



MARATHON COUNTY PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Wednesday, January 8, 2020, at 12:00 p.m.
Courthouse Assembly Room – B-105, 500 Forest St, Wausau

Attendance:

<u>Members</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Craig McEwen, Chair	X	
Jim Schaefer, Vice-Chair	X	
Kelley Gabor	X	
Jean Maszk	X	
David Nutting	X	
Arnie Schlei	X	
Chris Voll		X

Others Present: Lance Leonhard, Ruth Heinzl, Jon Graveen, Jamie Polley, Chad Billeb, John Robinson, Theresa Wetzsteon, Kurt Gibbs, E.J. Stark, Molly Lawrence, Laura Yarie, Kelly Schremp, Andrea Larson, Media, Mary Palmer

1. Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Craig McEwen at 12:00 p.m.

2. Public Comment (15 minute limit) – None

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Public Safety Meeting on December 10, 2019

MOTION BY MASZK; SECOND BY SCHAEFER TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 10, 2019, PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEES WITH THE CORRECTION TO REMOVE DAVID NUTTING IN ATTENDANCE. MOTION CARRIED.

Going out of order with approval from the committee. Taking 6A and then 5A then going back to 4A.

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

A. Reconsider Changes for Support of Sports Events Occurring on County Roads Resolution

Discussion:

This agenda item was to be voted on at the December County Board meeting, but was postponed until January.

Upon further review of the policy, staff is suggesting that the policy be redeveloped to be more inclusive of any major event such as Farm Technology Days and not just sporting events. We cannot stop groups of people from riding on a highway, and we can't just pick five events because we do more than that now. The goal is to have a good, streamlined policy with uniformity throughout the county. Keep the application form the same.

One Supervisor is not in support of anything in the policy that hinders services. The County does not have the authority to stop anyone from having an event. They have to obey the laws. We would prefer to work with them so they have a safe event. Events have gotten bigger and there are more of them. We want to make sure we make the events are safe.

Chair McEwen will ask the County Board to refer back to Public Safety for further review.

Until a more inclusive policy is development the County will continue working with events as they have in the past.

Action:

No action taken.

Follow through:

No follow through needed.

5. Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance or Resolution:

- A. Resolution asking the State to Provide Funding for Assistant District Attorneys Consistent with their own Analysis of Need

Discussion:

No comments from the Committee

Action:

MOTION BY MASZK; SECOND BY SCHAEFER TO SUPPORT THE RESOLUTION ASKING THE STATE TO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEYS CONSISTENT WITH THEIR OWN ANALYSIS OF NEED AND MOVE IT FORWARD TO THE COUNTY BOARD. MOTION CARRIED.

The District Attorney feels the last whereas doesn't capture the spirit of what happened at the County Board. Her interpretation is that the Board made it clear that it's the State's responsibility to fund those programs.

A Supervisor stated that the state is responsible for a lot of stuff, but we are responsible to keep these programs going.

Chair McEwen stated that the resolution is a good place to start to look for funding.

Follow through:

Send to County Board

6. Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports

- A. Update on the Roles of the State Prosecutors in County Initiatives

Discussion:

Theresa Wetzsteon, District Attorney, has looked up what the role of District Attorney's (DA's) office is and it's described as processing crimes. She gave the history of the relationship between Marathon County and the District Attorney's office since 2011.

Understaffing of their department negatively affects the County and the initiatives that are currently being provided. The Governor recognizes that Marathon County is aligned with his vision which allowed Marathon County to get additional (3.5) Assistant District Attorneys. She feels she has been working to keep the partnership with the county and to keep the programs going. Right now their office is 5.7 prosecutors short. Plus in March three additional prosecutors will be on leave.

She has looked at what they do beyond their job description in the statutes. A list of the main programs that they participate in was handed out and explained what they do and how their department is involved in the programs. They will be filling in much of the data over the next month on the programs they participate in.

It was no one's first choice to pit two programs against each other. She said she will not make any rash decisions on cutting program participation. Some comments from committee members and other board members are:

- The partnership between the DA's office and the County is strongly believed in.
- We have increased staff 9%. The board directed county administration to do a comprehensive study and how it effects all the departments in the criminal justice system.
- What can we do to keep from building a new jail?
- One supervisor agrees with a lot of details the DA's office is sharing and feels the County Board dropped the ball.
- It's not a once in a lifetime opportunity to get additional prosecutors and we need to proactively get the State's support. Look at lean process and see what efficiencies might be made. Let's create opportunities and not close the door for additional funding. DA welcomes efficiencies
- Levy limits and increases in health insurance have played a big part over the past few years. Having a discussion with State Attorney General is welcomed. There has to be additional resources through the State. Marathon County serves the best we can with resources we have

and will look at other options to perform those services.

- There is an option of having a county attorney as a special prosecutor to the DA's office. That person can be held accountable to the County. Also don't lose the legal secretary need in her office.

The DA truly believes that there will be no additional prosecutors coming from the State over her lifetime as District Attorney. Defendants' constitutional rights need to be protected and that's her priority. She feels she's doing her job for her department.

Chair McEwen thanked the DA's office for all they do and recognizes how progressive they are in the Country. He also pointed out that over the past few years the County has been very supportive of all her position requests such as a technology technician. He's hopeful that we will continue with a good partnership. He pointed out that she recognizes the benefit of the programs.

Follow through:

No follow through requested.

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

- A. Next meeting: **Wednesday, February 12, 2020** at the Courthouse Assembly Room.

- B. Announcement: Phone Service in Town of Easton is not being repaired by Frontier. Representatives from Frontier or FCC and possibly CCITC and DCAP are being invited to the Infrastructure meeting along with area legislators, hopefully at the February meeting. This is a serious safety issue. Requesting a joint meeting with Public Safety and infrastructure.

8. Adjournment

MOTION BY SCHAEFER; SECOND BY SCHLEI TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. MOTION CARRIED. (1:29 pm)

Respectfully submitted by,
Mary Palmer