

Columbia County
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MINUTES
August 9, 2022

Notice: These minutes have not been approved by the Judiciary Committee and are subject to additions and/or corrections. They will be approved at next month's regularly scheduled committee meeting.

Present: Eric J. Shimpach, Tess Carr, Joe Harvestine, John A. Stevenson, and Jeffrey A. Leckwee

Also Present: Chris Polzer, Denise J. Brusveen, Judge Voigt, Judge Cross, Judge Hepler, Susan Raimer, Brenda Yaskal, Julie Kayartz, Chris Boettcher, Selina Hooker, Joseph Ruf III and Kelly Hoffmann

I. Call to Order. Posting Compliance. Approve Agenda. Approve Minutes. Expenditure Reports.

- 1) Meeting called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Chair Shimpach.
- 2) Posting compliance was met per Open Meetings Law.
- 3) ***Motion was made by Carr to approve the agenda. Seconded by Leckwee. Motion carried.***
- 4) ***Motion was made by Leckwee to approve the previous meeting minutes from the regular Judiciary Committee Meeting on July 12, 2022. Seconded by Carr. Motion carried.***
- 5) **Public Input.** none
- 6) **Chairman's Communications.** none
- 7) **Expenditure Reports.** After a review of the expenditure reports for the Judges, Clerk of Courts, District Attorney's Office, Corporation Counsel Office, and Child Support Office, ***a motion was made by Leckwee to approve all of the expenditures. Seconded by Carr. Motion carried.***
- 8) **Next meeting date** will be Tuesday, September 13, 2022, at 8:30 a.m. in the Courthouse basement conference room.

II. Judges:

- **General Review of Department Activities.** General discussion of monthly activities provided by Judge Voigt. Judge Voigt indicated that the jury trial schedule is still very busy. Judge Voigt provided some statistics on the backlog of cases. As of March 1, 2020, there were 1900 open cases, as of January 1, 2022, there were 3700 open cases, and as of August 5, 2022, there were 3450 open cases. The Courts continue to work on the backlog from COVID-19 as well as processing new cases. Judge Voigt indicated that the Courthouse Security Committee Meeting had met for the first time in a long time and the Judges have been in contact with the Sheriff's Office to set up a formal training for all Courthouse staff on December 9, 2022. Judge Hepler talked about the resignation of his court reporter and also talked about the difficulty in finding court reporters.
- **Circuit Court Operations 2023 Budget.** Discussion. ***Motion was made by Carr to approve the Circuit Court Operations (No. 1212) budget including capital outlay request as presented. Seconded by Leckwee. Motion carried.***
- **Register in Probate 2023 Budget.** Discussion. ***Motion was made by Leckwee to approve the Register in Probate (No. 1216) budget as presented. Seconded by Carr. Motion carried.***
- **Family Court Mediator 2023 Budget.** Discussion. ***Motion was made by Leckwee to approve the Family Court Mediator (No. 1218) budget as presented. Seconded by Harvestine. Motion carried.***
- **Court Commissioner 2023 Budget.** Discussion. ***Motion was made by Carr to approve the Court Commissioner (No. 1240) budget as presented. Seconded by Leckwee. Motion carried.***

III. Clerk of Courts:

- **General Review of Department Activities.** General discussion of monthly activities provided by Clerk of Courts, Susan Raimer. Raimer stated there will be a new criminal clerk starting next week. Raimer stated that they have been working without a Chief Deputy since April 22, 2022, as the previous Chief Deputy retired. Raimer stated that the position was not offered to anyone within the office since she will be retiring soon and will allow her replacement to choose their own Chief Deputy. Staff continues to work diligently with all of the jury trials going on. Raimer stated that elevator work will be done in September through mid-October. Raimer discussed the possibility of holding youth government day again as it has not been held since COVID-19. The Committee was in support of holding youth government day again.
- **Clerk of Courts 2023 Budget.** Discussion. *Motion was made by Leckwee to approve the Clerk of Courts (No. 1220) budget including capital outlay request as presented. Seconded by Harvestine. Motion carried.*

IV. District Attorney:

- **General Review of Department Activities.** General discussion of monthly activities provided by DA Brenda Yaskal. Yaskal discussed changes and challenges in the DA's Office operations due to COVID-19. She stated that they are continuing to move forward and there is still a heavy jury trial schedule. General discussion on Teen Court provided by Chris Boettcher, Teen Court Coordinator. Boettcher handed out an updated brochure on the Teen Court program. Boettcher indicated that it has been a slow year, not only for Columbia County but also for other counties, due to the bounce back from COVID-19. Yaskal stated they are hopeful for more referrals in the coming months.
- **District Attorney 2023 Budget.** Discussion. *Motion was made by Stevenson to approve the District Attorney (No. 1610) budget including capital outlay request as presented. Seconded by Leckwee. Motion carried 4-1 with Shimpach opposed.*
- **Teen Court 2023 Budget.** Discussion. *Motion was made by Carr to approve the Teen Court (No. 1615) budget as presented. Seconded by Stevenson. Motion carried.*
- **Teen Court Invoice.** Discussion. *Motion was made by Leckwee to approve payment of the teen court invoice as presented. Seconded by Harvestine. Motion carried.*

V. Corporation Counsel/Child Support Office:

- **General Review of Department Activities.** General discussion of monthly activities for Corporation Counsel and Child Support provided by Corporation Counsel Joseph Ruf, III.
- **Child Support 2023 Budget.** *Motion was made by Carr to approve the Child Support (No. 1645) budget as presented. Seconded by Stevenson. Motion carried.* **Corporation Counsel 2023 Budget.** *Motion was made by Carr to approve the Corporation Counsel (No. 1640) budget as presented. Seconded by Stevenson. Motion carried.*

Motion was made by Leckwee to adjourn the meeting at 10:14 a.m. Seconded by Stevenson. Motion carried.

Secretary of Record,

Recording Secretary,


Supervisor Tess Carr
Committee Secretary


Kelly Hoffmann
Assistant to Corporation Counsel/HR Director

cc: Judiciary Committee Members
Chair Polzer
1st Vice Chair Brusveen
2nd Vice Chair M. Rohrbeck
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