

Manitowoc County Public Safety Committee
Manitowoc County Communications and Technology Building

October 11, 2023 5:00 p.m.

Attendance: Present: Chairperson James Falkowski, Supervisor Nick Muench, Supervisor Leo Naidl, and Supervisor Norb Vogt.

Excused: Supervisor Mark Linsmeier.

Others in attendance: Patricia Koppa.

Chair James Falkowski called meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. Roll call circulated.

Minutes of prior meeting: Chair Falkowski asked if there were any changes or corrections to the minutes of the prior meeting from September 12, 2023. None offered and the minutes were approved upon motion of Supervisor Norb Vogt and second by Supervisor Leo Naidl.

The Chair noted that the monthly reports and monthly financials were sent to all members.

Call for public input. William Otto Two Rivers commented that the Mishicot police department facilities are in need of updating for the comfort and benefit of the officers. Supervisor Falkowski thanked Mr. Otto for comments.

Chair Falkowski noted that Clerk of Court April Higgins was unable to attend due to being out of town at conference but will be added to the November 8 agenda along with Family Court Commissioner.

Register in Probate and Circuit Court Commissioner Patricia Koppa spoke about the budget and work of the probate office. Her role as court commissioner is distinct from the duties as register in probate and covers additional areas of the court system. The probate office is responsible for much more than probate. The office is also responsible for guardianships and protective placements, civil commitments and adoptions. As these areas sometimes overlap with cases under the responsibility of the Juvenile Clerk, an employee in the Clerk of Courts office, a new position was requested to focus on those special cases and work as back up to the Juvenile Clerk. It does not appear that position was included in the Executive's budget for 2024. The request will be renewed. The need is great for both offices. The Register in Probate office is often unstaffed as commissioner duties have more than doubled over time.

As to the 2023 budget, additional revenue should cover the cost of the LTE position for the back-scanning project necessitated by the office relocation last summer. The project has been more time consuming than anticipated and could go on for months depending on the availability of the scanning employees. Approximately 10 hours per week are spent on this with additional time from Register and Deputy Register as able. To fully process one year took about 40 hours and we have another 8 years left.

Over the long term, filings in the probate office fall within fairly defined ranges. There have been some notable issues of late regarding personal representatives not completing the probate responsibilities; addressing may require policy changes. For example surety bonds may be needed to assure that someone is available to complete administration once the money is depleted due to misuse or distribution. This is in the court's discretion so Ms. Koppa will be consulting with the judges before implementing any thing.

In general, the probate office is running smoothly. There are always things of interest but nothing requiring action of the committee or county board at this time. Supervisors are encouraged to reach out with any questions.

Supervisor Nick Muench moved to adjourn; Supervisor Naidl seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted
Patricia Koppa for
Supervisor Norb Vogt, Committee Secretary