



Public Safety, Health and Judicial Committee Meeting – Wednesday, May 12, 2021

Third Floor Boardroom, Old Lee County Courthouse – 9:00 a.m.
112 E Second St, Dixon, Illinois 61021

Meeting called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chair Mike Koppien

Member Roll Call: Chair Mike Koppien, Vice Chair Marilyn Shippert, Keane Hudson, Katie White, Mike Zeman and Jack Skrogstad were all present in person.

Members Absent: None

Board Members, Department Heads, or County Employees Present: Bob Olson (County Board Chairman), John Nicholson (County Board Vice Chair), Will Fawkes (Assistant State's Attorney), Amy Johnson (Circuit Clerk), John Simonton (Sheriff), Staci Stewart (Probation), Kevin Lalley (EMA), Jonathan Henrikson (IT Intern), and Becky Brenner (Board Secretary) were present in person.

Minutes of the April 2021 Public Safety, Health, and Judicial Committee meeting were approved without modification.

Review of Claims & Reports

Motion from Mike Zeman: To accept and approve all claims from the Circuit Clerk, Sheriff, Coroner, State's Attorney, Probation, EMA, Public Defender, Judge Ackert, Judge Friel-Draper, Judge Klahn, and Judge Lee.

Second by Marilyn Shippert: Jack Skrogstad abstained from the vote. All other members voted in favor.

Collection of Unpaid Fines – States Attorney – Will Fawkes reported that \$10,392.73 had been collected in April in unpaid fines.

Update on Dangerous and Abandoned Properties – Marilyn Shippert reported that she had received a complaint from a concerned citizen regarding an abandoned property in Nachusa. She passed around photos of the property that had been taken. The Sheriff stated that the property matters would need to be addressed by the Zoning Office and State's Attorney's Office and the Sheriff's Office would start working on the abandoned vehicles.

Department Head Reports

Staci Stewart reported that her office had met with their legislative representative for the Illinois Probation and Court Services throughout the state. He had indicated that a flat budget was presented and favorably received. She is hoping that they will be able to go into the next year with a flat budget and 100% reimbursement.

Old Business:

John Simonton did not have any new information to share regarding the Qualified Immunity item on the agenda.

New Business

John Simonton walked the committee through the access card reader project proposed for the Old Courthouse and New Courts Building. The LEC and New Courts Building already have an access card reader system. He would like to tighten up security in the Old Courthouse. With a card reader system, doors can be locked and unlocked automatically for entrance during business hours and the system would eliminate the process of tracking actual keys. No action will be taken until a funding source has been identified.

John Simonton explained that his office is still struggling with staffing. There is still one employee out with a long-term injury. There are two young deputies that will be attending the academy and cannot be used for full service at this time. Sergeant Kim Stewart, Corrections Officer, and Corporal Jared Yater, Civil Process, will both be retiring at the end of June 2021. John reported that there is a lot of shuffling in the office right now with new appointments and positional changes.

John Simonton explained to the committee that at this time his office had expended 70% of the overtime budget.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the resolution on the agenda to amend the Department of EMA to a division of the Lee County Sheriff's Office. Kevin Lalley explained to the committee that he instigated the change. There is a lot of paperwork that needs to be processed through the office and he was hoping to find support to lessen the workload by utilizing the secretaries at the Sheriff's Office. The other option would be to hire a part-time secretary. He also explained that he reports directly and frequently to the County Board Chairman and that there is no replacement for his position to handle emergency operations or necessary reporting for the office if he is on vacation, off sick or attending training. Kevin explained that he is looking at a long-term plan because someday he is going to retire and felt the County should have someone that could transition into the position. The Sheriff explained that it would be a logical transition since when Kevin is out of the office, the Sheriff's Office knows where the equipment and contact information is to handle an incident in a timely and appropriate fashion. The two offices work hand in hand frequently. Bob Olson was in favor of cross training and mentoring program between the two offices and suggested that the Board tour his office in the New Courts Building and familiarize themselves with what takes place in the office to get a better understanding of the EMA workload. Mike Koppien asked if there was an employee in the Sheriff's Office that could be mentored to transition into Kevin's job, if there was a vacancy. He was also in favor of a part-time assistant. Marilyn Shippert questioned the involvement from the Sheriff's Office since the office is already struggling with a staffing shortage. She suggested hiring a part-time assistant in the EMA office to help with the workload and learn the ins and outs of the position. Keane Hudson thought that EMA and the Sheriff's Office under the same umbrella would be an excellent example of pooling resources for the good of the County. John Nicholson was concerned that the duties specific to the two offices would get lost in the mix during an emergency. Jack Skrogstad stated that he was in favor of the resolution for the sake of accountability and chain of command, and it should have been done long before now.

Motion by Marilyn Shippert: To table the Resolution: Amending the Department of EMA to a Division of the Lee County Sheriff's Office until the committee had more facts.

Second by Mike Zeman:

Roll call vote: Chair Mike Koppien—Yes, Vice Chair Marilyn Shippert—Yes, Keane Hudson—No, Katie White—No, Mike Zeman—No, Jack Skrogstad—No. *Motion failed.*

Motion by Jack Skrogstad: To move Resolution: Amending the Department of EMA to a Division of the Lee County Sheriff's Office to the Executive Committee.

Second by Katie White:

Roll call vote: Vice Chair Marilyn Shippert—Yes, Keane Hudson—Yes, Katie White—Yes, Mike Zeman—Yes, Jack Skrogstad—Yes, Chair Mike Koppien—Yes. *Motion passed unanimously.*

Motion by Keane Hudson: To move the Appointment of Donald J. Dinges as Trustee of the Sublette Fire Protection District to Executive Committee.

Second by Marilyn Shippert: Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Motion to adjourn by Jack Skrogstad:

Second by Marilyn Shippert: Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

With no further business, meeting was adjourned at 10:58 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,
Becky Brenner – Lee County Board Secretary

The next scheduled meeting for the Public Safety Committee will be 9:00 a.m., on Wednesday, June 9, 2021