



## MARATHON COUNTY PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Wednesday, November 4, 2020, at 2:00 p.m.

Employee Resources Conference Room-C-149, Courthouse, 500 Forest St, Wausau

Attendance:

<u>Members</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Matt Bootz, Chair	W	
Brent Jacobson, Vice-Chair	W	
Jenifer Bizzotto		EX
Bruce Lamont	W	
Jean Maszk	W	
Allen Opall	W	
Arnie Schlei	W	

**Others Present:** Lance Leonhard, Kurt Gibbs, Jason Hake, Laura Yarie, Toshia Ranallo, Mary Palmer

**Via Web or Phone:** Ruth Heinzl, EJ Stark, Bill Millhausen, Theresa Wetzsteon, Sandra LaDu, Chad Billeb, Shawn Jaeger, Dean, Craig McEwen

### 1. Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Matt Bootz at 2:00 p.m.

### 2. Public Comment (15 minute limit) – None

### 3. Approval of the Minutes of the Public Safety Meeting on September 30, 2020 MOTION BY JACOBSON; SECOND BY MASZK TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 30, 2020 COMMITTEE MEETING. MOTION CARRIED.

### 4. Policy Issues Discussion and Committee Determination to the County Board for its Consideration

- A. Resolution Requesting the State of Wisconsin to Annually Allocate Funds to Public Safety  
Answering Points

#### **Discussion:**

Chief Deputy Billeb gave the history that all phones pay a fee to a fund to be used for 9-1-1 answering points. Seventy-five cents per phone and 38 cents on other electronic retail sales. The money is still collected, but not dispersed to local 9-1-1 agencies. Some money is available for new projects, but because Marathon County is forward thinking and we have already started upgrades, we are not able to access any of these funds. The request is to ask for \$15 million annually for grants to the Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPS). We need to invest further in text, video, etc.

#### **Action:**

**MOTION BY JACOBSON; SECOND BY MASK TO SUPPORT THE RESOLUTION TO ANNUALLY ALLOCATE \$15 MILLION IN FUNDS TO PSAPS AND FORWARD TO THE FULL BOARD FOR APPROVAL. MOTION CARRIED.**

#### **Follow through:**

Forward to County Board for approval.

### 5. Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance or Resolution - None

### 6. Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports

- A. Update on Impact of Recent Legislation on Operating While Intoxicated Treatment Court and  
Next Steps Relative to Treatment Court Operations Planning

**Discussion:**

Laura Yarie, Justice Systems Coordinator, gave the history of our OWI Court. It was designed to work with felony 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> high risk offenders. A team made up of all court related departments/agencies work together to review applications to the program by looking at assessments to mental health, AODA history, their motivation and willingness to participate. If accepted to the program, the individual pleads guilty which is then imposed and stayed and then they are placed on probation. This model is treatment and accountability which leads to success. Rewards and sanctions are given quickly so the accountability piece is extremely important. Data given on the success of the program is very high.

On March 1, 2020 a law was passed that 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> offenders must serve one and one-half years in prison. There is no option to give these high risk offenders probation. Our judges would like an amendment to the Act that if a person is participating in an established program, that the prison time can be waived.

Other counties that have OWI Courts were not established on the criteria that we were with the National Institute of Corrections and do not follow their criteria. Those courts are working with 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> offenders and those higher go to prison.

**Follow through:**

No follow through needed.

B. Wisconsin Changes Policy relative to Medicaid Coverage for Incarcerated Individuals

**Discussion:**

Supervisors have been working with the Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) and National Association of Counties (NACo) to only suspend Medicaid for incarcerated individuals. States have the option to suspend or terminate benefits upon incarceration. Wisconsin has been a termination state. When inmates are released from custody, they need to reapply for those benefits. At Federal prisons, benefits are suspended and upon release benefits are restored without any additional paperwork.

There were positions in the community helping people apply and reapply for benefits. There were constant technology, cognitive issues, and no paperwork. We were looking to become a suspended county within a termination state.

**Follow through:**

No follow through needed.

1. What does this mean for inmates?

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/news/releases/101620.htm>

**Discussion:**

In early October 2020, Wisconsin switched to become a suspended state. Benefits will automatically go back in place upon release. This will save time, money and frustration for the newly released.

**Follow through:**

No follow through needed.

C. Update from Sheriff's Office on COVID-19 Mitigation Efforts Within the Jail

**Discussion:**

Sandra LaDu, Jail Administrator – Covid is a day to day situation. New arrivals are tested. The first person that tested positive in the jail was at the end of July. Everyone was tested and he was the only person that came back positive. (28 possible) – Since July there had been about 8 with varying symptoms or were a-symptomatic. All recovered.

Last Thursday, an inmate in the long term pod tested positive and they tested 56 people. Forty tested positive in the jail. They have various medical staff available for all levels of COVID. On October 23 all are doing well. Staff have tested positive. Officers have no contact with other shifts.

If we would have a staffing issue, there is a plan to go down to minimums. We have some flexibility to

pull staff from the juvenile facilities, if necessary.

**Follow through:**

No follow through needed.

**D. Status of the District Attorney's Office in light of the County's Prioritization and Upcoming Judicial System Changes**

**Discussion:**

Theresa Wetzsteon, District Attorney for Marathon County - Building off the OWI court discussion. She feels there is a line drawn in the sand that prosecutors are state employees and the county is not going to let the State of Wisconsin shirk its responsibilities when it comes to staff.

For the past two years the DA has been asking for additional positions (1 Assistant District Attorney and 1 legal secretary) to be paid for by the County. There has not been funding for those positions either year. No new County positions were approved for the 2021 budget.

Looking for funding for her positions, the D.A. pointed out that the County is spending \$165,000 each year for OWI Court on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> offenders who are on their way to prison. If sent to prison, the state would be responsible for these offenders. It's the state's dime. By working with 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> offenders the County is supplementing the state with county tax levy dollars and county resources on a regular basis. It's a double standard.

The DA's office workload is increasing due to body cameras and Marsy's Law and now we will get a 6<sup>th</sup> court branch.

Non-mandatory programs that DA personnel participate in, such as the Restorative Justice program, will be a program her staff won't be participating in any longer. She also points out that the SSTOP (Safe Streets Treatment Options Program) costs \$118,000 per year of tax levy funds. Is it a smart allocation of her resources to participate in and maintain integrity of the program? She does not support continuation of this program.

Supervisors have the option to amend the budget at County Board. There is a form that was sent out to complete. County Board Chair Gibbs pointed out that all programs need to be looked at. Prior to the pandemic there was going to be a system-wide review of all programs. There hasn't been enough staff for this. We cannot, especially at the last minute, put one program against another. We need to look at the total picture.

In the future we are going to look at system budgeting, which may help and also Priority Based Budgeting.

**Follow through:**

No follow through needed.

**7. Next Meeting Time, Location, Announcements and Agenda Items**

- A. Next meeting: December 2, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.
- B. Announcements: None

**8. Adjournment**

**MOTION BY MASZK; SECOND BY OPALL TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. MOTION CARRIED.  
(3:36 pm)**

Respectfully submitted by,  
Mary Palmer