

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 29, 2020

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Ward, Hogan, Haff, Hicks, O'Brien, Clary

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Rozell

SUPERVISORS: Henke, Hall, Fedler, Campbell, Wilson, Griffith

Debra Prehoda, Clerk

Al Nolette, County Treasurer

Roger Wickes, County Attorney

Glen Gosnell, Director Public Safety

Tim Hardy, Deputy Director Public Safety

John Graham, Code Enforcement Adm.

Mike Mercure, Public Defender

Mike Gray, Alternative Sentencing Director

Tony Jordan, District Attorney

John Winchell, Undersheriff

Anthony White, Probation Director

Fire Coordinator

AGENDA AS PRESENTED IN COMMITTEE NOTICE:

1. Call to Order
2. Accept Minutes – December 1, 2020
3. Department Reports/Requests:
 - A. Code Enforcement
 - 1) Department Updates
 - B. District Attorney
 - 1) Office Operations Update
 - 2) Court Operation Update
 - 3) Analysis of Current Felony and Misdemeanor Backlog
4. Other Business
5. Adjournment

Chairman Ward called the meeting to order at 1:03 P.M. via teleconference.

A motion to accept the minutes of the December 1, 2020 meeting was moved by Mr. O'Brien, seconded Mr. Hogan and adopted.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS /REQUESTS:

CODE ENFORCEMENT – John Graham, Code Enforcement Administrator, addressed the following items:

- Department Updates:
 - Office moved to Burgoyne Avenue location. Thanked the Buildings and Grounds department.
 - Two new employees will complete their training by the end of February.
 - Installation of Fireplace & Woodstoves – Sent out a general announcement that installing fireplaces and woodstoves require a permit.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY – Tony Jordan, DA, addressed the following items:

- Office Operations Update – 2020 has been a challenging year. Looking at just penal law, misdemeanors, felonies and DWIs, their volume is up 2.7% over last year. Last year they were just over 1300 and this year currently at 1368 penal law, misdemeanor and felonies and that doesn't include all the vehicle and traffic violations that they do in local courts despite a three or four month pause.
- Court Operation Update – During the first shutdown, the Governor in his executive order stayed all of the criminal procedure law timelines including speedy trial discovery and that has not happened during this most recent shutdown. This will be a real problem and challenge in the coming months for his office. Local courts all but shut down since early December. The only activity permitted to be done in person are arraignments and preliminary hearings. Encouraged to do virtual proceedings. Cases are not moving through. This is a

directive from the office of court administration not the Governor. Also, half of all arraignments have been for warrants.

- Discovery Process – The office is now 90% to 95% paperless through investments in information technology and digital management systems. They have been able to accomplish the rapid turnaround in discovery without any interruption with case integrity. IT has been wonderful for support and with remote connectivity allowing them to work through the shutdown.
- Analysis of Current Felony and Misdemeanor Backlog – Speedy trial concerns because if they are not processed or prosecuted within 90 days for misdemeanors, 60 days for violations or 180 days for felonies then the case is in jeopardy of being dismissed and the clock continues but no way of getting into court to move the case along. He does not want defendants sitting in jail. Currently have unindicted/uncharged 123 felonies and 150 uncharged investigations and other types of cases that would be direct presentment to the grand jury. Over the last three years, they have averaged 30 to 35 felony cases in terms of new arrest a month and grand jury is allowed one day week so the backlog is growing about 18 to 20 cases a month. The backlog in cases are arsons, eight assaults, thirty four domestic, fourteen firearms and twenty six crimes and non-violent forty five DWIs and seventy drug cases. As the backlog grows anticipate defendants asking for cases to be dismissed on speedy trial basis. Misdemeanor backlog is about four hundred seventy.
- Still have a high number of DWIs but down over last year by 15% to 20%.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Thanked Anthony White, Probation Director, who is retiring at the end of the month, for his service and wished him well in his new endeavor.

A motion to adjourn was moved by Mr. O'Brien, seconded by Mrs. Clary and adopted.

The meeting adjourned at 1:33 P.M.

Debra Prehoda, Clerk
Washington County Board of Supervisors