

Minutes
Eau Claire County
Committee on Judiciary and Law Enforcement
Wednesday, June 24, 2020 – 3:00 PM
Virtual Meeting via Cisco Webex

Members Present: Melissa Janssen, Sandra McKinney, Zoe Roberts, Connie Russell, and Gerald Wilkie.

Ex-Officio Members Present: Nick Smiar

Others Present: The Honorable John F. Manydeeds, Register in Probate/Clerk of Juvenile Court Jean Gay, Criminal Justice Director Tiana Glenna, Data Analyst Dana Swanstrom, Clerk of Circuit Court Susan Schaffer, Sheriff Ron Cramer, Captain Joel Brettingen, Lieutenant Cory Schalinske, Captain Dan Bresina, Lieutenant Dave Riewestahl, Petra Asani, Anthony Ledford, David Carlson, Dr. Susan Wolfgram, and Eric Huse.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Wilkie at 3:00 PM.

Call of the Roll

The Clerk called the roll. Attendance was noted above.

Confirmation of Public Meeting Notice

The Clerk confirmed this meeting was properly noticed to the public.

Public Comment

Jim Wilson provided written comments that were provided in the meeting materials. The committee reviewed the comments.

David Carlson made public comment regarding the recent High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) designation and County involvement with the West Central Drug Taskforce (WCDTF). A written transcript of the comments is included with these minutes.

Approve Minutes from May 27, 2020 Meeting

Supervisor Janssen moved to approve the minutes from the May 27, 2020 meeting. The minutes were adopted as published in the meeting materials via 5-0 voice vote.

Register in Probate/Clerk of Juvenile Court 1st Quarter Fiscal Update

Register in Probate/Clerk of Juvenile Court (RIP/COJC) Jean Gay provided the First Quarter update. Filing fees are on target for first quarter. RIP/COJC Gay noted there is a surplus which is typical for the first quarter every year. The first quarter was consumed by annual accounting and reporting.

Court Process & Treatment Court Overview

The Honorable John F. Manydeeds, Branch I Circuit Court Judge for Eau Claire County, provided an overview of the Treatment Courts in Eau Claire County. There are four treatment courts in Eau Claire county: Alternatives to Incarcerating Mothers (AIM), Drug, Mental Health, & Veterans. Treatment court is often seen as a last effort for rehabilitation. Treatment teams, comprised of Circuit Judge, prosecutor, public defender, and treatment providers, meet outside of the presence of participants to review progress of participants. After the treatment team meetings, the participants are brought together to have a large meeting. Each participant is addressed by the presiding judge as a means of a check-in with their progress.

Judge Manydeeds also provided an overview of some of the challenges the Courts are facing as a result of COVID-19. One of the most significant challenges facing the Court is the resumption of Jury Trials. Judge Manydeeds outlined some of the considerations being discussed. Additionally, Intake Court is a concern. Typically, there are a large number of cases heard one right after another at 9:30 AM Return Hearings and

11:00 AM Initial Appearances. The Court is working with the various stakeholders to address this and find a way forward. The Committee asked clarifying questions and discussed the information provided.

Criminal Justice Collaborating Council Dashboard Update

- **Dashboard**
 - A link to the dashboard website was included in the meeting materials. The data is completely refreshed monthly on the website with additional data being added periodically. The Committee reviewed the information.
- **Report from Supervisor Russell**
 - Supervisor Russell attend the June 17, 2020 Criminal Justice Collaborating Council Meeting. At the meeting, Judge Schumacher was elected chair and District Attorney King was elected vice-chair. Discussion at the meeting was mostly focused around the Courts reopening amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Captain Bresina provided the Council with an update on Jail procedures. The Council also discussed the treatment court coordinator vacancy and who will oversee treatment courts. The Council Bylaws were changed to add two additional members; one from Corporation Counsel, filled by Eau Claire County Corporation Counsel Tim Sullivan and one from the City-County Health Department filled by Health Director Lieske Giese. The Council is still seeking a community member representative.

Stop & Think Program Presentation

Dr. Wolfgram provided an overview of the Stop & Think Program. The Presentation was provided in the meeting materials. Dana Swanstrom provided an overview of the statistical information that was included in the presentation.

Eau Claire County Sheriff's Office Updates

- **Jail Population, Staffing, & COVID-19 Response**
 - Lieutenant Riewestahl provided an update. The COVID-19 Jail Action Plan has been posted to the Eau Claire County website. Current jail population includes 142 inmates in custody. Of those currently in custody, 54 inmates are in custody due to a probation related hold and 30 inmates are awaiting transport to Dodge Correctional. Wisconsin Prison System resumed admissions from county jails on June 1 so there is a bottleneck effect.
 - County Administration approved the Sheriff's Office request to fill the vacant correctional officer positions. Background screening is being conducted now for the candidate selected.
 - The jail has an expectation that COVID-19 will be present in its building and have plans to handle it. Those exhibiting symptoms are tested and inmates are quarantined.
- **High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Grant**
 - Sheriff Cramer provided an overview of the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Grant. The United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin contacted Sheriff Cramer to apply for the grant based on recent trends in the area. The grant is a 10 year commitment. Eau Claire County was one of 12 sites across the country selected for the designation and grant funds. The HIDTA Grant will bring intelligence, networking, and prosecution resources for the "high level" drug dealers in the Chippewa and St. Croix River Valleys.

Future Meeting Date

The next committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 22, 2020 at 3:00 PM.

A joint meeting with the Committee on Finance and Budget is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, August 26, 2020 at 3:00 PM.

Future Agenda Items

- Sentence Modifications & COVID-19
- Eau Claire County Sheriff's Office
 - Statistics, Data, & Information
 - Minority Incidents vs. General Population

- Defense and Arrest Tactics (DAAT), Restraint Practices, & Historical Usage
- 2nd Quarter Fiscal Update

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by Chairperson Wilkie at 4:50 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:

Eric Huse

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Committee Clerk

Committee on Judiciary and Law Enforcement Comments:

My name is David Carlson. I live at 2212 Altoona Ave, Eau Claire, WI 54701.

I wanted to submit my public comments here today addressing the Committee on Judiciary and Law Enforcement's discussions on the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area designation placed on Eau Claire County. This designation brings with it drug task force operations that will be multi-jurisdictional, involving Minneapolis, St. Paul, Madison, Milwaukee, Chicago, and many areas in between. In Wisconsin alone, at least 80 percent of the African American population lives under these HIDTA task force operations.

By inviting this designation into our county, we have perpetuated a war on drugs which has only exponentially increased the incarceration rates throughout our nation, and in our state, while the opiate overdose death rate has raised in parallel to the expansion of these operations, from 1,960 deaths in 1999, to 15,469 in 2016, nationally. Those numbers represent one-year death totals for each of the years I listed. This war has only perpetuated the cycles of addiction, recidivism, violence, and crime, yet here we are in 2020, doubling down on the same strategies.

There will be critical decisions to be made coming up in January of 2021. These decisions will include what nonmandated services the County Board should cut. I highly recommend that Eau Claire County's involvement in the West Central Drug Task Force, with Sheriff Cramer being the project director, be the nonmandated service taken out of the budget.

We have allowed the West Central Drug Task Force to lead the way in traumatizing young children with their no knock raids, their disproportionate targeting of people of color with drug operations that produce no lasting benefits, and their requests for further militarization of their officers with equipment and tactical training. And to what effect? Every year the budget for these operations must be increased, if not directly, then indirectly through jail costs, treatment costs, incarceration costs, court costs, and the toll on fellow community members.

The Eau Claire County Jail sits at a 20% African American Population, yet African Americans comprise only 1.2% of the Eau Claire County population. In a Zoom meeting last week with Sheriff Cramer, Captain Bresina, Lieske Giese, Marisa Stanley, Susan Wolfgram, Kim Cronk, Anthony Ledford, and myself, Sheriff Cramer stated that African Americans comprised so much of the jail population because of people from out of town like two individuals in the jail for homicide charges. Sheriff Cramer used these two individuals to represent the then 18% African American jail population. What I did not inform Sheriff Cramer of, but that I knew instantly, was that the individuals involved in the recent homicide are not even African American. They are Latino. This representation purported by our Sheriff is exactly the reason Eau Claire County needs to reevaluate all operations internally before considering collaborating with other agencies from multiple jurisdictions who also need to get their houses in order.

If Eau Claire County is serious about stopping the systemic racism, along with the oppression of many classes and groups of people in this community, it is time to move away from the strategies law enforcement has employed for the last 50 years. All of what I have presented today is backed by research which I would gladly make available to this committee should there be any dispute. I thank you for your time.