

Portage County Security & Facilities Meeting

Meeting Minutes

December 20, 2022; Meeting Called to Order at 1:42 PM

Present:

Judge Louis J. Molepske, Jr.; District Attorney-Cass Cousins; Sheriff-Mike Lukas; Clerk of Court-Lisa Roth; Family Court Commissioner-Melissa Dalkert; Victim Witness Coordinator-Jane Iwanski; Facilities Director-Todd Neuenfeldt; Portage County Bar Association President-Stephen Sawyer; Stevens Point Mayor-Mike Wiza

Next meeting:

Wednesday, March 8, 2023 at 1:30 PM - Branch 2 Courtroom

1. Overview of Committee's Purpose & Review of Past Minutes of the Committee from 2018-2019

Opening remarks by Judge Molepske - Committee hasn't met since 2019. Reviewed history of committee and handed out prior meeting minutes. Reviewed SCR 68 - each county needs to have a security and facilities committee. With so many new people in the building, there is a need for revisiting some of the safety procedures and training new employees on safety procedures (i.e. Safety Procedure Flip Charts in each office).

2. Discussion of Security Concerns of Court Rm. E

FCC Melissa Dalkert - Stated that the security in Courtroom E is very weak. One of the issues are that there is only one entrance/exit to the courtroom by a narrow hallway. Suggested adding another exit through to Jury Room 3. As it stands now, the FCC would be trapped if there were a security threat. Some of the most emotional hearings are heard in the smallest of courtrooms. Stated this room is at least five times more dangerous than when she was a State Public Defender. Violence has been exacerbated in recent years and there have been some close calls as far as dangerousness. A second doorway would be helpful for the FCC and clerk. Also would suggest moving the flagpoles from the back of the room so they could not be used as potential weapons.

Sheriff Lukas - Suggested putting these types of hearings in a regular courtroom.

Judge Molepske - Looking to coordinate calendars to help with holding hearings in a regular courtroom.

Atty. Sawyer - Also has concerns as to the location of the FCC office because there are no metal detectors or security on the first floor.

3. Discussion on Special Meetings/Duress Alarms/Active Shooter Response and Training

Atty. Sawyer - Asked about concerns for letting the general public know when conducting things like active shooter training as planned with open meetings laws?

Judge Molepske - Active shooters response is determined by the Sheriff as to how officers will respond and how much the procedure is exposed to the public.

Sheriff Lukas - Any open meeting should not bring up any tactics of court security procedures. Training in tactical movements would be closed to the public and should not be discussed in any open meeting.

Sheriff Lukas - During Covid we had county-wide active shooter training. It was taped. There was an email sent out on 9/12/22 to do another active shooter training but didn't receive much of a response to it.

Judge Molepske - Will speak to the other two judges about doing the active shooter training.

Sheriff Lukas - Planning for the training must be well in advance to close off building to the public to have the all employee training.

Todd Neuenfeldt - Press/duress alarms will be tested again in late January by a physical test; they are pinged every day by facilities. Is there a written policy on the use of these?

Sheriff Lukas - If the person feels threatened, they may press the button if they feel unsafe or threatened.

4. Discussion of Any Other Security Issues

Sheriff Lukas - Regarding security updates - monthly screenings reports should be sent to all department heads and judges - there are several column to the report. It is a public record and is generated monthly. YTD 24,358 people were screened through the end of November 2022. 188 knives and 80 other potential weapons here confiscated. However, no firearms were confiscated.

Judge Molepske - Is the screening style, like in airports, a possibility at the entrance?

Sheriff Lukas - That style of screening is not feasible in this building because there are other ways to get upstairs without going through a main screen.

Judge Molepske - One-point screening is in the new building plan.

Todd Neuenfeldt - In regard to the building project, plans are being kept quiet until decisions can be made in order to keep misinformation from getting out.

Judge Molepske - The courts will need to find that the court design is in compliance of the SCRs courtroom design.

Discussion of bathroom security for court personnel and victims.

Judge Molepske - We need to identify and discuss current Court facilities, procedures, ordinances and activities that address SCR 68.05(4) mandate to coordinate and develop general court security and facility policies and key activities.

Discussion to make sure new employees are trained on safety procedures. Sheriff Lukas reminded members of the safety flip charts posted in all offices.

Mayor Wiza - Over the course of Covid, the City took steps to fob all city doors and train employees on duress button; we have done several security updates.

Committee will meet quarterly with the next meeting to be in March 2023.

Meeting adjourned at 2:43 PM.

2023 MEETING SCHEDULE:

Quarter 1: March 8, 2023 @ 1:30 PM

Quarter 2: May 25, 2023 @ 1:30 PM

Quarter 3: August 17, 2023 @ 1:30 PM

Quarter 4: November 16, 2023 @ 1:30 PM

All meetings to be held in the Br. 2 Courtroom.