

COUNTY OF KENDALL, ILLINOIS
Law, Justice and Legislation Committee
Monday, February 28, 2022
Meeting Minutes

Call to Order and Pledge Allegiance – Chair Judy Gilmour called the meeting to order at 3:00p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call:

Committee Member	Status	Arrived	Left Meeting
Judy Gilmour	Here		
Amy Cesich	Absent		
Dan Koukol	Here		
Ruben Rodriguez	Here		
Robyn Vickers	Absent		

Others Present: Sheriff Dwight Baird, EMA Director Roger Bonuchi, Court Services Director Alice Elliott, ASA Leslie Johnson, Commander Jason Langston, Public Defender Jason Majer, Coroner Jacquie Purcell, Undersheriff Bobby Richardson, Commander Jeanne Russo, Deputy Commander Caleb Waltmire

Approval of Agenda: Member Koukol made a motion to approve the agenda, second by Member Rodriguez. **With three members present voting aye, the agenda was approved.**

Approval of Minutes – Member Rodriguez made a motion to approve the November 22, January 24, 2022 meeting minutes, second by Member Koukol. **With three members present voting aye, the motion carried by a 3-0 vote.**

Public Comment – None

Status Reports

Coroner – January written reports provided. Coroner Purcell reported there were two suicides in January, with four death determinations on hold that are possible overdoses. There were a total of 46 deaths.

The Coroner reviewed her current staffing situation, and stated that the caseload has increased almost three times to what it was prior to the pandemic. Purcell stated that she has two full-time staff members, herself and Chief Deputy Coroner Levi Gotte. Purcell explained that adding another full-time deputy coroner would help tremendously with office coverage, additional case paperwork, and in the field doing investigations. Coroner Purcell has already discussed the new position, and funding options with the Finance Committee, and hopes to hire someone on May 1, 2022, which will help to relieve some of overload.

The Coroner also stated she plans to increase the hours for the current Administrative Assistant from 10 to 15, which will increase the office coverage, and assist with the overwhelming amount of paperwork and documentation required for each case. Purcell reported that she has also discussed this proposal with the Finance Committee and will make the change on March 1, 2022.

EMA – January 2022 written report provided. EMA Director Bonuchi reported the Dosimetry testing is taking place at the EMA Office, the Lisbon Fire Department, and Newark Fire Department. Two of the three have submitted results so far. The testing is required every two years.

Bonuchi reported that work continues on the Mitigation Plan, which is the process used by the state and local leaders to understand risks from natural hazards and to develop long-term strategies that will reduce the impacts and loss of future events on people, property, and the environment. Bonuchi stated that they are working on the FEMA application for the grant, and the mitigation plan contract.

Public Defender –Public Defender Jason Majer reported that the office will lose one assistant public defender on March 11, 2022. Majer stated that he plans to ask for additional clerical assistance in the budget hearing with the Finance Committee. Majer stated that there is too much clerical work for one person to do.

Circuit Clerk – Written report provided.

Court Services – Written reports provided. Director Elliot reviewed some of their current initiatives including a Juvenile Detention Assessment Screening Tool, Pretrial Assessment tools, and a Supreme Court Region 2 Mental Health Task Force.

Elliott stated that the Mental Health Task Force is a collaborative process involving several community partners convening in March for the purpose of completing a Community Assessment Survey. The purpose of the survey is to identify existing resources available to meet the needs of mental health individuals at various intercept points in the community. This will help to identify the gaps in systems and resources while collaborating to address those areas of need.

Director Elliott reported that Juvenile Officer Brian VanMeter was recently appointed by Governor Pritzker to the 22 member Sec Offender Management Board for a 5-year term. VanMeter currently co-chairs the Sex Offender committee for the Illinois Probation and Court Services Association as well. Brian’s involvement in both of these capacities ensures that Kendall County is kept abreast of the most up to date legislation, treatment and best practices as it relates to community supervision of this specialized population.

Elliott stated that her office has recently lost three staff members that moved out of state. She is working diligently to fill those vacancies as soon as possible with the right candidates.

Presiding Judge – No Report

State's Attorney – No Report

Sheriff's Report –

- a. Operations Division – Written report provided. Undersheriff Richardson reported that arrests have increased from 2021, fuel expenses have increased, and mileage has decreased due to the Finance Committees decision to cut the Sheriff's Office fuel budget for this year.

The Undersheriff reported that Commander Langston recently graduated from the 10-week FBI Academy.

Richardson stated that there are currently three deputies in the Academy, two deputies taking the test for the Academy, and 2 planned retirement of deputies in the near future.

- b. Corrections Division – Written report provided. Commander Russo reported an increase in medical appointments and expenses.

Russo announced that the new EHM Assistant will begin on March 7, 2022, as well as a Part-Time Records Clerk that will work specifically with the Corrections Division.

Commander Russo explained the Health Management Associates Program which assists persons with opioid addiction who end up in the criminal justice system with treatment, counseling and in-jail behavioral therapies through the use of medical assisted treatment, which reduces the risk of fatal overdose following release from incarceration. Russo stated that Family Counseling Service counselors come to the jail for weekly meetings.

- c. Records Division – Written report provided.

Old Business – None

New Business - None

Legislative Update – Member Gilmour read the two bills, and stated that the County Board has been pushing for this for a very long time. The Local Government Distributive Fund increase will go into effect on July 1, 2022.

Chairman's Report/Comments – No report.

Items for the March 1, 2022 Kendall County Board Meeting - None

Items for the March 10, 2022 Committee of the Whole Meeting – None

Chairman's report/comments - None

Public Comment – None

Executive Session – Not needed

Adjournment – Member Rodriguez made a motion to adjourn the meeting, second by Member Koukol. **With three members in agreement, the meeting adjourned at 3:59p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Valarie McClain
Administrative Assistant and Recording Secretary