



Minutes - October 21, 2025

Call to Order: Chair Tillman called the hybrid Public Safety and Justice Committee meeting to order at 5:23 pm in 911 Conference Center.

Committee Members Present: Supervisors Tillman, Knudson, Whitedge, and Schwarz.

Committee Members Absent: Supervisor Rashkin, YIG Cian Hardtke, and YIG Cooper Buehl.

Staff Members Present: Kevin Wernet, Emergency Management Director; Sheriff Fell; Fredd Carr, 911 Communications Director; Judge Barbara McCrory; Darle Grenawalt Child Support Office, Melissa Wittwer, Child Support Director; Amanda Nelson, Clerk of Courts; Christina Figueroa Soto, Medical Examiner's Office, Attorney Jason Sanders, District Attorney; Dr. Rogalska, Medical Examiner, John Light, County Administrator; Kristin Vander Kooi, Finance Director.

Others Present: Sheila Williams

Approve Agenda: Supervisor Knudson moved approval of the agenda as presented, second by Supervisor Whitedge. ADOPTED.

Citizen Participation, Communications and Announcements: Sheila Williams from Janesville, Wisconsin, addressed the committee about criminals' rights being put before the public. Sheila also states that Rock County is soft on crime via the court system. She also has concerns about the CJCC committee, why their meetings are not livestream, and why they are operating from an independent board. She is asking the committee to appoint CJCC Committee members, the meetings be recorded and offered over zoom.

Approval of Minutes:

October 7, 2025 Minutes: Supervisor Whitedge moved approval of October 7, 2025 minutes, second by Supervisor Schwarz. ADOPTED

2026 Recommended Budget Review:

Child Support: Child Support Services was awarded a two year contract for the Children First Program. The department can receive up to \$800 per eligible individual and was awarded 130 slots, which is equal to \$104,000.00 in revenue.

Clerk of Court/Circuit Court: The committee addressed the higher attorney rates. Judge McCrory explained that Guardian ad Litem fees go by the public's income. We pay the fees, then we collect the

fees. The Public Defenders Office is having trouble not being able to find attorneys. Indigency requests are higher. There is someone from the Public Defenders Office in Judge McCrory's courtroom to help appoint during court.

Medical Examiner: The base changes to the IGA are the most significant budget change for 2026, which was previously discussed. Everything else remains the same.

District Attorney: Jason Sanders introduced the budget appeal. The appeal is to allow the purchase of digital evidence management. This is a program needed to help the District Attorneys office produce evidence efficiently. The appeal would also replace four outdated laptops, as well as nine additional scanners that work with Windows 11. The budget appeal packet includes quotes from Motorola and answers to the questions that the committee had at the last meeting.

Supervisor Tillman moved to initiate the budget appeal and have it brought in front of County Finance, second by Supervisor Knudson. MOVING FORWARD

Special Reports:

Children First Update: Melissa Wittwer addressed the committee, updating them about the Children First Program. It is employment related. A referral program used to help noncustodial parents find work instead of being found in contempt of court. Since March 2025, there have been 37 people referred. 14 have met the timeline, seven have made bulk payments and continue to be employed. The program works with people one on one with different barriers to find employment. They keep contact with them and ensure that they are conducting work searches. They have the support of Community Action, Salvation Army, Project Thrive and Life Beyond Bars.

Sheriff's Report: Sheriff Fell states that September is consistent with what it has been. Activity regarding their canine that will be retiring soon. The Sheriff's Department utilized donations to purchase a new canine. Deputy Kukel will be the new canine officer.

Committee Requests, Future Agenda Items: Hazmat team information

Next meeting date and time: The next Public Safety and Justice Committee meeting will be held November 11, 2025 at 5:15 pm at the 911 Communications Center.

Adjournment: Supervisor Knudson moved to adjournment at 5:55 pm, second by Supervisor Whitledge. ADOPTED

Respectfully prepared by,

Sarah Heider

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