

**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Douglas County Board of Supervisors**  
**Thursday, February 25, 2021, 4:00 p.m., Board Room, Second Floor, Government Center**  
**1316 North 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Superior, Wisconsin**

Meeting called to order by Chair Pomush.

**ROLL CALL:** Present – Samuel Pomush, Rosemary Lear, Mark McGillis (remote), Ron Leino. Absent – Ron Leino, Peter Clark. Others present – Michele Wick, Dave Sletten, Kelly Thimm, Amber Popplewell, Rebecca Lovejoy, Mark Liebaert, Rebecca Severson, Tyler Edwards, Darrell Witt, Cheryl Westman, Committee Clerk.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Motion by Lear, second Leino, to approve the October 29, 2020, meeting minutes. Motion carried.

**Updates and Reports:**

**Child Support:** Severson reported department has had many staff changeovers and shortages, and also dealing with COVID related processes.

**Circuit Court Branch I:** Thimm continuing with teleconferencing, which is working very well.

**Clerk of Courts:** Wick reported the department is not fully staffed at this time, and staffing continues to be an ongoing problem.

**Court Commissioner:** Popplewell reported virtual court has been going very well. The department is utilizing technology wherever possible.

**Emergency Management:** Sletten still working on COVID response issues: drive- through testing along with National Guard at Amsoil facility; Room 270 for vaccination clinic; and regional vaccination sites.

**Communications Center:** Sletten reported recruitment in progress for two vacant positions. Backup 911 center to be housed with two dispatch stations at the Hawthorne Highway Department.

**Medical Examiner:** Witt noted volume has increased by 30%.

**Sheriff – Jail Division:** Edwards reported body scanner installed and operational; Court Officer position welcome addition and being heavily utilized; 4 video courtrooms working well, with one more coming soon; thermal cameras now in place; majority of staff have been vaccinated for COVID 19; receiver bunks to be replaced with concrete in the near future; purchased two additional hand-helds for Guardian system, and architectural plans are being drawn up for a remodel on the second floor to add six more cells for federal inmates. Committee to tour facility at a future date.

**ACTION ITEMS/REFERRALS:** **Resolution in Support of Increased County Child Support Funding:** Reviewed.

**ACTION (RESOLUTION):** Motion by Lear, second Leino, to approve the resolution in support of increased county child support funding and forward to County Board. Motion carried unanimously.

**INFORMATIONAL: Staff retention (Tyler Edwards).** Since 2017, and the loss of protective retirement, there has been an 85% turnaround in staff. Currently there are 6 open positions, and female officers are critically low. Staff working overtime hours habitually, and dealing with the stress of COVID, added to an already stressful job is leading to a lot of people leaving. St. Louis County has a higher starting salary and usually has openings, so losing people across the bridge as well. Edwards proposed moving sergeants and jailer positions up one grade level in the pay scale to make the job more wage competitive. Per County Administrator, wage study would be required for this to occur.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Motion by Lear, second McGillis, to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 4:53 p.m.

Submitted by,

Cheryl Westman, Committee Clerk