



## **LEGAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING – Thursday, March 13, 2014**

The Legal Affairs Committee meeting was called to order by Chair Kevin Gobel, at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, March 13, 2014 in room 308 of the Courthouse Annex.

Members Present: Kevin Gobel, Jerry Cade, Sherman Erlandson, Jerry Johnson, and A. Richard Brose.

Others in attendance were Gregory M. Lunde, Michele Engh

**Affirmed proper public notice of meeting.**

**Review of the January 9, 2014 meeting minutes:**

**Motion by Brose/second by Johnson to approve the minutes as written. All in favor. Motion carried.**

**Next was Review of vouchers and Corp. Counsel Budget status:**

**Motion by Cade/second by Brose to approve the vouchers/transfers. All in favor. Motion carried.**

**Lunde noted that our current expenses show a negative balance of \$5,000 as Michele's position was not budgeted for last year. He also noted that revenue was up over \$10,000 however, so her position being dependent on grant writing revenues was in fact essentially paid for by revenues within the first year.**

**Next was Audience to Visitors:** None

**Next was closed session regarding legal counsel/litigation:** The committee chose to forgo a closed session on this agenda item as no visitors were present.

**Motion by Johnson, Second by Cade, to enter into closed session §19.85(1)(c) WI Stats. Regarding employment, promotion, compensation, & performance evaluation. Roll call vote. All in favor. Motion carried.**

**Motion by Brose/second by Johnson to reconvene into open session pursuant to WI Stats. §19.85 (2). All in favor. Motion carried.**

**Next, Lunde updated the committee on Robert Rules of Order:** Lunde informed the committee that it is his understanding that he has strong committee support for educating the County Board on this matter, and that he has spoken with Chairman Cornell and it was determined that Lunde would provide a short training either at a County Board meeting or after lunch perhaps

**Next was Committee member's reports/questions and Corporation Counsel update:** Lunde noted all the positive feedback from a number of people regarding the resolutions from the last Legal Affairs meeting. He then briefly discussed the La Farge meal site. Lunde stated there has been an unbelievable number of commitments the last several weeks, and that the number of juvenile commitments has increased as he has already seen more juvenile commitments this year than in all of last year combined. Lunde stated most of the people have gotten out of state institutions at this point, one way or another, even if that means they simply ended up being transferred and therefore are now part of someone else's

budget instead of Vernon County's. Lunde also noted that the problem with juvenile commitments is that very few places will take a juvenile, so they generally end up going to Winnebago because that's about the only place that will take them as even though Gundersen has a few limited beds, La Crosse's residents seem to eat those up; the same applies to a facility in Eau Claire as their own residents seem to always be using the available beds there.

Gobel noted a situation he was familiar with regarding La Crosse County, and stated that the previous Monday, they had 24 persons for intake court from events over the weekend, and all 24 were charges stemming from Methamphetamine use, and the following day, there were 17 more persons that came into the jail on drug charges as the judge is setting high cash bonds as opposed to signature bonds. The result of that however, is that there are now no more beds available and inmates are sleeping on the floors.

Gobel then noted the train traffic near Stoddard and Genoa and the single entrance to a portion of the Village in Stoddard having been blocked for over 30 minutes, and of how potentially serious and life threatening that could be for someone with a medical emergency. Cade asked the maximum time a train crossing could be blocked, and Gobel stated 20 minutes is the maximum time allotted per Federal law.

Gobel then stated 50 to 60 trains per day, and 3,500 oil cars, which are high in Methane gas and which are highly explosive, are going through Vernon County every week, and once the other track in La Crosse is completed, there will be an estimated 100 trains per day traveling up and down the river road, which will surely heighten the potential for traffic accidents at crossings when you consider all the crossings in our area; Black Hawk Park, Goose Island Campground, a portion of the Village of Stoddard, etc.

**Next meeting date** was set for April 10, 2014 at 11:00 a.m.

**Motion by Erlandson/second by Johnson to adjourn the meeting. All in favor. Motion carried.**

Minutes respectfully submitted by Michele Engh; typewritten by Tena M. Fredrickson, Corporation Counsel Administrative Assistants.