

Wood County Criminal Justice Task Force Minutes June 19, 2019

Present: Melvin Pedersen, Grand Rapids PD; Greg Potter, Branch 1; Lori Heideman, Wood County Dispatch; Kate Frigo Drury, State Public Defender; Cindy Joosten, Clerk of Courts; Bill Clendenning, Wood County Board; Dennis Polach, Wood County Board; James Wunrow, Wood County Jail; Theodore Ashbeck, Wood County Sheriff's Dept.; Craig Lambert, District Attorney; Michelle Newman, Victim Witness; Jackie Arnold, Clerk of Courts; Caitlin Saylor, Dept. of Corrections; Adam Stublaski, Dept of Corrections.

Minute Approvals: Judge Potter called meeting to order at 12:00. No additions or corrections to 3/20/19 Task Force minutes. Minutes are approved.

Public Comment: None.

Additions to Agenda: No additions.

Restorative Justice: Bill Clendenning states that Criminal Justice Coordinator position was postponed to next County Board meeting. Some supervisors are against it.

Drug Court: Judge Wolf is not present today. He has submitted report, which was attached to agenda.

Victim Impact Panel: Nothing new on Victim Impact Panel. It is suggested that it be removed from agenda.

Round Table: Judge Potter addresses issues Judge Wolf wanted addressed regarding assigning Public Defenders. Kate addresses a specific case issue. She states what the process they have for assigning attorneys to cases. Currently, there are 26 Wood County cases that they cannot find attorneys for. There are more cases in Wood County that they can't find attorneys for than in the surrounding counties. Judge Potter questions concerns of Public Defender not appointing an attorney to cases because trial date is less than a month out. He states that the Court will have no problem adjourning trials so an attorney can have more preparation time. Kate says it does not help assigning attorneys by having a quick trial date as most attorneys are reluctant to take those cases. Judge Potter states that he has appointed counsel for defendants who are eligible for Public Defender, but he will not be doing that again because of the cost. Judge Potter addresses Kate regarding a staff attorney was not appointed on a new case, but she represented same defendant on an old case and both cases were set for preliminary hearing at same time. The staff attorney would not represent defendant on new case at preliminary hearing. Later, after she was appointed, she requested that preliminary hearing be reheard. Kate states that if the attorney is not prepared to for the hearing, then she does not want them proceeding. Waiver of time limits to hold preliminary hearing is suggested.

Grand Rapids PD Melvin Pedersen questions why Wood County has more cases waiting for appointment of counsel than surrounding counties. Kate states she does not know the reason for this.

Melvin Pedersen states that he knows that a Veteran's Court is contingent upon hiring a Criminal Justice Coordinator, but he feels it keeps getting put on the back burner. He feels that there is a need for Veteran's Court. He feels that maybe advising County Board that a Veteran's Court would be included in a Criminal Justice Coordinator's duties that that might make a difference for board members who are undecided.

Bill Clendenning states he appears at the Criminal Justice Task Force meetings for the County Board Chairman. He feels it is important that County Board be represented.

Adam Stublaski states that they have a new agent starting on Monday, June 24th. He notes that Portage County's Veteran's Court has also been put on hold. Perhaps Wood and Portage Counties can be consolidated. Craig Lambert states that he has contacted other District Attorneys in the past regarding a regional Veteran's Court. He welcomes any calls from other counties.

Cindy Joosten states that during the Clerk of Courts conference last week, they were advised of openings in Milwaukee County for Digital Court Reporters. Within the next 5 years, 180 court reporters will be eligible to retire. Training is available for Digital Court Reporters. Judge Potter states that the State is trying to get a DAR in each courtroom. He states there is a real shortage of court reporters as not many are going into the field and they have many other options now other than reporting in court.

Kate Frigo Drury states that the proposed \$70/hour rate for Public Defender attorneys has passed some legislature and may become a reality soon, which will help with getting attorneys appointed on cases. Public Defender has a new staff attorney starting in Wood County on July 10th. Kate will initially be her mentor for the first month and then Gavin Grubofski will be when he comes back from vacation.

Ted Ashbeck states that the jail population is coming down a bit. They are averaging 235 inmates per day. Inmates are still being housed in Waupaca and Adams Counties. They have had an increase in extradition holds and one was a juvenile which was expensive. James Wunrow states Wood County has 100 inmates housed out of Wood County. He states that the jail is willing to work with attorneys on those out-of-county inmates by bringing them here to meet with their attorney. He hopes that this may help with appointing a Public Defender. He thanks the judges for allowing inmates to appear by video for their arraignments. Waupaca will be adding video equipment so inmates housed in Waupaca can appear by video.

Michelle Neumann appeared late and Victim Impact Panel is now addressed. She states that Portage County offers Victim Impact Panel and will accept offenders from Wood County. Kate thinks the Panel is beneficial to offenders. If Wood County does

reinstate panel, speakers will need to be found. MADD does have a list of speakers. Michelle states there is also an online program that may be used.

Meeting adjourned at 12:50. Next meeting set for 9/18/19 at 12:00 Noon.

Submitted 6/24/19

Jackie Arnold
Deputy Clerk of Courts