



Winnebago County

The Wave of the Future

**JUDICIARY AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, MAY 4, 2026**

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Hanson at 6:00 p.m. in the Rick Meyer Room at the Sheriff's Department, 4311 Jackson Street, Oshkosh.

Members Present: Chairman Conley Hanson, Supervisor George Bureau, Supervisor Tim Paterson, Supervisor Kate Hancock-Cooke, and Supervisor Jim Wise

Also Present at the Meeting:

- Sheriff John Matz*
- Captain Darin Rice*
- Captain Lara Vendola*
- Lieutenant Amber Rozek*
- Chief Deputy Tim Eichman*
- Judge Michael Rust*
- District Attorney Eric Sparr*
- Corporation Counsel Mary Anne Mueller*
- Emergency Management Eric Rasmussen*
- Resident Bryan Stafford*

via TEAMS: Supervisor Steve Binder

B. Introductions

1. Introductions from departments under the Judiciary & Public Safety Committee of Jurisdiction
 - Julie Barthels, County Clerk
 - John Matz, Sheriff
 - Eric Sparr, District Attorney
 - Eric Rasmussen, Emergency Management Director
 - Mary Anne Mueller, Corporation Counsel
- *Julie Barthels, County Clerk - Thanked the committee for the respect that has been shown to her and to her office. She is looking forward to working with them during this term.*
- *John Matz, Sheriff - Thanked the committee for doing the job that they do. He asked them to be patient with the new Sheriff and always reach out with any questions that may arise.*
- *Eric Sparr, District Attorney - If you have things that come up or want to see the process of the District Attorney's office, do not hesitate to contact their office.*
- *Eric Rasmussen, Emergency Management - Appreciates the extra position that was awarded to his department last year. He encouraged keeping the same partnership that he has experienced in the past with the Judiciary & Public Safety Committee.*
- *Mary Anne Mueller, Corporation Counsel - Her office's job is to protect the County. She shared with the committee members all the services that her office provides for the County. She thanked the committee for the extra paralegal position awarded to her at budget time last year. Corporation Counsel Mueller thanked the committee for their time and consideration.*

C. Approval of Minutes

1. April 6, 2026, Meeting Minutes
 - Motion by Supervisor Wise, seconded by Supervisor Hancock-Cooke to approve the April 6, 2026, Judiciary and Public Safety Committee minutes. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE. (5-0)*

D. Public Comments under the Jurisdiction of the Committee

Judge Rust Branch 1 - Noted that the Judges will be attending the Judiciary and Public Safety (JPS) committee meetings. They will do it on a rotation basis. If anyone would like to sit with one of the Judges during the day, please contact Judge Rust.

E. Communications Shared by Committee Members

No comments from Committee Members.

F. Committee Chair's Report

Chairman Hanson felt very privileged to have two former chairpersons in the room; Supervisor Wise and Bryan Stafford. He thanked them for setting an example for him to follow for the last two supervisory terms.

G. Department Reports

1. Sheriff's Report

- **ICE Update** — Captain Amber Rozek provided an ICE update for the committee. The numbers are staying relatively the same. Captain Rozek gave an incident report on ICE for the month of April. Two inmates were turned over to ICE and there are still four in custody.
- **STAFFING** — Sheriff John Matz provided an update on staffing within the Sheriff's Department. There are four vacancies. They have five Interns starting May 18th. They have 6 positions that will be added in July. There will be one corrections officer starting July 6th, and four in background checks. In the Dispatch Center, they have 4 vacancies. There will be one dispatcher starting July 6th and five candidates to be interviewed starting on May 22nd. When looking at the 2027 budget, they will be requesting four positions to alleviate \$40,000.00 in overtime per month. The jail count for May 4th is 280 inmates. The average for the month of April was 278. Sheriff Matz explained the reasoning for having the C Pod open. Sheriff Matz then took questions from the committee members.
- **Fuel Budget/ Plan to Manage Fuel Increases** — Captain Darin Rice commented on the fuel budget. The price of fuel was budgeted from \$2.15 to \$2.25 per gallon. The price for the last delivery of fuel was \$3.50 per gallon. For the officers that would take their squads home to be able to respond faster to incidents, this would end because of the increased fuel cost. Without this program, officers would have to drive from their homes to the Sheriff's Department to get their vehicles and then back to the scene. This would include officers in administrative positions. Currently, the county is divided into five sections. Another option to save fuel would be to consider doubling up on squads and dividing the county into three sections. The Sheriff's Department has a minimum staff of 5 officers per shift. They would have two squads with two officers, and one squad with one officer that would patrol the central area of the county. This could also jeopardize response time. Supervisor Hancock-Cooke and Supervisor Bureau asked Captain Rice to provide numbers showing the effects of taking away the squad-at-home option and the advantages or disadvantages to doubling up in squads.
- **Flood Response** — Captain Darin Rice reported that the squad cars have been equipped with Frisbuoys (inflatable buoys) and life jackets for officers and citizens. They purchased chest waders for the officers to go door to door to check on citizens. They provided plastic sheeting to help preserve the sandbags. Portage County offered their armored vehicle, which sits higher than Winnebago County's Bearcat. The Sheriff's Department was afraid that this vehicle was too heavy with the uncertainty of the road structures. Two Winnebago County Lieutenants took a crash course on how to drive a "duck". A resident of Winnebago County offered it to the Sheriff's Department to use. Captain Rice then took questions from the committee members.

H. Business Items

1. **Authorization for a budget transfer to purchase a new squad car to replace an existing fleet vehicle that was totaled in a crash.**

Captain Darin Rice reported that another squad car was totaled due to an accident on February 20th. There were no injuries. Another vehicle went through a stop sign and T-boned the squad car. Insurance determined the payout would be \$39,524.15, leaving a gap of \$9,504.35 that would need to be covered by the County. The Sheriff's Department would like a budget transfer to have the ability to purchase a new vehicle to replace the squad car that was totaled.

Motion by Supervisor Bureau, seconded by Supervisor Paterson to authorize a budget transfer to purchase a new squad car to replace an existing fleet vehicle that was totaled in a crash. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE. (5-0)

I. Presentations

There were no presentations for this meeting.

J. Next Meeting Date

1. **Discussion/Possible Action of Judiciary & Public Safety Committee Meeting Time**

The committee considered looking at different meeting times as the Personnel & Finance Committee meets the first Monday at 3:30 p.m.

After discussion, a motion by Supervisor Bureau, seconded by Supervisor Hanson, to call the question. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE

Vote to move the Judiciary and Public Safety Committee meeting to the first Monday of the month at 9:00 a.m. VOTE: AYES - 3; NAYES - 2 Hancock-Cooke and Wise. Motion Failed. This needs to be a unanimous vote.

The next meeting will be held on June 1, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Rick Meyer Room of the Sheriff's Department.

K. Adjourn

Motion by Supervisor Paterson, seconded by Supervisor Bureau to adjourn the May 4, 2026, Judiciary and Public Safety Committee meeting.

CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE. (5-0)

The meeting was adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

*Respectfully Submitted by,
Julie A. Barthels
Winnebago County Clerk*

*The video portion of this meeting is available on the County website:
<https://winnebago.cowi.portal.civicclerk.com>*