

Legislative Committee

March 6, 2024

11:05 a.m.

Attendees

Committee: Allen Hinkley, Art Merrill, Lisa Driscoll, Timothy Kelso, Tina Molé

Absent: Eric Wilson

Staff: Deb Goodrich, Maria Kelso, Judith Garrison, Joe Ermeti, Penny Bishop

Mr. Hinkley called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m. Upon a motion by Mrs. Driscoll, seconded by Mr. Kelso, the draft minutes of the February 7 committee meeting were approved.

County Clerk Deb Goodrich distributed a monthly revenue report which indicates revenues were down compared to the same period as last year. She reported the hiring of two new DMV employees which will enable all DMV offices in the county to be staffed and remain open. Mr. Hinkley acknowledged that will make a lot of people in the County happy. In reply to Mrs. Driscoll, Mrs. Goodrich said the new employees will be trained at the DMV office in which they will be working. Regarding new equipment, Mrs. Goodrich stated each DMV office already has an Admin workstation which will allow users to complete random audits without having to purchase new equipment.

Elections Commissioner Maria Kelso reported they have been processing early vote-by-mail and absentee applications. New voter enrollment numbers came in on February 21 indicating a slight change. She noted the technicians are creating a ballot for Delaware Academy on a proposition that is up for consideration. She announced that congressional redistricting has occurred but there were no changes in the 19th District that affect Delaware County. She explained there is a lag in signing. Generally, the first day to sign petitions would be February 27 but anything signed February 27th or 28th will be null and void because the date was moved to the 29th. She indicated the County Attorney created a Memorandum of Understanding for an agreement with New York State for new compliances in cybersecurity remediation. Both commissioners will be at the Walton School on Friday, as requested by the Superintendent, to present to the high school students and to preregister some of them. In reply to Ms. Molé, Ms. Kelso said some federal and state representatives are up for reelection in 2024. She referenced a news article about Super Tuesday which had good information on the candidates who are on petitions for the presidential primaries. She emphasized that her office must be very careful when processing applications to be sure to only process democratic or republican applications for primary elections. Elections Commissioner Judith Garrison added that with the congressional redistricting, both 18th and 19th Districts will be competitive. Ms. Molé confirmed that Congressman Marc Molinaro represents all of Delaware County. Ms. Garrison praised Vecc Videography for the work they do posting videos for the Board of Elections.

Public Defender Joe Ermeti announced they have received the first payment for reimbursement of 18B payments that the county fronts for assigned attorneys. The payment is over \$53,000 with more reimbursement payments anticipated. The state imposed the higher assigned counsel rate, which went from \$75 an hour to \$158 per hour, and the state is compensating about half the increase. He reported his office has one full-time position that is not filled, but they are able to cover all the courts in the county. The work is getting done but he's concerned about the amount of work necessary to get everything done. In reply to Mr. Hinkley, Mr. Ermeti said numbers are through the roof at the CAP court. He noted the attorney who covered the previous night had five separate arraignments to handle, and it is more common now to have multiple arraignments on any given day. He reported that State Indigent Legal

Services (ILS) has verbally agreed to compensate the county for taxicab rides of those needing transportation upon release from the CAP court. That cost will be paid from the Public Defender's budget through special state funds. Currently, DSS caseworkers are called to transport released offenders to varying parts of the County which is not a good idea, especially given that many of the calls are late in the evening. In reply to Ms. Molé, Mr. Ermeti said there is no local Uber service, however, there are on call taxi services available. When utilized, the taxi service will bill his office for payment and his office will need to request reimbursement from ILS. Mr. Ermeti reported that even with the approved raise for CAP court attorneys, one of his attorneys told him he was not interested. Mr. Ermeti stated that presently there are three attorneys covering CAP court.

Clerk of the Board Penny Bishop reported a new Assistant Medical Examiner has been hired and is training with Nanette Treadwell and Jim Cooros. Ms. Molé stated that we are still looking to hire a Medical Examiner. Mrs. Bishop noted that position is harder to fill because the Medical Examiner is required to be a Delaware County resident.

Upon a motion, the meeting adjourned at 11:22 a.m.