

Judicial & Rules Committee Meeting
Tuesday January 24, 2017
Courthouse Annex, Room 319, 4:30 PM

MINUTES

Agenda Items 1 - Call to Order and Roll Call

Michael Marron called the Judicial & Rules Committee of the Vermilion County Board to order at 4:30 PM., January 24, 2017 in the Courthouse Annex Room 319.

Upon the call of roll, the following members were present: Larry Baughn, Adam Hart, Tom Morse, Deanna Witzel, Phearn Butler, Robert Boyd were present. Nancy O'Kane was excused. 6 present, 1 absent at roll call.

Also present were: Bill Donahue, Assistant State's Attorney, Stephanie Webber, Denny Gardner-Circuit Clerk, Paul Sermersheim, Catherine Osterber, Thomas Gregory- Probation Jennifer Jenkins, Administrative Assistant.

Agenda Item 2 - Adoption/Amendment to the Agenda

Michael Marron asked if there were any changes/additions to the agenda. One change to strike item # 10 due to miscommunication of the agenda items. Motion to approve the agenda by Tom Morse, Second by Deanna Witzel. Motion was carried by acclamation.

Agenda Item 3 - Approval of Minutes from August 23, 2016

A motion was made by Witzel, second by Butler, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion was carried by acclamation.

Agenda Item 4 - Audience Comments

None

Agenda Item 5 – Election of Committee Chairman & Vice Chairman

A motion was made by Baughn, second by Morse, to nominate Adam Hart as the Judicial and Rules Committee Chairman. Motion was carried by acclamation.

Hart requested a motion for the Judicial & Rules Vice Chairman. Witzel nominated Baughn and second by Tom Morse. Motion was carried by acclamation.

Agenda Item 6 – Committee Member Orientation

Tom Gregory, Probation Director, provided a brief presentation on the Probation Department and their job duties and responsibilities. He shared that Probation currently has around 30 employees and that there are currently around 1000 individuals throughout Vermilion County that are on probation. They range from juveniles to adults. Probation is currently operating on a \$1.2 million dollar budget.

Denny Gardner, Circuit Clerk, shared his department's job responsibilities and duties with the committee. The Circuit Clerk's office is a filing agency. Everything that goes through the courthouse must first go through the Circuit Clerk's office. Whether it is a traffic violation or a felony, it will go through the Circuit Clerk's office.

Denny is looking forward to when technology within in his office will be significantly changed. He knows that Chairman Marron has been working very hard to get this done. This will allow departments to share information amongst themselves. Instead of always pulling files this will now be something, hopefully, that will be accessible immediately. The Circuit Clerk's office has been working for the last couple of years scanning documents.

He expressed the hard work of his employees and how pleased he is with their work. He is happy that he is happy what the County Board is doing to provide an increase to his staff

salaries and bump it up so that they are where they should be. Denny has 20 union staff, 4 supervisors, and 4 part-time employees.

Denny invites everyone on the County Board to come over and visit and see what his staff is capable of.

Stephanie Webber, presented on behalf of the State's Attorney's office.

Stephanie shared the efficiencies of the State's Attorney's office. The most apparent is utilizing 3 different systems that must be cross-referenced in order to determine the State's Attorney's agenda for the day. The idea of JANO certainly will be ideal for this office. This will save a significant amount of time for the entire county. However, one of the most significant examples of saving money and building revenue, from the State's Attorney's office is the use of a collection agency more so than what we have used from the past. An example was provided in the form of a traffic ticket, etc. & the costs associated with that. Fees can range anywhere from a couple of hundred dollars up to thousands of dollars. In the past often times if a ticket was not paid then the County was issuing warrants and bringing in offenders just over fines. Their bond money would be applied to their initial fine however most often, they would still have outstanding debt for that ticket in which the process would start over. By working with a collection agency, we are able to retrieve the money without incurring additional costs by creating additional work for the county, etc. The idea is to increase the retrieval of this revenue by up to 50%.

Also a detailed cost sheet is printed out at the time of sentencing so that the County is collecting on each fee that they are entitled to.

The State's Attorney's office currently has 11 attorney's & 11 staff members.

Agenda Item 7 –Fee Revisions- Circuit Clerk

Dennis Gardner explained that he would like to table this agenda item until a later date.

Agenda Items 8- Peer Court Agreement & Budget Amendment –Peer Court Contract

Marron introduced Paul Sermersheim and Catherine Osterbur from Peer Court. Marron provided a brief description of the County's role in funding Peer Court. He explained that it was originally funded by the general fund. And then it was changed to the 708 board. As of current there has been no money provided by the County to Peer Court. Ms. Osterbur and Mr. Sermersheim provided the committee with a presentation of Peer Court and its place in the community. Ms. Osterbur explained that Peer Court has been a part of this community for 24 years and they work with first time juvenile offenders. The juveniles are referred by the juvenile investigators or the State's Attorney's office. It also depends on of the referral would be a good fit for the program. Peer Court works with about 100 juveniles a year. 85%-95% successfully complete the Peer Court program. The committee was directed to the Memorandum of Agreement re: Peer Court and Vermilion County, Illinois.

Hart informed the committee that this was a resolution and a budget amendment for the Peer Court Agreement and the Peer Court Contract.

A motion was made to combine the above into one item. Morse made the motion, second by Witzel.

Marron shared that the budget would need to be amended to allow for the County for the \$5250.00 to Peer Court for fiscal year 2016-2017.

Upon the call of roll, the following members voted yes, to-wit: Hart, Baughn, Morse, Witzel, Butler and Boyd. 6 yes, 1 absent

Agenda Items 10-Striken

Agenda Item 11- Creation of a Technology committee

Marron shared that we are asking the Judicial & Rules committee to amend the rules to allow for a technology committee. This committee would oversee the Tech Services Dept. and they would be responsible for implementing and creating a 5 year technology plan.

Right now we are funding our technology in a haphazard manner. We have new software systems coming our way, such as JANO, and an accounting system. Also, our hardware needs are also very critical. We need to continuously be updated and upgraded. This will help us avoid getting hit all at once with huge expenses.

Baughn made the motion for the creation of a Technology Committee, second by Witzel.

Motion was carried by acclamation.

Agenda Item 12 – Change committee meeting times to 5:00

Hart explained that it is somewhat difficult for some committee members to come before 5:00.

The ideal time for all committee meetings will be at 5:00.

Marron added that we will be amending Rule 20 item B in the Rules of Order for this change and we will have this specific language changed and ready for the county board meeting.

Motion by Morse, second by Witzel to have all committee meetings begin at 5:00 p.m. c.s.t..

Motion carried by acclamation.

Agenda Item 13 – Adjournment

Committee Chairman Hart declared the meeting adjourned at 5:42 P.M.

Minutes by: Jennifer Jenkins, Administrative Assistant