

LEGAL/SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – June 15, 2021

PRESENT: Legislators (Chair) Sauerbrey, Balliet, Standing, Hollenbeck, Monell (Chair of Committee), Roberts and Weston, County Attorney Peter DeWind, Treasurer Jim McFadden, Stephanie Jerzak, Chief Accountant, Peter Kovalovsky, Treasurer's office, ILS Administrator Irene Graven, Public Defender George Awad, District Attorney Kirk Martin (and County Attorney Secretary Diane Stephens – Minutes)

Meeting convened by Legislator Monell at 10:30 a.m.

Minutes - On motion of Legislator Hollenbeck, seconded by Legislator Monell and unanimously carried the minutes from the May 11, 2021 meeting were approved.

YTD budget - Nothing to note; no extraordinary expenses at this time.

New Business:

- **District Attorney Kirk Martin:** Mr. Martin reported that the Courts are starting to open up. In the past the usual number of felony trials per year was between three and four, whereas now three felony trials are scheduled for next week alone. He is expecting to have one felony trial during each trial term. However, he doesn't anticipate this affecting their budget. They have realized an increased cost due to the bail reform requirement that transcripts of proceedings be provided as part of the Discovery process. Their system for handling Discovery is in place. The traffic diversion program is picking up and subsequently the revenue from this program. He and two of the assistant district attorneys are handling the local courts as one assistant is currently on maternity leave. They are well staffed and in good shape.
- **Resolutions -Authorize acceptance of year three ILS funds and budget; Create and fill part time assistant public defender position; Fill part time paralegal position in Family Court Public Defender's office:** Mr. DeWind reported that the ILS budget numbers were checked with the contract amounts as amended by the State. The budget includes the increase in salary for the Asst. Public Defender, which will be addressed later this year. It also includes money to create and fill a part time Asst. Public Defender position (research attorney) and fill a part time paralegal position in the Family Court Public Defender's office.
Public Defender George Awad: Mr. Awad reported that work will soon begin on the year four ILS budget. He reported that his office has had an increase in trials – ten trials are expected within the next six months. They have had to retain experts but, due to the funding from the ILS grant, he has not had to ask for budget increases from the County to cover the cost of these. Most of the courts are open. Like the District Attorney's office, transcript costs is one of their bigger costs.
- **Tioga Tobacco Asset Securitization Corporation:** The annual meeting was held on June 1.

- **Board of Ethics:** There is a vacant seat on the Board of Ethics, with Craig Jochum's term having ended in March. Mr. DeWind stated that he'd like that seat filled before the Ethics Meeting in early fall.
- **Litigation:** Mr. DeWind reported that two new claims were received. One claim arising from flooding off of Pennsylvania Ave. (Gaylord Road), which is proceeding as a formal lawsuit. NYMIR has assigned counsel to defend this. The second is a notice of claim alleging mistreatment and refusal of medical treatment (from a previous injury) during an arrest. NYMIR has referred this matter to counsel.
- **Safety Officer:** The Safety Officer has been busy. Mr. DeWind reported that there has been a definite uptick in workplace violence reported by DSS. These occurred most often when caseworkers have had to interact with the public during home visits. The Safety Officer investigates these and a safety plan is recommended to the department in order to mitigate the risk. Mr. DeWind also reported that the Safety Officer is performing informal tailgate meetings with DPW to remind them of the proper protocols. In addition, she has analyzed and identified several safety programs that we are required to have and maintain to be OSHA compliant.
- **MUNIS Contract training:** Mr. DeWind reported that his office is scheduled to hold MUNIS contract training tomorrow, June 16. The contract module was identified as a confusing part of MUNIS. Diane Stephens has put together a power point presentation. The presentation will be recorded and placed on Share Point for future reference by users.
- **Executive:** None

Meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.