

Judicial & Rules Committee Meeting
Tuesday, July 27, 2021
Vermilion County Administrative Building 2nd Floor, 5:00 PM

MINUTES

Agenda Item 1 - Call to Order and Roll Call:

Committee Chairman Mary Ellen Surprenant called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM. Upon the call of roll, the following members were present: Mary Ellen Surprenant, Breannah Haton, Nancy O'Kane and Phearn Butler. Excused absent was Tom Morse. Absent were Steve Miller and Natalie Duncan. 4 present, 3 absent. Steve Miller arrived after roll call at 5:08pm. Also attending the meeting were: Larry Baughn – Vermilion County Chairman, Thomas Gregory – Probation Director, Cindy Savalick – Court Administrator, Judge Thomas O'Shaughnessy – Chief Judge, Melissa Quick – Circuit Clerk, Michael Mara – Chief Public Defender and Cassy Carter - Vermilion County Financial Manager.

Agenda Item 2 - Adoption/Amendment to the Agenda:

Butler moved, seconded by O'Kane, to adopt the agenda as presented. Motion was carried by acclamation. Motion passed.

Agenda Item 3 - Approval of Minutes from June 22, 2021:

O'Kane moved, seconded by Haton, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion was carried by acclamation. Motion passed.

Agenda Item 4 - Audience Comments:

None.

Agenda Item 5 – Probation Budget 2022:

Motion by O'Kane, seconded by Haton to discuss.

Thomas Gregory explained that the budget was very similar to last year. The salary line accounts for a 3% increase for the personnel as well as the Department Head. He did have one correction to the budget narrative noting they have (3) Pretrial Officers not (4). The state reimburses the salary line \$1,274,276 of the total payroll of \$1,457,784. He pointed out the total increase of \$33,713 is an overall increase to the budget of 2%. There was a move of \$11,000 to the General Fund Special Circumstances from the Probation Service Fee Fund for supplies. The increase to the Telephone line was due to COVID to ensure the probation officers had phones/iPad to stay in communication with their clients. The increase in uniforms was due to the shelf life on bullet proof vests. They will need to purchase new ones. The Telephone line from the Electronic Monitoring Fund is for the night time officers to track clients. O'Kane inquired about the Probation cars all being 2012, Gregory stated they rotate the cars for mileage and feels they are all still in good shape as they are being well maintained. Gregory invited the committee members to visit the probation department.

Upon roll call vote the following members voted yes, to-wit: Surprenant, Miller, Haton, O'Kane, and Butler. Absent and not voting were Morse and Duncan. 5 yes, 2 absent. Motion passed.

Agenda Item 6 – Public Defender Budget 2022:

Motion by Butler, seconded by O'Kane to discuss.

Michael Mara stated the budget is similar to last year. He explained the 3% salary increase as well as his increase mandated by the state of a 2.5% COLA. His pay is set by the state and the county has to pay that set amount in order to receive this state reimbursement for his salary. He explained the only real change was to the Postage line. There was an abundance of postage that has finally been exhausted, so he needs to add more funds to ensure his mailings can go out. He also noted the Case Expense line is lower than usual due to cases being pushed back due to COVID, thus many cases are still not resolved but will be in the near future.

Upon roll call vote the following members voted yes, to-wit: Surprenant, Miller, Haton, O'Kane, and Butler. Absent and not voting were Morse and Duncan. 5 yes, 2 absent. Motion passed.

Agenda Item 7 – Circuit Clerk Budget 2022:

Motion by Miller, seconded by O'Kane to discuss.

Melissa Quick stated the budget is very similar to last year. She explained the change to the salary line, as her department will receive 3% increases. She is currently short two people, but has some good applicants. The e-filing has made it possible for her to cut two part time employees. Quick stated she will not replace the part time positions in an effort to reach the \$15/hour minimum wage requirement in 2025. The Transfer line is for Jano, which is the case management system used by the courts, this is a 5-year contract.

Upon roll call vote the following members voted yes, to-wit: Surprenant, Miller, Haton, O'Kane, and Butler. Absent and not voting were Morse and Duncan. 5 yes, 2 absent. Motion passed.

Agenda Item 8 – Court Administration Budget 2022:

Motion by Miller, seconded by Butler to discuss.

Judge O'Shaughnessy stated the budget is similar to last year. He explained the 8 judges, 4 court reporters, and 4 court specialists are state employees. The Court Administrator and Jury Commission Coordinator are both county employees so he increased the salary line by 3% which accounts for their raises. There was a question on the line for Contractual/Legal Fees, he explained this is used if there is a conflict with the State's Attorney's office resulting in a need from the Public Defender's office. For example, if a child is removed from parents then one parent would be appointed an attorney from State's Attorney office, the other parent would be appointed a contracted attorney, and the child would be appointed a contracted attorney called the Guardian ad Litem. These contracted attorneys are individual contractors and are paid from this Contractual/Legal Fees line. The Law Library Fund by statute has to be open to public which consists of court books and a computer terminal.

Upon roll call vote the following members voted yes, to-wit: Surprenant, Miller, Haton, O'Kane, and Butler. Absent and not voting were Morse and Duncan. 5 yes, 2 absent. Motion passed.

Agenda Item 9 – Executive Session:

None.

Agenda Item 10 - Items of Information:

Baughn explained that Clifton Larson Allen has everything they need to prepare the final audit report. Sandy will present the audited budget soon. The Executive & Legislative committee passed the Windfarm Ordinance and will be on the agenda for the August County Board meeting.

Agenda Item 11- Adjournment:

Surprenant adjourned the meeting at 6:10PM

Minutes by: Cassy Carter, Financial Manager