

COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: Law Enforcement & Courts
CHAIRPERSON: Bill Bingham, Chairman
DATE/TIME: March 22, 2021 @ 4:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Jo Daviess County – 3rd floor County Board Room

PRESENT – Law Enforcement & Courts:

☒ Bill Bingham	☐ Vacant	☒ LaDon Trost
☒ Darcy Wild (4:35 pm)	☒ John Korth	☒ Scott Toot
☒ Don Zillig		

A quorum was established.

Other Board Members: None.

Others: Kathy Phillips, Dan Reimer and Kevin Turner

1. Minutes Approval:

- a) Minutes from February 16, 2021 Law Enforcement & Courts Committee meeting – Don Zillig made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 16, 2021 Law Enforcement & Courts Committee meeting. Seconded by John Korth and motion carried following a roll call vote resulting in all ayes.

2. Citizens' Comments: None.

3. Unfinished Business

- a) FY2019/FY2020 Strategic Goals & Plans – Review Committee Assignments from 2019 County Board Retreat – Update Status/Progress – The Committee strategic goals and plans were not included in the meeting packet, however the committee had reviewed and updated their assignments from the 2019 County Board Retreat at their February meeting.
- b) Progress report - Jo Daviess County All Hazard Mitigation Plan Update – Chuck Pedersen was unable to attend the meeting. The update of the Jo Daviess County All Hazard Mitigation Plan has been completed and is posted on the Jo Daviess County website.
- c) Update on the MDFPD Communication Tower Project – Bill Bingham reported that a joint Law Enforcement & Courts Committee and Ad-Hoc Menominee-Dunleith Fire Protection District Communication Tower Committee meeting was held just prior to today's meeting. Progress was made and a decision was made to submit an application to AT&T for a possible lease of space on a new tower that is being constructed. Because of the application process a few other action items on the agenda were deferred. It was decided to put on hold any decisions on a new communication tower location until the results of a collocate application with AT&T is known

4. New Business

- a) Discussion and possible action on tuition reimbursement– Sheriff Turner reported that he has two employees right now that are enrolling in College and per our collective bargaining agreement (CBA) there is a section regarding tuition reimbursement. We did not actually budget for it this year. There are currently no funds appropriated for tuition reimbursement in the FY2021 budget. Sheriff would like to see if we could assist our employees who qualify, by reimbursing one employee per provisions in the CBA for this semester, and then next semester another employee who is looking to go back to college. Dan Reimer discussed that the tuition reimbursement section from the CBA is included in the meeting

packet. The tuition reimbursement provision has been included in the CBA for many years but there has not been a request or opportunity to use it. The County does not have a specific tuition reimbursement policy for non-union employees. In 2007 the Executive Committee worked on a tuition reimbursement policy, but the great recession occurred, funds were limited, and the policy was never adopted. Currently individual departments budget for necessary and mandatory training requirements for their staff on a case by case basis. If additional funds are needed a necessary or mandatory expense request is made during the budget planning process. Sheriff's situation is a little bit different because there are specific parameters already set up in the CBA. There is nothing appropriated in the FY2021 budget, however there may be a possibility of making a request to use the Contingency fund and then make a necessary expense request for the FY2022 budget. Sheriff Turner added it is the employee's responsibility to submit all necessary course descriptions and grade reports to the Sheriff or his designee in order to receive tuition reimbursement.

5. Staff Reports

a) **Sheriff's Report** - Sheriff Turner reported that the US Army has asked to extend the Blanding Landing Recreation Area contract another year within the same terms and conditions. There is an issue with the generator in the Public Safety building, oil is mixing with the antifreeze. They had a mechanic diagnosis the problem and he was able to order parts but they will take a while to get here, as a result the generator will be down for a period of time. He was able to secure a loaner generator for us to use for emergencies and to keep the communications center operational. He recommended that we consider a new generator where parts are more accessible. He is going to research and get back to the Sheriff's Office and ETSB. Turner will work with Bill Kimball and Joe Kratcha to see what route we need to go for a new generator. LaDon Trost added that generator was purchased in 1998 or 1999 and it is time to get it replaced. Sheriff Turner discussed that last month asked to transfer funds designated in the Public Safety Building budget for the jail cook to line items to pay for inmate food service. The jail cook position will not be replaced. Two bids were received for 2021 inmate food service. One was from Dillon's who was awarded a contract. The other was from The Workshop who bid only to provide meals Monday through Friday. Turner asked if we could now consider The Workshop bid for Monday through Friday and continue to contract with Dillon's for weekends and holidays. When we put inmate food service out to bid we had a jail cook who has since retired and will not be replaced. This item is not on the agenda so no action can be taken until a future meeting when this item is on the agenda.

b) **Circuit Clerk's Office** – Kathy Phillips, Clerk of the Circuit Court, reported that plans are underway to start in person court on May 3rd, for criminal court. Right now everything is still being done by Zoom. We will begin to have people come to the courthouse at that time. Otherwise everything is the same as normal.

c) **Probation** – Jamie Watson, Chief County Probation Officer, was unable to attend the meeting.

d) **Public Defender** – None.

6. Citizens' Comments – None.

7. Board Member Concerns – None.

The next Law Enforcement & Courts Committee meeting will be Monday, April 19, 2021, at 4:30 p.m. at the Jo Daviess County Courthouse, County Board Room.

Meeting adjourned at 4:54 p.m. following a motion by John Korth and a second by Scott Toot. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes.