

## SECURITY COMMITTEE MEETING

April 5, 2017

Minutes

Location: Room 500 in the Courthouse

**Committee Members Present:** Judge Karen Seifert, Clerk of Courts Melissa Pingel, Sheriff John Matz, Lieutenant Bill Anthes, Victim Witness Coordinator Terri Vandellen, Family Court Commissioner Lisa Krueger, Attorney Rebecca Castonia, County Board Chairman David Albrecht, District Court Administrator Jon Bellows, State Public Defender Linda Meier and Emergency Management Linda Kollmann.

**Others Present:** Todd Christopherson

- I. **Attendance:** Attorney Jelinski informed Melissa Pingel that he may not make the meeting due to Court in Waupaca, note: he did not attend. DA Gossett informed Melissa Pingel that he would not be at the meeting due to a luncheon for his assistants last day.
- II. **Minutes:** Those present at the meeting approved the minutes from the January meeting.
- III. **Membership Change:** Judge Seifert informed the Committee that John Bermingham is now a Court Commissioner for the County, therefore, he is no longer able to serve in the role of the private bar member. For membership purposes, the Committee needed to replace him per SCR with another private attorney. At the last meeting, the Committee suggested Rebecca Castonia; Judge Seifert subsequently contacted her and she said agreed to be on the Committee. Judge Seifert introduced her and the Committee welcomed her.
- IV. **Security Center Update:** Sheriff Matz told the Committee that the opening of the Security Center has been delayed due to some technology issues. The opening was originally set to be April 3, 2017 and now the date is unknown. The Sheriff did inform the Committee that both of the transport garage doors are working. Jon Bellows noted that the Chief Judge of the 4<sup>th</sup> District did sign off on the Security Center construction as well as the remodel plan for department relocation.
- V. **Courthouse Security Conference:** Judge Seifert and Jon Bellows presented about the Security Center at the Annual Courthouse Security Conference in Appleton in March. The two staff screeners from the WCSO and Officer Putzer who is one of the Courthouse Security Officers attended the program as well. Judge Seifert explained the biggest question posed to them was regarding how they were able to get “buy in” from the employees. She noted the important role of former Courthouse Security Lt. Joe Kroncke. She explained how he spent a lot of time at the Courthouse talking with employees and explaining the need for the screening.

- VI. Security Incidents:** Judge Seifert reported that there were three security incidents in the Courthouse since the Committee met in January. One incident was an anonymous threat to kill everyone in the Courthouse, kill Judge Gritton as well as blow his house up. The second incident was during a preliminary hearing, a defendant got unruly and flipped over the defense table. The third incident was in Judge Seifert's courtroom on Valentines Day. A defendant from the Winnebago County Resource Center was in her Branch for a mental trial, the defendant threatened Judge Seifert and the Officer present.
- VII. Tunnels:** Sheriff Matz informed the Committee that OPD Chief Smith would like to eliminate tunnel access between the Courthouse and the Public Safety Building (PSB). Sheriff Matz wanted input from the Committee members. The reason that the Chief and Sheriff want the tunnel access eliminated is they believe there could be a security breach. Commissioner Krueger noted that by not shutting the tunnel down the County would be screening most employees but not those coming from the PSB where Branch VI-Judge Bissett's Courtroom, Branch 6, Court Commissioner Keberlein and Family Court Services are currently located. Note: the only people that are able to access the tunnel is with prior approval with key card access. The remodel project, which includes relocating all the court-related functions from the PSB into the Courthouse is supposed to be complete by the end or shortly thereafter. If that is the case, the question was, why could the access not just continue until the completion of the project? The issue at that point would be moot because noone would need access between the buildings. The Sheriff said the issue is that it is possible to for someone to get on an elevator in the PSB that could potentially access the tunnel, Judge Seifert asked if OPD would lock and control access to that elevator if that would eliminate the issue? Sheriff Matz said he would talk to Chief Smith about the possibility of locking that elevator. Currently, the tunnel is used everyday by the Clerk of Courts staff in the Courthouse and in the PSB to transport files, mail, supplies and court files. Also, Melissa Pingel does not like the idea of all the jurors sent to Branch VI crossing busy Jackson Street, which has no form of flashing lights to get traffic to stop, when there is a safer alternative by accessing the tunnel. In addition, the Bailiffs for Branch VI haul all of the supplies used for jury through the tunnels. The DA's office attorneys and the Victim Witness office use the tunnels regularly for court, after trials, and for the safe movement of victims. Sheriff Matz said he would talk to Chief Smith.
- VIII. Third Branch:** Judge Seifert informed the Committee that there was an article in the Third Branch, a quarterly publication written by the Director of State Courts regarding current news in the Court System, regarding the Winnebago County Screening Center. If you would like to access the article, it is on page 12, cut & paste the following link into your browser:  
<https://wicourts.gov/news/thirdbranch/docs/winter17.pdf>
- IX. Victim Rooms:** VWC Vandellen said she reviewed the "phases" document that Facilities sent out about the remodel. She noted that in the original plan, there was a

victim and witness room on the first floor and now that seems to be missing from the plan. Judge Seifert said that Facilities Director Mike Elder needs to be informed about the issue because Wisconsin Statutes require there be a place for victims and witnesses in the Courthouse.

- X. Bullet Proof:** Chairman Albrecht said people have been asking if the glass on the Security Center is bullet proof and he did not know the answer. The Sheriff said that the control center and inner windows are bullet proof but the outside structure is not bullet proof.
- XI. County Issued ID Badges:** The Sheriff encourages all staff members wear their badges to work and if there is a back up with the screening that the screeners would be able to identify them and move them to the front of the line. Melissa Pingel indicated all of her staff have instructed to wear their badges everyday.
- XII. Exempt from Screening:** Lt. Anthes needs photos from those that are statutorily exempt screening. This would include the Judges and anyone else approved by the Judges to carry in the Courthouse/Courtrooms. Judge Seifert suggested he contact Facilities because they have photos from the County issued ID's that were issued to the Judges upon taking the bench. She also noted if those pictures were not adequate and they need new photos to just let her know.
- XIII. Tour:** Judge Seifert asked if the Sheriff could show the Committee the Screening Center, he was agreeable to her request.
- XIV. July 19, 2017 – Room 500 of the Courthouse.**

Respectfully Submitted by Melissa M. Pingel, Clerk of Courts.