



Justice and Public Safety Committee

Thursday, April 28, 2010 – 9:00 a.m.
Room 100 – Otsego County Building
225 West Main Gaylord, MI 49735

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM

Members Present: Doug Johnson, Paul Liss, Mike Hyde, John Burt, Erma Backenstose, Sheriff McBride, Brian Webber, Rachel Frisch, Vicki Courterier, Judge Morse, Amy Neubecker, Mike Thompson

Excused: Kyle Legel

Others Present: Dan Wilson, Janet Frederick-Wilson

OLD BUSINESS

A. Animal Control Facility

Mr. Hyde informed the Committee that the Animal Control Facility Subcommittee has looked into several empty buildings and is in the process of obtaining the estimated costs to refurbish them.

Mr. Burt indicated that all cost estimates for the remodeling options, along with a reduced size version of the original plans for a new building should be in by the end of next week (5/7/10). He would like to have the architects, Butcher & Associates, present the options to the full Committee.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Friend of the Court Citizens Advisory Committee

Ms. Neubecker informed the Committee that a FOC Citizens Advisory Committee serves to advise the county board and the circuit court as to the performance of the FOC. The advisory committee is not mandated. Of the 83 Michigan counties, 3 have active advisory committees: Kent, Oakland, and Macomb. The individuals serving on the advisory committee would be volunteers as there is no funding for this service. The current system in Otsego County does not have an advisory committee but does have a grievance process, as mandated by the state, which includes an annual review process that is advertised in the newspaper for individuals to come forward if they have concerns. Our FOC processes over 1,600 cases per year, and the number of grievances for the past 3 years are as follows: 2009-0; 2008-3; 2007-2.

Mr. Wilson and Ms. Frederick-Wilson both spoke to the Committee about their Parents for Children Program, which started in Macomb county 12 years ago. They indicated that they would be interested in developing a program in the Northern Michigan area.

Mr. Johnson informed the Committee that he will speak to his contacts at Macomb and Oakland Counties, to obtain additional information on their FOC citizen advisory committees. He will report back to the Committee.

B. Jury Questionnaires

Judge Morse explained to the Committee that the Court is planning on issuing bench warrants in Otsego County for individuals who do not fill out their jury questionnaires due to the high rate of non-response in Otsego County. A letter would go out first to the individuals who did not respond, before the bench warrant is issued. Judge Morse indicated that she has never had to issue a bench warrant, as the letter has been effective. Judge Allen is using the process in Crawford County. Judge Morse will report back to the Committee on how it goes in Crawford County.

The next meeting date is set for July 28, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.

Mr. Johnson adjourned the meeting at 9:38 AM.