



AURORA
PUBLIC
DEFENDER
Justice Fairness &
Compassion For All

PUBLIC DEFENDER COMMISSION MEETING

August 26, 2022 12:15 P.M.

PUBLIC DEFENDER'S IN OFFICE AND VIRTUAL CONFERENCE ROOM

MINUTES

1. The meeting was called to order at 12:25 p.m.
2. Present were Commissioners Tom Tobiassen, Sara Hildebrand, Tom Ashburn, Colette Tvedt, David Kaplan along with Chief Public Defender Doug Wilson. A quorum was declared to conduct Commission business.

Absent: Johanna Cartledge, and Frances Smylie-Brown

3. Guests: Elizabeth Cadiz, Greg Pastrich, Robert DeSoto, Christopher Ide, Dustin Klein, Richard Barahona, Jordan Culver, Stephen Pepper, and Evan Davies.
4. Minutes: None, will approve next month.
5. Introductions
6. Report from the Chief Public Defender:

Staff

We have been down admin for a few months now and happy to report that we are fully staffed.

Compensation

We just approved a five 5% increase for those who passed the annual evaluations. The increase will take effect in October instead of waiting till January. Chief Wilson eval and raise will be handled by Chief Commissioner Tobiassen.

The commission will need to be involved in the one- time high performance bonuses. Commissioner Tobiassen suggests Chief Wilson reviews and brings suggestions to the commission.

Budget

Our department budget looks like it will increase by 1 million dollars if the 2 FTE requests get approved. That will put us at 2.9 million and 20.5 FTE's. Out of the 1-million-dollar increase, 79% is funds we did not ask for like the pay adjustments from the city, an FTE for state mandated court, and grant funds. \$322,000 of the increase comes from grant funds we will be receiving from State Fines and Fees Committee to help pay for our mental health professional, interns, and help pay for all the

competency evaluations. 10% of the increase is due to the state mandated weekend court that will begin in January 2023.

We have reached out to some City Council members hoping to be able to explain our requests and hope they will be supportive of our needs and requests.

Passing of Ordinances

Motor Vehicle Theft and Failure to Appear ordinances just went into effect on August 13th but we haven't seen an impact on our case load yet.

Commissioner Tobiassen asks if we have started tracking Motor Vehicle Thefts and FTA's. Chief Wilson responds that we have been tracking motor vehicle cases, but we need to separate those that came after the passing of the ordinance and start tracking any FTA charges that are filed.

On Monday, a new mandatory minimum sentence bill on retail theft was on the agenda to presented. Commissioner Ashburn states that it was withdrawn.

Chief Wilson explains that the situation with these mandatory minimum sentences is that jail cannot be waived. If jail is not waived, those are all cases that could potentially fall on the Public Defender.

Our workload looks to increase by the beginning of January 2023.

Commissioner Tobiassen asks if the possibility of pleading a Motor Vehicle Theft down exists. Chief Wilson replies that based on what has already been happening since the passing of the ordinance, it has not been pled down and in fact, Motor Vehicle Trespass cases are getting the same treatment as Motor Vehicle Theft cases.

Aurora Sustained

We received a check for \$322,000 this week to help with the mental health and competency program. The program director wants to come out in October and see the program in action. They are discussing taking this statewide again.

Public Defender Commission Renewals

We have 3 renewals that we are working on. Letters have been received and sent on to the boards and commission liaison. Letters from our Chair needs to be completed.

Discussions were had regarding the upcoming renewals and possible future changes in the commission status with Commissioner Hildebrand.

Commissioner Ashburn asks for clarification on the process for appointing members. Commissioner Tobiassen explains that once members are selected, the clerk is informed, and from there it goes to City Council to vote on.

7. From the Commission:

Commission Chair Tobiassen states that he is currently working on Chief Wilsons 5% increase with HR.

Next meeting will be held on September 23, 2022 at 12:15 p.m. in the Public Defender's Virtual Conference room.

The Commission meeting adjourned at 1:23 p.m.

COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON

Date _____