

**JUSTICE COMMITTEE MEETING
Macon County Office Building
Macon County Board Room #514
141 S. Main Street, Decatur, IL 62523**

May 27, 2021 @ 3:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Debra Kraft – Vice Chair
Jim Gresham
Lloyd Holman
Bill Oliver

MEMBERS ABSENT

Verzell Taylor
Greg Mattingley
Dave Drobisch

COUNTY PERSONNEL PRESENT

Scott Rueter, State's Attorney
Pat Berter, Probation
Judge Griffith, Courts
Tammy Esposito, EMA
Sheriff Brown
Michelle Sanders, Public Defender
Chief Deputy Adam Walter, Sheriff's Office
Sherry Doty, Circuit Clerk
Shelly Eaton, Circuit Clerk's Office
Jessie Smalley, HR
Carol Reed, Auditor
Jeannie Durham, County Board Office

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Kraft @ 3:00 p.m. at the Macon County Office Building.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING

Mr. Oliver made a motion to approve the minutes from the last Macon County Board Justice Committee meeting (3/25/2021), seconded by Mr. Gresham and the motion carried 4-0.

CLAIMS

Mr. Holman made a motion to approve the claims as presented, seconded by Mr. Oliver and the motion carried 4-0.

REPORTS

Circuit Clerk –

Macon County Board Resolution Approving Additional Appropriations in the Circuit Clerk's FY2021 General Fund Budget

Ms. Doty explained that everyone knows we have all been hit by COVID. After presenting the budget, Ms. Doty said she had been contacted last year by the State's Attorney's Office stating that they had made arrangements with the previous administration for the collection fees to be put back into their budget and legally, it is theirs. It amounted to \$24,999. She said she had her Chief Deputy, Robert Bellah from IT & herself to start negotiating contracts on maintenance and the vendors were very generous as soon as they heard that they had gotten rid of Tyler. After all was done and said, there was a savings of \$20,000. She said she thought the office was fine.

Two months after the budget was passed, the Supreme Court mandated that one fee shall be collected on traffic incidents instead of being assessed per ticket. She said she still thought they were fine. They would still have collections, Comptroller, Failure to Pays which put holds on licenses until people pay. COVID restrictions killed that. In the Court system also. The bonds went down because the Sheriff could not hold people in due to a fear of COVID in the jail. The Collections had restrictions. Comptroller had restrictions. All these restrictions were due to hardships on families. She said she had thought they were still ok because they still had the Failure to Pays. That is now changing July 1st. Governor Pritzker just signed the Criminal Reform Bill that lifts all holds on drivers licenses. She said she wishes she had had a crystal ball, but she didn't. She said they still don't know how this is going to affect them. This office has always brought income in. The office, as of today, is 7 people down due to previous cuts. The staff has absorbed all of that work. The special projects have been put on hold. The staff works diligently. They take pride in their work. The supervisors and several union people come in early and work late, sometimes on weekends and this is donated time. They don't ask for anything. Ms. Doty said they are at the minimum staff the office can be at to make the deadlines for the local courts, the Appellate Courts and the Supreme Courts. This resolution is to save the staff due to COVID, which about 89% of that is due to COVID.

But, there is a silver lining. January 1st, there will be a new record keeping manual that states how cases are filed and how they are collected. Right now when someone files a Petition for a Tax Deed for 150 parcels the one time fee is \$202 but come January 1, 2022 we will be charging \$306 per parcel for a total of \$45,900. Only \$11 goes to the state. The rest stays right here with us.

Ms. Doty presented the resolution as follows:

Macon County Board Resolution Approving Additional Appropriation in the Circuit Clerk's
Fy2021 General Fund Budget

WHEREAS, the Circuit Clerk has determined that the special budget accounts "Document Storage" and "Automated Records" will experience a significant shortfall in revenue for FY2021 due to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and a new state Supreme Court rule which became effective January 1, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the Circuit Clerk has determined that the employees whose salaries are paid through those special budget accounts are essential to the effective operation of the Circuit Clerk's Office; and

WHEREAS, the Circuit Clerk's Office is already understaffed by 7 employees short as a result of previous budget cuts; and

WHEREAS, losing any of the employees who are funded by the special budget accounts at this time would be devastating to the ability of the Circuit Clerk's Office to function and provide the services to the Courts and the public that the law requires it to provide; specifically, mandates on the office from the circuit court as well as the appellate and supreme court would be affected; succinctly, the Circuit Clerk's Office is presently at the bare minimum staffing level to operate efficiently; and

WHEREAS, the Circuit Clerk has made several changes to allocation of staff salary expenses so as to reallocate such expenses amongst her various budget accounts in an attempt to mitigate the revenue shortfall, but the changes have not proved adequate to address it entirely.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Macon County Board that the County Board finds that there exists an immediate emergency situation with respect to the FY21 budget accounts for the Circuit Clerk in that a failure to appropriate additional funds to said accounts will cause the Circuit Clerk's Office to be unable to provide the services to the Courts and the public that are mandated by law and court rules.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Circuit Clerk's FY21 General Fund Budget is amended as follows:

Increase A001-050-5610	\$75,697.00
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Ms. Doty explained that this is for 5 employees. It is the management team.

Mr. Gresham asked if this is to get the office through to the end of the year. Ms. Doty confirmed.

Chair Kraft asked if this is for current employees and the two ladies that left were not replaced. Ms. Doty confirmed, saying she was not adding any and the two were part of the 7. She said the office is down to 28 counting the Chief Deputy and herself. They had 35 prior. That has been absorbed and they are doing a fine job meeting the mandates. She said she did not think she could do that with any less. She said she now works 7 days a week.

Mr. Gresham made a motion to forward the resolution on to the Finance Committee with recommendation to approve, seconded by Mr. Oliver and the motion carried 4-0.

Circuit Courts –

Judge Griffith reported that they have been able to conduct jury trials in February, March, April & May. February, April & May each had one big trial. March saw a number of trials conducted. Even though there have not been that many trials, due to Ms. Sanders' & Mr. Rueter's hard work, many, many cases have been resolved. Because of that, there is not a backlog of criminal cases unlike a lot of counties do, due to COVID. Things are going reasonably well.

Coroner – No Report

Court Services / Probation –

Mr. Berter reported that with some of the new standards that have come down from the Administrative Office of Illinois Courts, the department has decided to create a Field Unit. Some of the existing Probation Officers will be used. They will be strictly Field Officers. So, they will be doing all of the field contacts for the department. The reason that needs to be reported is that, just because of everything that is going on out in the community, some vests are going to be purchased for their protection. It will be around \$8,000. Once the vests are received, those bills will be coming through. The program will be piloted for about 6 months just to see how it will need to be tweaked. The officers will be in teams and will be assigned a vehicle. Quarterly vehicle inspections will be conducted on those vehicles.

Chair Kraft asked about how many agents will be put in that. Mr. Berter explained that there will be 2 Juvenile Officers, 2 Adult Officers, 2 Adult Redeploy Officers and 2 backup officers in case someone is sick so the contacts can still be made out in the field.

Mr. Oliver asked if the officers would be armed. Mr. Berter said no, the only things they carry is OC spray and expandable batons. Mr. Oliver said he hoped that along with the vests, that would be good enough.

Emergency Management Agency –

Ms. Esposito apologized for not having been to a meeting in a while. She explained that she is a one woman office and it has been hard to get away from it.

Macon County EMA is returning to operations that are more "normal". All requirements for the County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) approval and accreditation are complete, we will now begin focusing on program improvement and community outreach.

As more and more of society becomes "Open", the goal is to get out and spread preparedness messaging. Schools, businesses, community organizations all present opportunities to help our citizens and county to become more resilient. The desire is for Macon County to have a culture of preparedness. One that is not just taking action when an event occurs. Rather, a continuous conversation where all of our citizens encouraged to be part of the process in making our communities better able to respond and recover from disaster impacts. Education is a large part of that. Ms. Esposito said she is looking forward to meeting with community members and organizations to ramp up the effort!

Covid 19 Response

Ms. Esposito thanked Sheriff Brown for providing her team. She explained that Lt. Scheibly, Lt. Auton, & Lt. Root were all a part and worked countless hours. If not for them, they would probably not have had the success they did. They did logistics, helped with meetings, everything imaginable to keep it going working 12 to 14 hour days for quite a while. There was ever changing information during this and countless hours were put in trying to keep up with that and the requests and to get the stakeholders a platform so decisions could be made so they could get out and help the community.

MCEMA has been very busy during the COVID response. Throughout the response, we have requested resources from the state and local distributors. We have distributed PPE throughout our county to many organizations/agencies. PPE that we have assisted with includes N95 respirators, surgical masks, hand sanitizer, touchless thermometers, disposable gowns, gloves and other support items. EMA held EOC meetings 7 days a week at first and then Monday through Friday for many months. We still hold an EOC meeting once a week. If we enter Phase 5 come June 1 1, we can go to even less frequency.

Countless hours were worked trying to keep up with requirements by the State, local needs and ever changing information. It was a journey that didn't seem to have an end in sight. Thankfully, the work load for COVID specific aspects, have lessened considerably. We have and continue to take part in the many meetings hosted by IDPH, IEMA, local HD and other local agencies.

Macon County Emergency Management (MCEMA) continues to support the COVID 19 response, vaccination and recovery efforts. MCEMA maintains a 30-day PPE supply available to supplement deficits for response agencies, long-term care facilities, county offices and community partner

agencies. It is also a reserve in case of resurgence so that we do not end up in the same situation as when COVID first hit our area. We are in a much better place to assist with needs at this time. PPE stock is stored in the EMA office at the Law Enforcement Center.

Currently MCEMA is working to compile events for a FEMA taskforce that is operating in our area for the next 30 days. They will have a presence at various events to educate and encourage residents to take advantage of the many local opportunities to receive a vaccination. They are also distributing information regarding COVID Funeral Assistance. The literature covers eligibility, qualifying expenses, and application information.

Macon County EMA submitted a COVID 19 After Action Report to the State in lieu of an excise for this accreditation period. We had an outstanding AAR that received accolades from our IEMA State Exercise Officer, Sandy Nickel. As I completed the required documentation I had valuable input from Chief Gambrell (Harristown FD), Michele Loutrel (DMH), Whitney Allison (HD) and Kathy Wade (HD). Honest review of their organizations and the overall response allowed me to present a thorough review and improvement plan.

Notable Events/Items

- Mitigation plan update, pre-application was completed to get assistance from FEMA. We are eligible if it gets accepted for \$33,000 toward the rewrite of that plan. It is a 75/25 match, so we will be on the hook for about \$11,000. It sounds like a lot of money, however, as discovered with COVID, when a disaster strikes, if you don't have the right things in place, it does more harm than good. IF we do not have a mitigation plan in place and if, for example, we would have a tornado, we would not be able to get certain FEMA assistance. Because, in their opinion, by not having that Mitigation plan in place, we have not done our due diligence to our community to adequately prepare. By not investing the \$11,000, we would be doing our community a great disservice if something were to happen. Notice of awards will be in July.
- A current, FEMA approved, county adopted mitigation plan is a requirement by FEMA for applying/receiving some disaster assistance for example damage from a tornado (non-COVID).
- Provided Search & Rescue mutual aid assistance with a search executed to locate remains/evidence, in support of Christian County. The search resulted in the location/identification of a missing person.
- Farm Progress is providing EMA with booth space during this year's show. We are very fortunate to have great volunteers and LEPC members who graciously offered to help with manning the booth. It is great to work with the Farm Progress staff. This opportunity provides EMA with an additional planning component as we already put together documents for submission to the National Weather Service for event support and the State Terrorism Information Center.

- EMA is compiling event submissions for National Weather Service support. This valuable service for community events provides event staff with tailored forecasts, access to NWS meteorologists before & during the event. It is valuable planning information as weather can create chaos quickly if unprepared! Events could be town festivals, fairs, sporting events, concerts, fireworks, any gathering of people that would benefit from weather awareness as part of their safety plan.

Office News

- MCEMA has filled the Administrative Assistant position. As a one-man office, working to meet COVID needs and required program benchmarks, many program goals were placed on hold. Now, having permanent help, we are beginning to make progress on reviving those efforts that had been temporarily shelved.
- As of March 18, our Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) has been approved by IEMA. This was a momentous task. The administrative code (state statute) for EMAs required that we not only have our EOP with new requirements but three additional support plans (continuity of operations, continuity of government and long term recovery).
- There was reward for all of the pain of the rewrite. The IEMA Region 7 coordinator informed me that there were two exceptional EOPs in the state and the Macon County's was one of them. This is quite high praise considering there are 102 counties and 25 accredited cities who submitted EOPs for approval.
- A complete rewrite of the EOP resulted in a document that is considerably smaller but more reflective of our current operating environment than our previous EOP version.
- EMA is currently scheduling meetings with those who have responsibilities in the plan. Pen & ink updates are being made for areas that require changes. They will be incorporated permanently into the next update.
- As of May 25, submission of accreditation documents to the State is complete.
- Conduct Local Emergency Planning Committee meetings quarterly. ○ LEPC group is working toward building a more robust committee ○ Hazardous Materials planning remains primary focus ○ Many from the group has agreed to being Exercise Design team for the EMA program ○ We are soliciting broader involvement from local business and the community at large
- EMA is purchasing 100 weather radios directly from Midland Radio at a substantial discount of retail pricing. Please see handout for information about the purchase and the plan to use this resource.
- Met with Salvation Army leadership for discussion on shared missions, ways that we can collaborate and how our joint efforts can benefit the citizens of Macon County

Exercise & Training

- MCEMA held virtual Storm Spotter training for our volunteers.
- Our volunteers are dedicated individuals who truly care about the safety of our citizens. Very proud to have such a great team.
- We have had two activations of storm spotters as of this report
- In addition to Storm Spotter, Coordinator Esposito has completed the following trainings over the last three months o Mass Fatality Planning and Response o Critical Incident Stress Management-Group Assistance & Individual Assistance o Two trainings for Integrated Public Alert & Warning System (IPAWS)
- EMA has attended two planning meetings and is taking part in the Decatur Airport's triennial full scale exercise in June. EMA will be an evaluator.
- Conduct monthly testing of Starcom radios and Outdoor Warning Systems countywide
- EMA has developed a training and exercise plan (TEP) that has been submitted to IEMA as part of the accreditation process.
- The TEP covers training and exercise through 2025.
- Exercises outlined incorporate the IEMA required 32 core capabilities

NEW

- IPAWS
- IPAWS Information handout
- Macon County will be adopting the IPAWS system using our Everbridge Notification system as the platform for messaging.
- EMA is currently working with the ETSB/CIRDC to get all of the pieces in place for implementation
- IPAWS is a communication pathway that integrates National (FEMA), state & local alert & warning systems. It provides a broad range of message options: Wireless Emergency Alerts, EAS (cable tv), NOAA weather radios and Internet Services.
- Provides additional layers of warning capability to enhance our efforts at providing timely, effective warnings of threats to our citizens

Chair Kraft praised Ms. Esposito for a job well done stating that she had been a part of the EOC call in meetings where they would call in at 10 a.m. and then by 1 p.m., everything would change. Everything changed hourly it seemed like for quite some time.

Public Building Commission – No Report

Public Defender's Office –

Ms. Sanders had no report

Sheriff's Department –

Sheriff Brown had no report

State's Attorney's Office –

Macon County Board Resolution Authorizing Disposal of Surplus Property by the State's Attorney's Office

Mr. Gresham made a motion to forward the resolution on to the Finance Committee with recommendation to approve, seconded by Mr. Holman and the motion carried 4-0.

Mr. Rueter reported that the office has had an attorney leave. He is in discussion to replace that experienced position. There is a problem with funding. Getting experienced attorneys on the amount of money the office can pay is a problem.

There is also still a position open for a starter attorney.

A staff member left for FMLA and at about the end of her 12 weeks, has informed the office that she will not be returning.

Otherwise, things are going well in the office. Ms. Sanders and Mr. Rueter are working well together to get cases resolved.

CITIZEN REMARKS – PUBLIC COMMENT –

There were no citizens present wishing to speak.

Old Business None

New Business - None

Closed Session – None needed

NEXT MEETING June 24, 2021

Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Holman, seconded by Mr. Oliver and the meeting was adjourned @ 3:30 p.m. by Vice Chair Kraft .

Minutes submitted by Jeannie Durham , Macon County Board Office