



PORTAGE COUNTY

MEETING MINUTES

JUDICIAL/GENERAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

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

Wednesday, May 25, 2022

6:30 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: 393 529 513, 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 06:30 PM

Members Present In-Person: Lionel Weaver, Pat Keller, Andrew Rockman, Suzanne Oehlke

Members Excused: Matt Jacowski

Staff Attending: Chief Deputy County Clerk Jentz, Justice Programs Director Starr, Clerk of Courts Roth, Register of Deeds Wisiniski, Veteran Service Director Clements, County Executive Pavelski, Deputy Corporation Counsel Hickethier, District Attorney Molepske, District Attorney Legal Associate Supervisor Redmann, and Finance Manager Foemmel

Others Attending: Melissa Meschke, Economic Development Outreach Manager, Institute for Business & Entrepreneurship

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.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. Chair

Chief Deputy County Clerk Jentz called for nominations for Chair. Supervisor Weaver was nominated by supervisor Rockman, second by Supervisor Keller.

Chief Deputy County Clerk Jentz called three times for any other nominations. No other nominations were made.

Motion by Supervisor Rockman, second by Supervisor Oehlke to cast a unanimous ballot and seat Supervisor Weaver as chair. Motion carried by voice vote, with no negative votes

Chair Weaver assumed the duties of the Chair.

2. Vice Chair

Chair Weaver called for nominations for Vice Chair.

Supervisor Jacowski was nominated by Supervisor Keller, seconded by Supervisor Weaver

Chair Weaver called for any other nominations for Vice Chair.

Supervisor Weaver nominated Supervisor Oehlke for Vice Chair.

Votes were cast and tallied. Supervisor Oehlke received (4) votes and Supervisor Jacowski received (0) votes.

Supervisor Oehlke was seated as Vice Chair

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3. March 22, 2022 Minutes

A motion was made by Supervisor Oehlke, seconded by Supervisor Rockman, to approve the March 22, 2022 minutes. Motion to approve carried by voice vote, with no negative votes.

CORRESPONDENCE**4. Memo re: Committee Meeting - Financial Matters, Finance Director Jossie****REPORTS****5. Vendor Invoice Lists**

Chair Weaver stated that if there were any questions they could be asked during the Director's report.

PRESENTATION**6. Overview of Central Wisconsin Veterans Small Business Project; Melissa Meschke, Economic Development Outreach Manager, Institute for Business & Entrepreneurship, University of Wisconsin System****DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION****7. 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

None

8. Veterans Services
a. Office and Budget Update

Veterans Service Director Clements provided the report included in the agenda packet.

b. Discussion/Possible Action re: State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds request for the Central Wisconsin Veterans Small Business Project

Veterans Service Director Clements stated that there were ongoing discussions with the County finance department, and this item would be brought back at a later meeting for further discussions and possible action.

9. Clerk of Courts
a. Office and Budget Update

Clerk of Courts Roth provided the following report:

Budget Update:

Current budget status:

2022 Expenses = 37.9%

Department Update:

Currently the department is fully staffed.

This week I was invited by the Director of State Courts to be a member of the CCAP (Consolidated Court Automation Programs) Steering Committee starting June 16th. This committee's purpose is to serve as an advisory board on policy and planning initiatives as they relate to information technology for the Wisconsin Court System. I will be joining circuit court judges, clerks of circuit court, registers in probate and other court system staff. Meetings are in Madison, bi-monthly. I was honored to be considered for this appointment and have accepted.

Myself and the chief deputy will be attending the spring conference by the Clerk of Courts Association in Rhinelander the 2nd week in June.

Due to Judge Eagon's pending retirement, July 3rd, Judge Patricia Baker was appointed as the Presiding Judge for Portage County effective May 1, 2022. The presiding judge fulfills the requirements of Supreme Court Rule 70.265 and any other duties to which the Supreme Court and Chief Judge shall from time to time assign to the Presiding Judge.

SCR 70.265 Presiding judge. The chief judge of each judicial administrative district may appoint a presiding judge in any multi judge circuit to serve under the chief judge. The presiding judge shall serve at the pleasure of the chief judge and provide assistance to the chief judge in administrative areas in the circuit in which he or she is the presiding judge. The chief judge may authorize the presiding judge to act for the chief judge in that circuit on any and all administrative duties specifically or generally delegated.

We continue to have reserve (retired) judges (provided by the State) here 2-3 days per week working through the Branch 2 calendar of hearings since Judge Shannon retired prior to the end of his term which was 07/31/2022. Also we are meeting regularly on the judicial calendars and case load divisions anticipating judge-elect to take oath and start mentorship later in June.

10. Register of Deeds
a. Office and Budget Update

Register of Deeds Wisinski provided the following report:

Cindy Wisinski, Register of Deeds, presented the committee with an overview of the office duties and its mission statement. This information can be found in the 2022 Portage County budget. She explained the fluctuation of recording and public searching during the past year. The Property Fraud Program that is offered in the Register of Deeds office for free to all residents that own property in Portage County was also discussed with a few questions answered. Wisinski shared that other States are experiencing an uptick in property fraud and the Register of Deeds office will increase awareness of this product to the public. Lastly Wisinski went through the current budget which is on target.

11. Corporation Counsel
a. Office and Budget Update

Deputy Corporation Counsel David Hickethier provided the following report:

Introduction to the duties and personnel of the Office of the Corporation Counsel.

Updates from the previous meeting minutes include:

Tax Deed Property listed on Wisconsin Surplus Auctions site sold and for a good price.

After County Board approval, the County hired an owner's representative for the county's multiple building issues that are under review—Sheriff's Office/Jail, courtrooms and court system facilities, municipal offices, etc.

With the summer months, anticipate staff on a rotation of vacations.

The Office budget is on track.

Our operations continue to be busy and we are maintaining a high level of legal services.

12. Justice Programs
a. Office and Budget Update

Justice Programs Department Update – Andrea Starr, Director – May 25, 2022

In 2022, Justice Programs has expended 30% of its allotted budget as of today's date

On May 2nd, the Treatment Court Oversight Committee meeting and approved the following recommendations:

Working with UW-Extension Nutritionist to work with participants on healthy eating in early recovery.

Changing Phase 5 requirements to assist participants with the transition out of Treatment Court.

Victim Rights Law

Due Process language

Policy on Termination Hearings

Ex Parte Communication Policy

The Treatment Court day will be changed starting the week of June 6th. Treatment Court will be held on Tuesdays at the same time 1:30 – 2:30 p.m. If the courts are closed for any holiday that falls on a Monday, Treatment Court will be held on Wednesday from 1:30 – 2:30 p.m.

State of WI, Department of Justice, TAD personal completed a site visit for the Treatment Court program. Program recommendations will be made in a report in 4-6 weeks.

Majority of the Treatment Court team attended the WATCP conference in the WI Dells.

The Treatment Court AODA provider and the Portage House AODA provider (same person) has transitioned well into each program.

Treatment Court current statistics:

- Current Active Participants: 10 (3 in warrant status)
- Terminated: 2
- Administrative Discharged: 1
- Pending: 6
- Ineligible: 9
 - 6 - Current or prior violent offense
 - 1 - Did not reside in Portage County
 - 2 - Risk Level to Low
- Declined Participation: 2

As the Director of Justice Programs and co-chair of the AODA coalition, Director Starr is looking into places that may be interested in having Naloxone boxes that would have free Narcan that anyone can access.

Two conjunction social work professors from UW-Stevens Point are completing two separate data evaluations/studies. One professor is evaluating 2015-2018 day report/pretrial program data to determine if using an assessment sparingly had an impact of court appearances and pretrial rearrest. The second study is a Post-Recidivism Treatment Court study. Both are expected to be completed later this year. Department of Corrections (DOC) is updating the Community Residential Program (CRP) contract for Portage House. Director Starr will need to meet with Finance Dept and DOC for some of the recommended changes that the DOC is requesting.

Justice Programs presentation is scheduled for June 21st starting at 3:45 p.m. in Annex Conference Room 1 & 2. A virtual option is available.

13. District Attorney
 - a. Office and Budget Update

District Attorney Molepske provided an office and budget update as provided in the agenda packet.

- b. Discussion/Possible Action re: Reclassification Request of Legal Associate Supervisor to Office Manager

A motion was made by Supervisor Rockman, seconded by Supervisor Weaver, to approve the reclassification request. Motion to approve carried by voice vote, with no negative votes.

14. County Clerk
 - a. Office and Budget Update

Chief Deputy County Clerk Jentz provided the following report:

Budget Update

County Board Budget at 37.6%

- WCA annual conference registrations and hotel deposits included

County Clerk Revenues at 30%

-Entering peak marriage license season and are already up from any of the past 5 years.

-- Issued 112 licenses

---Closest year was 2018 with 98

---Up 32 from last year at this point

--Law changes from Wisconsin Act 84 will be going to effect July 1, including

---Shorter waiting period of 3 days instead of 5

----Will see some decline in waivers

---Couples, including those from out of state, may apply in any County of the State

----May see some decline in licenses from out of state, but this is a small number in the first place

---License is valid for 60 days, up from 30 days

County Clerk Administration – 45.6%; 37.5% without encumbrances

-This is on track. Large portion encumbered by blanket purchase order for the postage for the entire County.

-Realizing a significant cost savings with the vacancy of the Clerk position.

County Clerk Election – 56.5%

-No concern here – this account typically goes above budget in even years (4 elections) and under in odd years (1-2 elections).

-Did take a hit from the April Recount as well, by law this was covered by the County with no reimbursement for the Executive contest

--Explicit cost calculated to be \$5,919.27

--Did not calculate implicit costs that can typically be passed along to aggrieved candidate when responsible for paying

--\$75 dollar reimbursement for District 24 contest

-Will see some additional cost savings due to City referendum on August ballot

Office Updates

Continuing to provide exceptional service to the public, board, and staff despite being down a 1/3rd of our staff.

Redistricting

The WI Supreme Court adopted the maps of S.B. 621 in Johnson v. Wisconsin Elections Commission. Thankfully, there were no wards in Portage County split by the new state legislative districts, but there were some assembly district changes.

-The City of Stevens Point is entirely in 71, no longer split 70.

-Hull Wards 6 & 8 – from 70 to 71

-Sharon from 71 to 70

-Town and Village of Almond from 72 to 71-

-Town of Grant now entirely in 71, no longer split with 72

-Working with the Town of Hull to adjust their reporting units for the partisan primary and election.

--Previously approved reporting units combined wards 6-8.

-Communication has been sent by WEC to municipal clerks. I have also followed up to confirm reporting units.

Election Preparations – August 9th primary

-June 1 filing deadline

--Incumbents for both Clerk of Courts and Sheriff have filed all required paperwork.

--Two other candidates have filed the declaration of candidacy and campaign registration for sheriff.

-County Clerk's office is set meet the June 22nd deadline to deliver ballots and supplies to municipal clerks to meet the June 23rd deadline for municipal clerks to send absentee ballots to those with requests on file.

Completed County Board Reorganization

-Coordinated with HR, IT, and Facilities to onboard the 9 new supervisors

-Worked closely with Exec and Chair for committee assignments

-Directory – 2022-23 Web directory was posted on May 4th. The paper directory will be sent to the printer this week – this was intentionally delayed so committee information, including chairs and vice chairs could be as accurate as possible.

CivicClerk

-All committees have been updated and have been working with new admin staff in the ADRC and Executive's office.

-The vendor, Civic Plus, has announced a new public portal coming, which they have stated will include a calendar view for minutes and agendas.

-Updated and worked with IT to post instructional guides for administrative staff. Communications with Supervisors will be forthcoming.

Dogs

-Received the first round of dog license reports have been received from 23 of the 28 municipalities. All 4678 individual tags have been logged and reconciled with the payments made to the treasurer's office.

-Received the quote and submitted a purchase order to order the 2023 dog tags. They will be gold.

County Clerk search and screen process is underway. My understanding is that the intent is that a resolution will go before the Executive/Operations Committee on June 7th and County Board on the 21st.

15. Discussion/Possible Action re: Establishment of Regular Meeting Dates and Time for the Judicial/ General Government Committee

Members present reached consensus to meet on the fourth Monday of each month at 5:30p.m.

NEXT MEETING DATE

June 27th at 5:30p.m.

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.