

**Waukesha County Board of Supervisors**

**Minutes of the Judiciary & Law Enforcement Committee  
Friday, April 14, 2023**

Chair LaFontain called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

**Present:** Supervisors Jacob LaFontain, Johnny Koremenos, Tom Schellinger, Terry Thieme and Matthew Weil

**Absent:** Mike Crowley and Robert Kolb

Also Present: Chief of Staff Sarah Spaeth, Legislative Policy Advisor Sarah Fraley, Administrative Specialist Barbara Hollander, Chairman Paul Decker, Supervisor Jim Heinrich, Budget Manager Bill Duckwitz, Financial Analyst Tyler Livesey, Director of Public Works Allison Bussler, Facilities Manager Shane Waeghe, Judge William Domina, Clerk of Circuit Courts Monica Paz, Principal Information Technology Professional Zach Tremaine, District Attorney Sue Opper, Human Resources Manager Renee Gage, Director of Administration Andy Thelke, Chief of Staff Shawn Lundie, Sheriff Eric Severson, Business Manager Joshua Joost, Inspector Jim Gumm, Deputy Inspector Patrick Esser, Financial Analyst Catherine Kienast, Patrol Superintendent Keith Hepp, Sign/Signal Maintenance Worker Nate Symoens, Mechanic Scott Fischer, Laura Hause (Gilbane), Captain Michelle Leffler, Captain Nick Ollinger

**Approve Minutes of March 17**

MOTION: Schellinger moved, second by Koremenos to approve the minutes of March 17. Motion carried 5-0

**Next Meeting Date**

May 12

**Discuss and Consider Ordinance 178-O-009 Modify The 2023-2027 Capital Plan To Increase Expenditures For Capital Project #201705 – Courthouse Project Step 2 – Renovate 1959 Courthouse**

Bussler and Waeghe presented that this ordinance modifies the 2023-2027 Capital Plan to increase expenditures by \$15,000,000 in 2024 for capital project #201705 – Courthouse Project Step 2 – Renovate 1959 Courthouse. The cost increase would be funded with \$6,000,000 of American Rescue Plan Act funding, \$5,000,000 from additional planned debt issuance of general obligation promissory notes, and \$4,000,000 of General Fund balance use.

MOTION: Thieme moved, second by Schellinger to approve Ordinance 178-O-009. Motion carried 5-0

**Presentation on the Use of Video Conferencing in the Courts**

Domina spoke on behalf of the judiciary that they unanimously desire all methods of appearances in civil, family and criminal cases, and went on to provide examples as to how video conferencing could create efficiencies for the courts. He reported that Waukesha County is the only populace county in the state that does not have video court. Answering Weil's questions, Domina gave the breakdown of

court officials in Waukesha County (6 criminal judges, 3 civil judges and 2 family judges); and explained that all six criminal branches have calendar every day (e.g., status dates, return dates, sentencing dates, motion hearings, trials), but the amount of activity in each courtroom varies and is not always predicable or controlled.

Severson and Gumm said this technology has costs involved including the need for additional personnel as well as equipment, maintenance and wiring at the jail. The concern is the use of correctional officers' time spent transporting inmates to the video conferencing areas and staying with that inmate until the end of the court appearance, rather than returning to the jail and assuming other duties. Severson said they would support video court if it were properly resourced, however this technology requires additional staff and that doesn't make it more efficient.

Answering Weil's questions, Severson said the time savings of processing an inmate when transporting to another county would be substituted with obligated time to do the video court supervision; and there would still need to be dedicated time to monitor an inmate even if the video appearance were in one of the pods at the jail.

Answering LaFontain's question regarding the implementation of the recommendations in the 2019 Waukesha County Safety and Efficiency Jail Operational Study Report, Gumm stated they have instituted rounding sessions with staff. The pilot video court program was not implemented because they were in the process of eliminating positions, and the pilot program recommended the creation of two sunset positions.

Thieme suggested talking to, touring, or having a presentation from a like county that does video conferencing.

#### **Tour of Waukesha County Jail**

The Committee took a tour of the Waukesha County Jail.

MOTION: Thieme moved, second by Weil to adjourn at 11:03 a.m. Motion carried 5-0

Respectfully submitted,



Terry Thieme  
Secretary – Judiciary & Law Enforcement Committee