

Columbia County
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MINUTES
November 10, 2020

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, Chris Polzer, Liz Miller and Steven Rohrbeck
Absent: Robert McClyman
Also Present: Judge Voigt, Judge Cross, Judge Hepler, Susan Raimer, Brenda Yaskal, Joseph Ruf III and Jamie Henriksen

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

- 1) Meeting called to order at 8:15 a.m. by Vice Chair Shimpach.
- 2) Posting compliance was met per Open Meetings Law.
- 3) ***Motion was made by Miller to approve the agenda. Seconded by Rohrbeck. Motion carried.***
- 4) ***Motion was made by Miller to approve the previous meeting minutes from October 13, 2020. Seconded by Polzer. 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 Miller to approve all of the expenditures. Seconded by Polzer. Motion carried.***
- 8) **Next meeting date** will be Tuesday, December 8, 2020 at 8:15 a.m. in the Courthouse basement conference room.

II. Judges:

- **General Review of Department Activities.** General discussion of monthly activities provided by Judge Cross. Judge Cross updated the Committee on the progress of the DAR Systems being installed in the Courtrooms. They are working closely with all departments to get through the backlog of criminal cases due to COVID-19. They are hoping to be caught up with the backlog within 6-9 months. Judge Voigt is back in the office as of this week. Voigt provided information regarding the various microphones that are being installed in the Courtrooms and the issues they are running into. They are working closely with the MIS and Facilities Management Departments to prepare for the DAR Systems being installed.

III. Clerk of Courts:

- **General Review of Department Activities.** General discussion of monthly activities provided by COC Susan Raimer. Raimer discussed the changes and challenges in COC operations that have occurred due to COVID-19. Raimer said they continue to work with the District Attorney's Office to schedule 30 cases per week in addition to what they originally had in an effort to reduce some of the back-logged cases from this summer. Raimer has been asked to participate in a re-organized subcommittee made up of Court staff to discuss in-person jury trials. This Committee met last month and focused on jury preparation before and after jury trials. Raimer informed the Committee that she plans to request approval from the County Board, in a few months, to work with a collection agency to assist in recouping fines and fees from defendants and/or clients and would really appreciate the support of the Judiciary Committee.

IV. District Attorney:

- **General Review of Department Activities.** General discussion of monthly activities provided by DA Brenda Yaskal. Yaskal also discussed changes and challenges in the DA's Office operations due to COVID-19. She added that she is optimistic with the way things are going with the Clerk of Court's Office with scheduling the extra complaints to work on the backlog. Yaskal added that she has worked with Accounting and with the HR Department to move some money in the budget to offer overtime to the County staff in her office to work on the backlog. She said they started with around 700 complaints and have the list down to under 400 complaints. She is happy with the way things are going given the pandemic.
- **Position Replacement Request – Legal Secretary** – DA Yaskal presented a position replacement request for a Legal Secretary due to a resignation. Discussion. *Motion was made by Miller to approve the Position Replacement Request – Legal Secretary. Seconded by Polzer. 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 Joseph Ruf, III. He discussed the challenges with COVID and appreciated the patience of the Judges and their staff through this pandemic. Ruf added that two new staff members will be added to the Child Support crew this month. There is money in the budget for some overlap for training.

Motion was made by Miller to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 a.m. Seconded by Polzer. Motion carried.

Secretary of Record,



Supervisor Chris Polzer
Committee Secretary

Recording Secretary,



Jamie Henriksen
HR Program Coordinator

cc: Judiciary Committee Members
Chair Gove
1st Vice Chair Foley
2nd Vice Chair Koch
Internet