

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

February 24, 2022 @ 3:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Greg Mattingley – Chair
Bill Oliver
Verzell Taylor .
Lloyd Holman .
Kevin Greenfield

MEMBERS ABSENT

Jim Gresham
Debra Kraft – Vice Chair

COUNTY PERSONNEL PRESENT

Mike Baggett, Assistant State's Attorney
Scott Rueter, State's Attorney
Sheriff Root
Jon Perona, DPBC
Jessie Smalley, HR
Sherry Doty, Circuit Clerk
Michelle Sanders, Public Defender
Pat Berter, Probation
Judge Griffith, Circuit Court
Tammy Schneider, EMA
Jeannie Durham, County Board Office

Chair Mattingley called the meeting to order at 3 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING

Chairman Greenfield made a motion to approve the minutes from the 1/27/2022 meeting, seconded by Mr. Oliver, and the motion carried 5-0.

CLAIMS

Mr. Oliver made a motion to approve the claims, seconded by Chairman Greenfield and the motion carried 5-0.

REPORTS

Circuit Clerk –

Macon County Board Resolution Authorizing Disposal of Surplus Property by the Circuit Clerk's Office

Ms. Doty explained that they had replaced a server, had several worn out computer / printer / keyboard items, and an old desk from 1952. The items are listed on an attachment with the resolution.

Chairman Greenfield made a motion to approve forwarding the resolution on to the Finance Committee with recommendation to approve, seconded by Mr. Holman and the motion carried 5-0.

Circuit Courts –

Judge Griffith reported that consistent with Governor Pritzker's Order and the Supreme Court Rule, he would be removing the mask requirement at the Courthouse on Monday. He said he has already informed Security.

They are still doing very well in terms of cases. Five cases were tried this past month. There is no backlog. He thanked Mr. Rueter, State's Attorney and Ms. Sanders, Public Defender for their efforts.

Chair Mattingley asked how it was going as far as jurors reporting. Judge Griffith said they have been sending out 150 summons each term, which is a lot. The weather was not great this past term. There were 85 or 90 jurors that showed up. That is reasonably well, but not great.

Coroner – no report

Court Services / Probation – No Report

Emergency Management Agency –

Ms. Schneider submitted the following and reported as follows:

Local Jurisdiction Engagement

Recent training: Whole Community Planning for Disasters

- Excellent turnout, 32 participants
 - County Board (2 reps)
 - Jurisdiction officials
 - Faith community
 - Community NGOs, ARC, United Way
 - Health Department: Macon Co, Moultrie Co, Champaign Co
 - Media/EAS partner
 - Law enforcement
 - Fire
 - Local industry

The hopes were that the class would spark conversations and action. As of today, EMA has a planning meeting with Forsyth on March 11 to work on updating the municipalities emergency plan and discuss community engagement. We will strategize ways to involve community members in preparedness activities and train them on how to be immediate helpers. I ask that Co Board members encourage participation in emergency planning & activities within their respective districts.

Training:

Disaster Assistance Process

Formerly known as Damage Assessment. This one-day course is designed to provide participants with an understanding of the damage assessment process and how damage information is used by local and state officials. Participants will learn how to collect, organize, report and analyze damage information.

The ability to accurately capture & document damage information can be the difference between the ability to seek reimbursements for resources used and receiving federal aid in a Federally Declared Disaster.

Debris Management

The importance of having plans containing standard operating procedures for all aspects of debris management is emphasized. Various situations that debris cause are discussed and the consequent actions necessary to return a community to pre-disaster conditions are addressed.

** These two courses are currently in the scheduling process with IEMA.

These are two of the most valuable courses available for our municipal leaders and their staff to whom these responsibilities belong. I strongly encourage every jurisdiction within the county to send a representative. It is important that damage assessment information is properly captured and that disaster debris be properly managed so as to **protect human health, comply with regulations, conserve disposal capacity, reduce injuries, and minimize or prevent environmental impacts.**

EMA is looking to schedule a more community based training as well: Texas A&M Extension (TEEX)

When Disaster Strikes: Prepare, Act, Survive

Course Description: This course is designed to prepare individuals who may be directly affected by a disaster help themselves, their family and other community members. Participants will learn how to develop a family preparedness plan, practice self-rescue, perform search and light rescue techniques, and understand the recovery process.

Topics

Prepare:

Survivor vs victim
Community threats
Community response capability
Family preparedness plan

Persevere:

Disaster survival
Individual assessment (SALT)

Self-rescue

Search and light rescue techniques

Protect:

Scene safety and damage assessment
Neighborhood accountability
Interacting with responders
Recovery and resiliency

Suggested Audience

The target audience encompasses the whole community approach, including, but not restricted to:

- Church Groups
 - Volunteer Fire Departments
 - Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)
 - Youth Groups
 - American Red Cross (ARC)
 - Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO)
 - Members of the general community
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Lastly, EMA is getting ready for the spring storm season.

EMA Volunteer meeting/NWS virtual spotter training

March 23rd at the EMA office

The National Weather Service is holding all Spotter Trainings virtually once again this year due to COVID.

NWS Virtual Training Schedule: <https://www.weather.gov/ilx/spotter>

Training conducted via Google Meet. No need to preregister.

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| Wed., March 2, 6-8 pm CST | Tues., March 8, 6-8 pm CST |
| Sat., March 12, 10 am-12 pm CST | Tues., March 15, 6:30-8:30 pm CST |
| Wed., March 23, 6-8 pm CST | Sat., April 2, 10 am-12 pm CST |

This is a great training and I encourage everyone to attend one of these trainings. I consider it another layer of preparedness. Being able to recognize characteristics of severe storms and storm development, changing conditions and recognition of potential weather threats and how to report them, is an all-around value to our citizens and community safety.

It is disappointing to continue with virtual training but we are hopeful that next year we can, once again, host an in person seminar. Historically, Macon County has the largest community turnout, for storm spotter trainings, in the NWS Lincoln's operational area. We host at RCC and draw between 100-120 participants. RCC is a wonderful partner and provides space for public safety training, free of charge.

Decatur Public Building Commission – no report

Public Defender's Office –

Ms. Sanders reported that they have hired a couple of attorneys in the last couple of weeks. They will be starting this Monday and the following Monday. That means those temporary contracts they have been putting in place can be phased out. Timing is perfect on that.

Chair Mattingley asked if these were new graduates. Ms. Sanders said one is. They just took the Bar Exam yesterday. The other person is a licensed attorney already.

The computers that were authorized have finally come in, after about a 6 month wait. They are currently being installed.

Sheriff's Department –

Sheriff Root reported that the Illinois Department of Corrections is now accepting their inmates so they will be getting rid of about 30 out of the current 339. That will give more space.

Federal Inmates is running around 56 and is pretty steady.

Macon County Board Resolution Amending the Rules, Regulations, and Requirements of the Macon County Merit Commission for the Macon County Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Root explained that the Merit Commission is an entity that has the authority to provide the office with the hiring process and the promotional process. The rules were amended multiple times over the years it has been in place. The last resolution, written and passed in January, 2019 took the Chief Deputy's position out of the Merit Commission so it could be hired directly from outside the Merit Commission Rules. This resolution is a rewrite of most of the rules. Multiple things have been amended. One was to include no longer requiring college for new hires. That will give the ability to bring in more applicants that were previously excluded.

He noted that the Merit Commission has not yet voted to accept these new rules. But, when the rewrite was done there were two members from the Merit Commission, two members from the deputies union, two people from the Command Officer's Union and two Administrators who were the Sheriff and Chief Deputy Thompson. There is no anticipation of any problems. The Merit Commission is set to meet on 3/8/22 to adopt the rules prior to it going to the full County Board on 3/10/22.

Chair Mattingley asked, with the removal of the college requirement so they could expand the pool, if there were any other significant changes.

Sheriff Root said that one of the things is with discipline. In 2007, some legislation was passed that allows for the discipline of deputies that are in the bargaining unit; the ability to go into the bargaining unit side of discipline instead of the Merit Commission, so that would attach interest arbitration in the event that they were terminated. They would have a process in the union to dispute that suspension or that discipline.

The changes have been made so that it takes affect under the Merit Commission Rules which spells out in the actual Merit Commission Statute on how they proceed with discipline. It also allows for the ability before the arbitrator or the union to exercise their rights under a collective bargaining agreement and it also follows the Illinois Police Officers Disciplinary Act. So there are three Statutes that regulate discipline for police officers.

Chairman Greenfield asked if those were the only two changes. Sheriff Root said no, there are quite a few changes and he would go over some of them now.

Some language was taken out that allowed for a deputy to be hired that went through an academy through the college. Sheriff Root said they don't care if they have the academy through the college. If they have an academy, that has nothing to do with the hiring process.

The language for promotions within the departments from 7 years to 5 years because there are people that have been there and are in the Command Structure allowing for some of the newer staff to be eligible.

The application process changed the requirements for entry level, taking away the college requirements.

On page 10, in the hiring process, lateral transfers which have always been allowed, but used to have only a 6 month probationary period because they come from an outside agency, but six months is not enough time to evaluate a person. This was changed to a 1 year probationary period so it would align with everyone else.

Previously taken out was the Chief Deputy. That previous to 2019 went through the Merit Commission. Sheriff Brown changed that so that he could promote someone to Chief Deputy from outside the department. Sheriff Root said they've now allowed for the changes in the Merit Commission Rules. Prior to 2019 changes, they were only allowed to hire for this position from someone that was a Lieutenant or Captain. That language has now been changed so that anybody can be promoted into that position of Chief Deputy that is a sworn police officer within the department. If they choose to go outside the department, they can do that, but once the term is over and the new sheriff decides he does not want them, they are an at will employee and they would just be separated from employment. It gives protections to those that are deputies. For example, if someone was brought in that was just a deputy on the street, it would be allowed. In the event that that does not work out, he would return to his previous position within the department. He would still be a good employee. It would give him the ability to circle back into their previous position.

Chairman Greenfield asked if the Chief Deputy would have to be a deputy. Sheriff Root said no, someone could be hired off the street as long as they are a sworn law enforcement officer and fall within the requirements to be a police officer. Whether you call him a Chief Deputy or an Under Sheriff, it is the same thing. It does give them that ability, but at the end of the term, if they did not come through the Merit Commission process through the department, they would no longer go back into the Merit Commission because they were not previously in that position. Chairman Greenfield clarified that they would have to be a law enforcement officer. Sheriff Root confirmed, saying that is a requirement by Statute.

The discipline takes into account the three Statutes that have to be abided by when doing discipline with anybody within the department.

Chairman Greenfield asked for the names of the Merit Commission members. Sheriff Root said they are previous Sheriff Tom Schneider, Jim Steck, Fred Clausen, Ed Aukamp, & Shelith Hansbro. One or two of their terms are up in May.

Mr. Holman made a motion to forward the resolution on to the Finance Committee with recommendation for approval, seconded by Ms. Taylor and the motion carried 5-0.

State's Attorney -

Mr. Rueter reported, in light of Ms. Sanders' report, he would mention that he has an experienced attorney that is leaving the office (wonder where he is going?), but he said he has also hired a new attorney which is a lady that is not fresh out of law school, but not done anything like this before. She has a criminal justice background and wants to get into prosecution. He said he has a zero return right now. The office is still down about 3 attorneys.

CITIZEN REMARKS – PUBLIC COMMENT – None

New Business - None

Old Business None

Closed Session – None needed

NEXT MEETING March 24, 2022

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Mattingley @ 3:35 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Jeannie Durham, Macon County Board Office