

Columbia County
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MINUTES
December 8, 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, David Drews, Joseph Ruf III and Jamie Henriksen

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

- 1) Meeting called to order at 8:16 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 Polzer. Motion carried.***
- 4) ***Motion was made by Miller to approve the previous meeting minutes from November 10, 2020. Seconded by Polzer. Motion carried.***
- 5) **Public Input.** None.
- 6) **Chairman's Communications.** Vice Chair Shimpach wanted to wish Chair McClyman well as he has been ill.
- 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 Polzer to approve all of the expenditures. Seconded by Miller. Motion carried.***
- 8) **Next meeting date** will be Tuesday, January 12, 2021 at 8:15 a.m. in the Courthouse basement conference room. After the January 2021 Committee Meeting, the Committee would like to start meeting every other month (odd numbered months).

II. Judges:

- **General Review of Department Activities.** General discussion of monthly activities provided by Judge Voigt. Judge Voigt updated the Committee on the progress of the backlog of criminal cases due to COVID-19. Defendants are not interested in moving forward with their cases as they do not want to contract COVID-19 in the jails/prisons. This is making things harder to catch up on cases that have been delayed. The Courts are working closely with the Facilities Management Department to have plexiglass installed for jury trials. Judge Voigt also added that they have money in the supplies budget and are looking into purchasing a laptop. This laptop would be used by Reserve Judges that are assisting with coverage but do not have the proper equipment available at home to utilize Zoom for court. Judge Hepler added that they are still struggling to fill vacancies for Court Reporters/DAR System Operators.

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 with the shortage of Court Reporters, she may have to ask her Clerks to assist with DAR System operations in the near future.

IV. District Attorney:

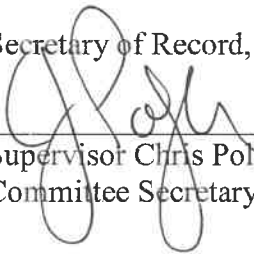
- **General Review of Department Activities.** General discussion of monthly activities provided by DA Brenda Yaskal. Yaskal discussed changes and challenges in the DA's Office operations due to COVID-19. Yaskal added that she had worked with Accounting and with the HR Department to move some money in the budget to offer overtime to the County staff in her office to work on the backlog and thinks this is going well. Yaskal also added that she has supply money remaining and will most likely request to purchase a laptop with that money. A Special Prosecutor, who has been working on Columbia County cases, has been using a State-issued laptop. The State is requesting their laptop back, therefore, Yaskal will need to purchase a replacement laptop.

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 were added to the Child Support staff recently and are doing great.
- **Position Replacement Request – Paralegal** - Ruf presented a position replacement request for a Paralegal due to a resignation. Discussion. *Motion was made by Polzer to approve the Position Replacement Request – Paralegal. Seconded by Miller. Motion carried.*
- **Position Description – Paralegal** - Ruf presented an updated position description for a Paralegal. *Motion was made by Miller to approve the Position Description – Paralegal. Seconded by Rohrbeck. Motion carried.*


Judiciary Committee was adjourned by Vice Chair Shimpach at 9:05 a.m.

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