

**Coulee Region Joint Municipal Court Committee**

Thursday, August 20, 2015

1

1 The meeting of the Coulee Region Joint Municipal Court Committee was called to order at 3:34  
2 p.m. on Thursday, August 20, 2015. It was noted that the meeting had been announced and a  
3 notice posted at City Hall.

4  
5 Roll call was taken with the following members present: City of Onalaska Chief of Police Jeff  
6 Trotnic, Village of West Salem Representative Charles Ashbeck (alternate), Village of Holmen  
7 Representative Scott Heinig, City of Onalaska Representative Joseph Davis, Town of Shelby  
8 Representative Sean Horton (alternate). Village of Bangor Representative Scott Alo arrived with  
9 the meeting already in progress.

10  
11 Also Present: Municipal Court Supervisor Amber Jolly, Financial Services Director/Treasurer  
12 Fred Buehler, Town of Campbell Chief of Police Drew Gavrilos, Town of Holland  
13 Representative Kathy Warzynski, Town of Holland Representative Mike Hoffman

14  
15 **Item 2 - Approval of minutes from the previous meeting**

16  
17 Motion by Scott Heinig, second by Charles, to approve the minutes from the previous meeting as  
18 printed and on file in the City Clerk's Office.

19  
20 On voice vote, motion carried.

21  
22 **Item 3 – Public Input (Limited to 3 minutes/individual)**

23  
24 Police Chief Trotnic called three times for anyone wishing to provide public input and closed  
25 that portion of the meeting.

26  
27 **Consideration and possible action on the following items:**

28  
29 **Item 4 – Introduction of new member – Joseph Davis**

30  
31 Joseph told the committee he has been a City of Onalaska resident for approximately five years  
32 and is employed as an IT director for a software company.

33  
34 **Item 5 – Review and consideration of Town of Holland's request to join the Coulee Region**  
35 **Joint Municipal Court to process Town ordinance citations**

36  
37 Kathy noted the Town of Holland had presented the list of citations that had been requested and  
38 added she had brought a summary sheet to today's meeting. Kathy said Town of Holland  
39 Attorney Steve Doyle will serve as the town's prosecutor. Kathy also noted that the Town of  
40 Holland is attempting to pass a citation ordinance because of challenges such as individuals  
41 taking down fire signs.

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42  
43 Amber asked which entity will be issuing the citations.

44  
45 Kathy said she believes the Town of Holland Chair will write them.

46  
47 Amber asked if the ordinances will only relate to items such as property maintenance.

48  
49 Kathy said yes and noted they will not include traffic citations that will require the assistance of  
50 the police.

51  
52 Amber asked Kathy if she is familiar with how Municipal Court functions.

53  
54 Kathy said she assumes the court will process the citations issued by the town. Kathy said town  
55 officials looked into ordering citation forms, but she said she decided to wait and determine if the  
56 Municipal Court has a preference.

57  
58 Amber explained that citations must be filed with the Municipal Court so they may be inputted  
59 into the court's data entry system. Amber noted there are specific court dates and that the City  
60 Attorney would attend court. The City Attorney would have leeway for amending, dismissing  
61 and deferred prosecution. All payments would be made through the City of Onalaska Police  
62 Department for processing. Amber said she would turn over the statistics to Fred, who then  
63 would send out payments.

64  
65 Scott Heinig inquired about the buy-in costs associated with participation.

66  
67 Fred noted the City of Onalaska must change its ordinance and said there are costs associated  
68 with doing so. Fred pointed out that everything is based on cases not dismissed and said costs  
69 increase as the number of cases increase. Fred noted one case is approximately \$45 and said he  
70 believes a cost should be levied because there is a cost for the City of Onalaska whether or not  
71 the Town of Holland has citations.

72  
73 Police Chief Trotnic asked if the committee is considering adding the Town of Holland today.

74  
75 Fred said this is an action item and noted this item will go before the Finance and Personnel  
76 Committee and ultimately the Common Council once the Coulee Region Joint Municipal Court  
77 Committee is finished with it.

78  
79 Amber inquired about the Town of Holland's timeline for joining the Coulee Region Joint  
80 Municipal Court.

81  
82 Fred said one month and noted the Town of Holland would receive a copy of the bylaws. Fred

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83 said the Town of Holland would officially become a member on January 1, 2016 if the request to  
84 join is approved by the Town of Holland Board, the Finance and Personnel Committee and the  
85 Common Council.

86

87 Scott Heinig inquired about the equivalent of two to five.

88

89 Fred referred to a sheet in committee members' packets and explained this is how each  
90 municipality's portion of the budget is established. Fred explained that each municipality's  
91 percentage of the expenditures is derived from the percentage of cases not dismissed.

92

93 Scott Heinig asked how many citations the Town of Holland expects to issue, and if the town's  
94 only challenge relates to fire signs.

95

96 Kathy said no, noting the Town of Holland has a noise ordinance and that a citizen is shooting  
97 exploding targets. Kathy the Town of Holland "isn't going anywhere" with its ordinance  
98 because there is no one to process citations. Kathy noted the Sheriff's Department told her the  
99 individual is on his own property and that the exploding targets are legal.

100

101 Scott Heinig said he approves of welcoming The Town of Holland to the Coulee Region Joint  
102 Municipal Court. Scott also said he believes there should be enough participation in the use of  
103 the organization so that there is an allocation that is "equitable and fair" for involvement. Scott  
104 said he believes there should be a minimum annual expectation that \$500 be allocated.

105

106 Fred asked that the number of cases dismissed that total as close to \$500 as possible be utilized.

107

108 Scott Heinig asked that the Town of Holland target 10 cases a year, and 12 maximum, for its  
109 needs.

110

111 Charles said it is possible the Town of Holland could issue 10 citations and all of them could be  
112 dismissed. However, the Coulee Region Joint Municipal Court still would incur expenses.  
113 Charles said he agrees that there should be a minimum fee established.

114

115 Motion by Scott Heinig, second by Charles, to consider allowing the Town of Holland to  
116 participate in the Coulee Region Joint Municipal Court beginning January 1, 2016. This is with  
117 the understanding that there will be a minimum annual allocation of \$500 for participation as it  
118 relates to cases not dismissed.

119

120 Fred asked when the next Town of Holland Board meeting will be held.

121

122 Mike said it will be held Wednesday, September 9.

123

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124 Fred requested a copy of the board minutes if the town chooses to participate in the Coulee  
125 Region Joint Municipal Court.

126

127 Motion by Scott Heinig, second by Charles, to amend the previous motion to state the Town of  
128 Holland's participation is contingent upon the Town of Holland Board's approval prior to the  
129 end of September so the City of Onalaska may amend its ordinance.

130

131 A question was asked if there are concerns that the City of Onalaska would not pass an amended  
132 ordinance.

133

134 Fred said no, but also noted that the Coulee Region Joint Municipal Court will have to absorb the  
135 costs for the first year as the ordinance will be changed in 2015.

136

137 On voice vote, motion carried.

138

139 **Item 6 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Report of Accounts Receivable – FIO**

140

141 Amber referred to a copy of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Report included in committee members' packets and  
142 noted it reflects the income received through the end of June. Amber reported that  
143 \$2,966,000.03 in fines had been assessed from January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2014 and the  
144 outstanding fines as of June 30, 2015 totaled \$695,278.12. Seventy-six percent of the fines  
145 assessed have been collected to date. Amber said approximately 80 percent of the fines have  
146 been collected after juvenile/minor fines are removed. Amber noted the non-City of Onalaska  
147 committees still utilize Tax Intercept. Amber noted the fines received this year via Tax Intercept  
148 were primarily from 2005 to 2008. Amber said the collection agency utilizes the Tax Intercept  
149 program for the City of Onalaska.

150

151 Police Chief Trotnic asked how long the City of Onalaska has been utilizing OR (signature)  
152 Bonds.

153

154 Amber said she believes the city began utilizing them in 2013. Amber said she believes there  
155 only has been one individual so far in 2015 who was picked up on a warrant issued prior to the  
156 change. Amber noted there only has been one jail fee and said municipalities are spared from  
157 paying jail fees for booking.

158

159 **Item 7 – Financials – Fred**

160

161 Fred referred to graphs included in committee members' packets that represent the statistics for  
162 each community over the entire calendar year as well as the court's overall performance. Fred  
163 referred to documents listing forfeitures, court costs and the monthly total for each community.  
164 Fred referred to a green-colored handout listing assets, liabilities, revenues and expenditures.

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165  
166 Motion by Scott Heinig, second by Charles, to accept the financials.

167  
168 On voice vote, motion carried.

169  
170 **Item 8 – Discussion and approval of 2016 Coulee Region Joint Municipal Court Budget –**  
171 **Amber and Fred**

172  
173 Fred referred to a document with the heading “Onalaska Joint Municipal Court” included in  
174 committee members’ packets and told the committee that starting in January actual cases not  
175 dismissed are utilized along with actual dollars being spent. This is offset by actual court costs  
176 from each town, city and village, and each municipality might be required to pay additional  
177 funds to the City of Onalaska if there is a shortfall. Fred noted that both January and December  
178 are held back and said this approach has worked well. Fred referred to the “Onalaska Joint  
179 Municipal Court” handout and noted that the Village of Bangor, which was at 10.3836 percent in  
180 the 2015 budget, will be at 6.2484 percent in the 2016 budget. Fred noted this decrease is due to  
181 the fact the Village of Bangor is issuing fewer citations.

182  
183 Fred referred to the Joint Municipal Court Allocation handout and noted he arrives at the  
184 denominator of the percentage by taking the first and second quarters, which is actual, and the  
185 third and fourth quarters, which also is actual. Fred referred back to the handout listing assets,  
186 liabilities, revenues and expenditures and noted \$45,530.89 of court costs had been taken in.  
187 Fred said the \$75,000 he has budgeted for court costs in the 2016 is “a pretty comfortable level”  
188 if the \$45,530.89 is divided by seven months and then multiplied by 12. Fred referred to a  
189 document with the heading “Personnel Justification” and noted the City of Onalaska had  
190 performed a 1.5 percent calculation on the full-time employees. Fred said he did not feel  
191 comfortable leaving health insurance at \$21,934; therefore, he has added 5 percent. Fred said he  
192 would redo the documents in September and send them to each municipality once he has  
193 obtained the accurate figure. Fred noted approximately \$6,000 was budgeted in the 2015  
194 Executive Budget for 600 hours of assistance from IT Specialist Mike DeLine. Fred noted the  
195 Coulee Region Joint Municipal Court’s share is 4 percent (\$290).

196  
197 Scott Heinig asked Fred if he believes the same amount of IT time will be needed in the 2016  
198 budget.

199  
200 Fred said this was moved out of hiring an employee and into contractual. Fred said the  
201 individual who will be brought in from Adoni Networks will be knowledgeable and will not  
202 require training.

203  
204 Amber noted that the \$290 is divided by the prorated percentages from each municipality.  
205 Amber referred to the Joint Municipal Court Line Item document and noted the Coulee Region

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206 Joint Municipal Court was given the directive of a zero-percent increase. Amber said she is  
207 increasing Phone/Internet/Cable to \$700 so there is “an extra cushion” should there be an  
208 increase in fees. Amber noted she has included 3P Administrators, Inc. (Section 125 health  
209 insurance savings plan) to the 2016 budget under Other Contractual Services at a cost of \$162.  
210 Amber said it will be necessary to add a line item under Other Contractual Services for an IT  
211 assistant at a cost of \$290. Doing so will increase the total that has been budgeted under Other  
212 Contractual Services from \$2,805 to \$3,095. Amber said that within the next five years she  
213 would like to add Tyler Content Management add-on software for document management. This  
214 software would aid in efficiency and organization, and it also would assist with going paperless.  
215 The program would decrease the amount of paper that is filed and attach a digital copy to  
216 citations within the INCODE software program. Amber said she also is possibly interested in  
217 purchasing add-on software for INCODE Notification for Courts. This program would allow  
218 clerks to customize telephone messages to defendants regarding upcoming court dates, payment  
219 due dates and other issues. The system would record the results of the calls on each ticket  
220 whether the call was answered or directed to voicemail. The anticipated result is to increase  
221 collections and reduce the number of warrants issued or license suspended. Four phone calls per  
222 ticket would be allowed, and the cost would be \$1. Amber said she is undecided on this item as  
223 there also are free programs available.

224

225 Fred inquired the cost of these items, noting no quotes had been attached.

226

227 Amber noted that the quotes remained unchanged from last year. Amber estimated the cost of  
228 the Tyler Content Management add-on software to be \$8,600. Amber said there is no charge for  
229 INCODE Notification for Courts, but there is a charge for the phone calls that are made.

230

231 Fred inquired about the cost of a personal computer for the JMC Assistant Clerk station  
232 scheduled to be purchased in 2017.

233

234 Amber said this is a “rolling computer” that would cost \$1,000.

235

236 Motion by Scott Heinig, second by Joseph, to recommend to the Common Council the  
237 preliminary 2016 Coulee Region Joint Municipal Court Budget as submitted, with the  
238 understanding modest modifications are forthcoming, including the addition of \$290 for  
239 additional IT services.

240

241 On voice vote, motion carried.

242

243 **Adjournment**

244

245 Motion by Police Chief Trotnic, second by Charles, to adjourn at 4:30 p.m.

246

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247 On voice vote, motion carried.

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249

250 Recorded by:

251

252 Kirk Bey