

PUBLIC SAFETY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

DATE: October 7, 2009

CALLED TO ORDER: 5:32 p.m.

ADJOURNED: 5:42 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Attending Members

Ryan Vaughn, Chair
Bob Cockrum
Mary Moriarty Adams
William Oliver
Marilyn Pfisterer
Christine Scales

Absent Members

Vernon Brown
Benjamin Hunter

AGENDA

PROPOSAL NO. 372, 2009 - approves a transfer of \$5,000 in the 2009 Budget of the Marion County Circuit Court (County General Fund) to purchase general office supplies
"Do Pass" Vote: 6-0

PROPOSAL NO. 373, 2009 - approves a transfer and appropriation of \$690,241 in the 2009 Budget of the Marion Superior Court (County General, Cumulative Capital Improvement, Alternative Dispute Resolution and County Grants Funds) to fund increased mediation costs, additional personnel costs, payroll software, Guardian Ad Litem costs, and a court recording system
"Do Pass" Vote: 6-0

PUBLIC SAFETY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

The Public Safety and Criminal Justice Committee of the City-County Council met on Wednesday, October 7, 2009. Chair Ryan Vaughn called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. with the following members present: Bob Cockrum, Mary Moriarty Adams, William Oliver, Marilyn Pfisterer and Christine Scales. Absent were Vernon Brown and Benjamin Councillor Hunter.

PROPOSAL NO. 372, 2009 - approves a transfer of \$5,000 in the 2009 Budget of the Marion County Circuit Court (County General Fund) to purchase general office supplies

Glenn Lawrence, Court Administrator, said the Circuit Court has a new judge who has had to purchase additional supplies. Therefore, they are transferring \$5,000 from Character 01 to Character 02.

Councillor Moriarty Adams moved, seconded by Councillors Scales and Pfisterer, to forward Proposal No. 372, 2009 to the full Council with a "Do Pass" recommendation. The motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

PROPOSAL NO. 373, 2009 - approves a transfer and appropriation of \$690,241 in the 2009 Budget of the Marion Superior Court (County General, Cumulative Capital Improvement, Alternative Dispute Resolution and County Grants Funds) to fund increased mediation costs, additional personnel costs, payroll software, Guardian Ad Litem costs, and a court recording system

Mr. Lawrence said the first part of this request is a transfer of about \$600,000 from Character 01 to Character 03 to pre-pay the county's portion of Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) and Guardian Ad Litem costs. He said the state provides a certain amount and the county is required to match that amount, which is about \$450,000 based on the number of Children in Need of Services (CHINS) cases. Mr. Lawrence said that the county's CHINS cases have dramatically increased about 30% to 40%, which has caused a backlog of over 1,200 cases. He said the children are waiting three to five months for Guardian Ad Litem.

Mr. Lawrence said another portion of the request is to prepay the parking fees for their employees for next year, as that expense was cut from next year's budget. He said they are able to prepay that cost this year because they are not filling some of their vacancies and they are seeing good retention at the Juvenile Detention Center.

Mr. Lawrence said that they are installing a new human resource (HR) and payroll system with some of the funds from the Cumulative Capital Improvement Fund. He said this is to help prepare them for some future HR and payroll projects. He added that the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Fund was established several years ago and is funded by a 20% fee in domestic relations filings. He said this fund is utilized to make up the difference for the cost of mediators for people who go to alternative mediation or resolution and pay on a sliding fee scale.

Mr. Lawrence said they received a grant to establish a truancy court at 25th Street and Keystone Avenue. He said the truancy court requires additional recording equipment and software.

Chair Vaughn asked if the things needed for the truancy court are covered by grant funding. Mr. Lawrence answered in the affirmative.

Chair Vaughn asked what portion of the ADR costs the parties pay and what portion the court pays. Mr. Lawrence answered that it set up on a sliding fee scale depending on the person's income. Chair Vaughn asked if the ADR cases are all family law related matters. Mr. Lawrence answered in the affirmative.

Chair Vaughn asked what the total cost of the future HR and payroll project will be. Mr. Lawrence answered that the total cost will be \$500,000. He said they hope to have the project up and running by January, 2009. Chair Vaughn asked if that total amount is included in this request. Mr. Lawrence answered in the negative, and stated that this only covers about \$36,000 for replacement of computers.

Councillor Oliver asked for an explanation of the mediation initiative and its increased costs. Mr. Lawrence answered that they attempt to settle disputes with families and individuals without going to court by sending them to mediators. Councillor Oliver asked if the increased cost is due to more cases going to mediators or the additional cost of staff for the cases. Mr. Lawrence answered that it is due to more cases.

Councillor Pfisterer said that the Guardian Ad Litem Fund was already very low for 2009. She asked if there is enough in the fund to cover the remainder of 2009. Mr. Lawrence answered that it will be challenging, but they are working with the City Controller and the Office of Finance and Management (OFM). Councillor Pfisterer asked if OFM is in support of this proposal. Jason Dudich, Deputy Controller, OFM, answered in the affirmative.

Councillor Scales moved, seconded by Councillor Pfisterer, to forward Proposal No. 373, 2009 to the full Council with a "Do Pass" recommendation. The motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

With no further business pending, and upon motion duly made, the Public Safety and Criminal Justice Committee of the City-County Council was adjourned at 5:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Ryan Vaughn, Chair
Public Safety and Criminal Justice Committee