**LEGAL/SAFETYCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – July 14, 2020**

PRESENT: Legislators Sauerbrey, Balliet, Roberts, Standinger, Mullen, Weston, Hollenbeck, Sullivan, and Monell, County Attorney Peter DeWind, Treasurer Jim McFadden, Assigned Counsel Administrator Irene Graven, and Public Defender George Awad, Personnel Director Bethany O’Rourke, (and County Attorney Secretary Diane Stephens – Minutes)

Meeting convened at 10:30 a.m.

**Minutes** - On motion of Legislator Mullen, seconded by Legislator Hollenbeck and unanimously carried the minutes from the June 10, 2020 meeting were approved.

**Budget** – YTD tracking well. The required 10% cut is not reflected yet, so most surpluses shown are earmarked for elimination.

**New Business**

* **Annual Sexual Harassment training and Title VI training** – Ed Solomon, Safety Officer will be scheduling this soon.
* **Juvenile and DSS caseload starting to increase** – There’s been a number of juvenile emergencies since things have started up again.
* **Indigent Legal Services Year 3 Budget** - This is the third year of the five year grant.
* There are three main objectives which are quality improvement, caseload improvement and counsel at first appearance.
* The budget includes adding a position of research attorney and includes a salary enhancement for two positions.
* The budget includes a small cushion to make sure they can front end money until reimbursement is received since the fiscal year for the State doesn’t coincide with the County’s
* This is a dedicated grant and there have been several phone calls with the State and they have stated that the funding will be provided. However, there is always the possibility that the State will pull funding. If that happens the Public Defender’s office will have to revert to what it was prior to the grant.

Personnel Director Bethany O’Rourke had a question with regard to the investigator position (whether it would be contractual or an employee) and a comment regarding the Data Officer position salary increase. Regarding the investigator position, Attorney Awad stated that he would like it to be a contractual position rather than an employee because the type he needs varies. Ms. O’Rourke stated that the Data Officer position is a CSEA position and that contract expires at the end of the year. If there is no CSEA salary increase, than the salary increase for the Data Officer position cannot be granted.

Chair Sauerbrey had some comments. She stated that she has daily contact with the State. She advised being very cautious regarding what the State will be paying for and that it is imperative that if the money stops, so do the positions.

Chair Sauerbrey also stated that it appears that there is an increase in the rent of $4000. Assigned Counsel Administrator Irene Graven explained that there is no increase in the rent, that the “increase” reflects the cushion they’ve put in place for the first 3-4 months at the beginning of the year, since the State’s fiscal year starts in April. The actual contractual rent amount has not increased.

Chair Sauerbrey also stated that they need to be aware of the “perception” created by granting raises for Public Defender staff when its’s quite possible that there will be no other raises for other employees for the next couple of years.

Legislator Sullivan stated that an eagle eye needs to be kept on this and that if the State stops funding, that this be stopped also.

Ms. Graven reported that the resolution for the software package for the assigned counsel program case management was on the agenda for the Legislative meeting. The State has seven categories they want reported on annually. Assigned counsel vouchers will be

e-filed.

Attorney DeWind reported that there have been a host of orders from the Office of Court Administration, which are separate from the Governor’s orders. It appears from the order of Judge Marks that the County’s ability to go forward on tax foreclosures is put on hold. The foreclosure petition was submitted on July 13, but getting the order signed, which transfers property to the County will be delayed.