

Price County Law Enforcement Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: June 12, 2020

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Place: Courthouse County Board Room 101; 126 Cherry St; Phillips, WI 54555

Meeting called to order at 9:00 a.m. by James Hintz, Committee Chairperson. Roll Call - Present: James Hintz, Bruce Jilka, Mark Kyle, Waldemar Madsen, Larry Palecek. Also present: Nick Trimner, Brian Schmidt, Jim Dalbesio, Leanna Samardich, Bob Kopisch, Bill Teeters, Ginny Strobl, Paula Houdek, Mark Fuhr

Items for discussion and possible action:

1. Elect Committee Vice-chairperson: Hintz nominated Larry Palecek for Vice-chairperson. Three calls for further nominations. Motion Hintz/Madsen to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Larry Palecek for Committee Vice-chairperson. Motion carried.
2. Communications: None.
3. Meeting Minutes – February 14, 2020: Motion Palecek/Kyle to approve the minutes of the February 14, 2020 meeting as presented. Motion carried.
4. Resolution – Declare Price County to be a “Second Amendment Sanctuary County”: Discussion with committee members and other Board members in attendance. Motion Madsen to approve the resolution and forward to the County Board with recommendation for adoption. Motion died due to lack of a second.
5. Coroner’s Report and Vouchers – Jim Dalbesio: Reviewed recent activity. Motion Palecek/Madsen to approve the vouchers in the amount of \$9,137.51. Motion carried.
6. District Attorney’s Report and Vouchers – Mark Fuhr: Motion Palecek/Kyle to approve the vouchers in the amount of \$8,400.83. Motion carried.
 - a. Vacant District Attorney Position: Mark Fuhr resigned as the Price County District Attorney. Applications to the Governor’s Office deadline was June 8th. Possible appointment by July 1st. If candidate is a private practice attorney, they would need to close their practice.
 - b. Assignment of Assistant District Attorney: Mark Fuhr has taken the position of the Assistant DA for Price and Taylor Counties.
7. Clerk of Circuit Court’s Report and Vouchers: Motion Palecek/Madsen to approve the vouchers in the amount of \$35,436.77. Motion carried.
8. Sheriff’s Office Report and Vouchers – Brian Schmidt: Double homicide investigation with Taylor County. Investigator Chris Jarosinski retired. Josh Isaacson transferring to Building & Grounds Department. Two jailer openings, two deputy openings, one investigator opening. Still waiting for one 2019 squad car. 2020 squads have been cancelled, but one new squad car changed to a pickup truck. Radio system is at end of life and needs to be upgraded. South tower property has been sold. Have not heard if new owner will continue to house tower. COVID issues have caused an increase in domestic calls. Jail meal provider has changed to Phillips Café. Civilian dispatch/jail staff transition going well.

Drug Investigator Bob Hawn: Methamphetamine cases have stayed level, but quantities have increased. Prices have come down. Heroin and fentanyl cases have decreased. Cocaine usage is increasing. Marijuana cases have remained level, but larger quantities. Firearm thefts have increased. All resulting in more prosecutions at all levels.

Motion Palecek/Madsen to approve the vouchers in the amount of \$240,963.61. Motion carried.
 - a. 2019 OWI Enforcement Statistics: Annual report. Was reviewed with the Price County Tavern League.
 - b. K-9 Unit – Joe Janak and Dixon will be recertified. Program going well.
 - c. Humane Officer – Dean Merlak: Position has gotten busy. Refining law enforcement protocol. Looking into an online dog licensing process. Discussed how position has been evolving.
9. Agenda Items for Next Meeting: Radio system.
10. Date of Next Meeting: August 14th.
11. Meeting adjourned at 10:23 a.m.

Respectfully submitted: Jean Gottwald, County Clerk