aid, Child Support Cooperative Agreement and Juvenile Legal Representation.

Budget for a slight decrease in court costs due to a decrease in court filings (which is being experienced across the state) and an increase from last in county ordinance collections which increased by 12.5%.

Expenses:

Staffing is down in expenses:

Currently, I have one un-filled position from January of this year. Holding that position open, and budgeting for it in 2022. This is the jury clerk/payment officer position.

Bailiffs:

It increased from \$75,000 to \$80,000 for court aides and jury bailiffs, a 5% increase from \$9500 to \$10,000 due to the back log in cases waiting for trial.

Other than wages and benefits, substantial areas are the

Court Appointed Attorneys: Budget less for 2022:

This year I budgeted \$100,000. Projected actual is \$75,000. 2022 = Down to \$85,000 (15%)

Guardian ad Litem: Budgeted less for 2022 as well:

This year I budget \$175,000. The project is set at \$135,000. 2022 = Down to \$135,000 (22.86%). I have also projected to recoup about \$30,000 from juvenile legal aide funds and remember we receive state funding around \$78,000.

Family Law Information Center:

Once again asking for \$10,000 from the county to support the center and anticipating \$30,000 fees that get paid out to JusticeWorks monthly as it comes in.

No change in court commissions charges.

The only area of concern is Medical Services:

This is typically for psychological exams and expert witnesses to prepare court-ordered reports and provide testimony.

This year I budgeted \$55,000 and now am projecting the actual to be around \$70,000.

Next year's budgeted amount is at \$60,000 (9% increase).

Revenues last year with COVID were down \$220,000, however finished off the year under budget well over \$30,000.

Law Library funding: (Located in Register of Deeds office, legal books and computer applications). Addressed this issue with the County Executive at the Budget Hearing.

We have a 3-year contract to provide an online data base for legal research and for book subscriptions and updates. Cost is \$31,000.

Built into the contract is a 3% price increase each year. I have been collecting information on other options for this resource (such as the State Law Library in Madison) and would like to discuss the county's options and intentions with continuing this service prior to executing a renewal in September 2022.

Ultimately, ended up 5.6% under budget ceiling, approximately \$52,000 at this time.

11. County Clerk

a. Office and Budget Update

County Clerk Filen provided the following report:

Budget Update

2021 Budget expenditure 60.1%

Department Update

Redistricting

Working closely with GIS to develop a tentative plan as well as meeting with municipal clerks to help coordinate county and municipal redistricting efforts. The tentative plan is set to go to the Redistricting Committee on September 2.

County Board Compensation

Thursday, August 26th, there will be a joint meeting of HR & Ex/Ops to review the compensation options developed in collaboration with Finance, HR, and County Clerk

Environmental Inspections RFP

Environmental inspections on tax delinquent properties is required by ordinance. The contract with the current vendor expired.

Conducted an RFP over the last couple of months and are in the final stages of that process. Intent to Award is set to be issued next week. A contract will be coming to the next meeting for approval.

Parking Permits

Working with Facilities and Supervisor Jankowski on the parking permit process. New permits will be issued this year, and we are working on updating our code of ordinances in regard to parking.

MOU

The current MOU with the relier municipalities is out of date and does not clearly outline the expectations of the municipalities.

Leigh updated the MOU to reflect more current information, we are determining the best timing for revoking the current MOU and issuing the updated version.

Elections

Gearing up for elections for 2022 with supply purchases.

Held TTX training for the local election officials

b. 2022 Budget Report

Budget 2022 Highlights

Mostly minor adjustments to the budget:

Eliminated minor line items that were no longer necessary (i.e. \$200 projector light bulb)

Increased allotted amount for travel and conference expenses for the County Board budget

Fees increased for the relier clerks

Increased election operating expenses budget to account for 4 elections that include the following contests: County Executive, County Board Supervisor, Governor, potential Health Care Referendum, etc. Eliminated the LTE Election Assistant position and absorbed duties into current staff

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.