Law & Courts Committee
February 1, 2018
Minutes

Members Present: Crenshaw, Banas (arrived at 6:01 p.m.), Hope, Celentino, Anthony, and Maiville

Members Absent: Schafer

Others Present: Judge Tom Boyd, Sheriff Scott Wriggelsworth, John Dinon, Bruce Gaukel, Rick Terrill, Mary Sabaj, KC Brown, Scott LeRoy, Tom Krug, Sherry Larner, Tim Dolehanty, Teri Morton, Liz Noel, and others

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Crenshaw at 6:00 p.m. in Personnel Conference Room D & E of the Human Services Building, 5303 S. Cedar Street, Lansing, Michigan.

Approval of the January 11, 2018 Minutes

MOVED BY COMM. HOPE, SUPPORTED BY COMM. MAIVILLE, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 11, 2018 LAW AND COURTS COMMITTEE MEETING.

THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Absent: Commissioners Banas and Schafer

Commissioner Banas arrived at 6:01 p.m.

Additions to the Agenda

6. 9-1-1 Center
   f. Controller’s Memo Regarding the Disbanding of the JLT (Discussion Item)

Limited Public Comment

Judge Thomas Boyd thanked the Committee for passing a resolution honoring Marilyn “Marty” Waugh, who was retiring after many years at the 55th District Court.

MOVED BY COMM. MAIVILLE, SUPPORTED BY COMM. ANTHONY, TO APPROVE A CONSENT AGENDA CONSISTING OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

1. 55th District Court – Resolution Honoring Marilyn Waugh

2. Circuit Court – Family Division
a. Resolution to Amend Three Year Contracts with Various Residential Placements
b. Resolution to Amend Acceptance of Michigan Drug Court Grant for the Ingham County Family Dependency Treatment Court

3. Animal Control – Resolution to Restore an Animal Shelter Clerk Position

4. Facilities Department
   a. Resolution to Provide and Install a New Dishwasher in the Family Center Kitchen

6. 9-1-1 Center
   a. Resolution to Authorize Renewal of the 9-1-1 Telephone System Support Agreement with Carousel Industries, Inc.
   b. Resolution to Approve a Contract Renewal for Pre-Employment Testing
   c. Resolution to Authorize Purchasing Scheduling Software/Services for the 9-1-1 Center
   d. Resolution to Authorize a Software Support Agreement with Tritech for the Arcserve Maintenance and Support

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Absent: Commissioner Schafer

THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Absent: Commissioner Schafer

4. Facilities Department
   b. Resolution to Authorize Construction Services for the Ingham County Family Center Kitchen Upgrade

MOVED BY COMM. MAIVILLE, SUPPORTED BY COMM. CELENTINO, TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION.

MOVED BY COMM. CELENTINO, SUPPORTED BY COMM. HOPE, TO AMEND THE RESOLUTION AS FOLLOWS:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ingham County Board of Commissioners authorizes a contract with T.H. Eifert, 3302 West St. Joseph, Lansing, Michigan 48791 48917, to provide construction services for the Ingham County Family Center kitchen upgrade project for a not to exceed total cost of $120,000.00 which includes the requested $4,000.00 contingency.

THE MOTION TO AMEND THE RESOLUTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Absent: Commissioner Schafer

THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION, AS AMENDED, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Absent: Commissioner Schafer

5. Law & Courts Committee – Programming Options for Justice Complex Millage (Discussion Item)
Teri Morton, Deputy Controller, introduced the discussion and programming options presented to the Committee.

KC Brown, CATS Program Coordinator, explained the two proposals Community Mental Health of Clinton, Eaton and Ingham Counties (CMH) had presented to the Committee.

Chairperson Crenshaw asked what the approximate cost of the first proposal would be.

Ms. Morton stated the cost was included in the proposal and was about $627,000.

Commissioner Banas stated she thought the proposal sounded forward-thinking. She asked what the County could expect for outcomes from their investment, as she assumed the proposals included ideas from other successful programs.

Ms. Brown stated they would hope that the programs could get people out of jail with jail diversion programs, and the rest of the treatment program would be to stabilize the inmates enough while they were in jail to get medication and continue treatment when they leave so they did not come back to the system. She further stated that case managers would do re-entry programs and provide resources to clients, as there was currently only one case manager and they focused on substance abuse.

Commissioner Banas asked if there was a ballpark number that could be provided for jail diversion programs.

Ms. Brown stated she did not know.

Commissioner Anthony stated these were exactly the kinds of services the County needed, and thanked the presenters for including full-time positions in the proposal, as she thought that was important. She asked if there were other counties in Michigan that had similar initiatives and saw success.

Ms. Brown stated there were some jail diversion pilot programs, where the offenders did not even enter jail if they qualified for the diversion program. She further stated she could provide some data and she did not know figures off the top of her head, but she knew other counties had been working on pre-charge and post-incarceration trainings.

Commissioner Anthony stated she would like to see the data, and to see if any other programs were coupled with a new jail. She further stated that the CATS program and CMH had had a hard time finding a pool of applicants they wanted to fill the current positions.

Commissioner Anthony asked if CATS and CMH had done their research, that if the millage passed, they would be able to fill those positions in a timely manner.

Ms. Brown stated CMH was having a hard time filling positions and keeping them filled, but they were now marketing and framing the positions differently. She further stated she thought a
new facility would entice people to the positions, and she thought it was realistic to get them filled, but she did not know what it would look like.

Commissioner Anthony asked if marketing and outreach was in the administrative part of the budget.

Ms. Brown stated marketing and outreach of the positions were part of the administrative budget.

Commissioner Banas stated she had just looked up jail diversion programs, and the State of Michigan had started one a few years ago that could be a helpful resource for the County's programs.

Ms. Brown stated she thought counties involved in the State's program were operating on grant funding. She further stated she could pull data from the program, but she did not know about the funding.

Discussion.

Chairperson Crenshaw asked how many inmates would be involved with the Intensive Detention Re-Entry Program (IDRP) in the County.

Sheriff Scott Wriggelsworth stated the contract the County had with the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) was for 50 beds, but the contract was always on pins and needles. He further stated part was limited programming with IDRP, and he liked the second proposal better because he was not sure how long the County would be in the contract business.

Commissioner Hope asked how much the difference was between the two proposals.

Sheriff Wriggelsworth stated that the difference between the two proposals was about $170,000.

Ms. Morton stated the second proposal was about $451,000.

Commissioner Hope stated that in the future, the County could possibly work in funding for programs for those inmates into a contract with MDOC in the future.

Discussion.

Mary Sabaj, Community Corrections Director, explained the proposal put together by Community Corrections. She further explained they had also received a proposal from Wellness, InX for re-entry and case management programs, which they thought Community Corrections could work with CMH to do things together, rather than create two different types of services.

Ms. Sabaj stated she had just heard that the Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT) program, which had been used in the jail for years and had been funded with a fixed allocation grant through CMH, was going to start charging a fee for service and would not fund people who were in both the MRT and CATS programs.
Discussion.

Chairperson Crenshaw asked if MRT had indicated the fee they would be charging for service.

Ms. Sabaj stated the MRT program had indicated how the fee for service would be laid out, but they would not accept clients that were also in the CATS program.

Chairperson Crenshaw asked if the County would have to pay for an individual in the MRT program.

Ms. Sabaj stated upon investigation, all of their clients were enrolled in both programs, but they could explore other programs.

Discussion.

Sheriff Wriggelsworth stated he thought Community Corrections, Pretrial Services, and CMH should get together to prioritize their programs within the given budget.

Chairperson Crenshaw asked the Committee what they wanted to set as an amount for programming within the millage.

Commissioner Banas stated she would like to see what the outcomes looked like first.

Discussion

Commissioner Banas asked what kind of information Ms. Brown and Ms. Sabaj could give the Committee on their sense of outcomes.

Ms. Sabaj stated the MRT program could probably provide national data.

Commissioner Hope asked if the County wanted to offer $1 million worth of services every year, how that translated into a millage rate.

Ms. Morton stated she estimated $1 million worth of programming would probably be about .15 mills each year; as the jail debt service was $5 million per year and that would translate to about .65 mills.

Commissioner Hope stated it was helpful to have a framework, because she wanted to maximize the benefit of those dollars.

Commissioner Celentino asked what the County would need to raise for the millage.

Ms. Morton stated she had run numbers, and with $65 million for jail debt for 20 years and $500,000 for programming each year, it would amount to 0.7 mills.
Commissioner Celentino once the agencies were given a direction and the full amount to work with, they could come back with their recommendations.

Ms. Morton stated it would be helpful to have a rough draft of the programming, so they could put that out to the public, but they would not need to work out all of the specifics.

Commissioner Anthony asked if, in the millage proposal language, the programming would be set aside as a set amount, a percentage, or not to exceed a certain amount.

Ms. Morton stated she thought they should remain silent on the dollar amount publicly, but the Committee should decide on a rough dollar amount they would like to set aside each year for programming.

Discussion.

Commissioner Banas stated she thought it would not be a slam dunk to sell the millage to the community, but word had been getting out about how crummy the jail was and that it would need to be replaced. She further stated she thought the County ought to start out modestly with services, because they needed to make sure Commissioners could sell this to their community to talk about it and she wanted data to go along with it.

Commissioner Anthony stated that an estimate of about $1 million would be a good starting place, to see what they could get for that amount.

Commissioner Maiville asked if there was additional funding beyond what was presented, because it looked like there was.

Ms. Morton stated Pretrial Services had a proposal of about $175,000 for two positions.

Commissioner Celentino- would support going with 1 million, have some room

Discussion.

Chairperson Crenshaw stated it looked like the consensus of the Committee was to set aside at least $1 million, have the agencies put together a combined proposal and present it at the second Committee meeting of March.

Ms. Sabaj asked if they were looking for programming specifically within the jail, or if the programming could be within the community as well.

Chairperson Crenshaw stated it could be either-or, as he believed if serving community then it was worth looking at.

6. 9-1-1 Center
   e. 9-1-1 Center Update
Ms. Morton explained the memo provided by Lance Langdon, 9-1-1 Center Director.

Bruce Gaukel, 9-1-1 Center Supervisor, stated the 9-1-1 Center staff had received an award from East Lansing Police.

Discussion.

Commissioner Celentino asked if the request for proposal (RFP) had been put on hold.

Ms. Morton stated that was correct, and the decision had been based on the number of applicants that were ready to be trained and they did not want to overburden the staff with trainees.

Commissioner Celentino asked if they had received a lot of applications for the open supervisor positions.

Mr. Gaukel stated the 9-1-1 Center had interviews scheduled interviews with eight applicants on February 8, 2018. He explained the selection process.

Commissioner Celentino asked if collective bargaining units were ever involved in the selection process.

Mr. Gaukel stated the collective bargaining units did not participate in the selection process, but the process was in place in the Capitol City Labor Program (CCLP) agreement.

Commissioner Banas congratulated the 9-1-1 Center for making progress. She asked of the people in the various aspects of the training process, if they seemed like they would be successful employees, because she recalled in the past the high turnover rate.

Mr. Gaukel stated the 9-1-1 Center currently had 17 recruits in active training, after one was lost to a position in Circuit Court and another returned after moving to the Sheriff’s Office. He further stated in checking all of the reports, it all seemed like good news, and things were progressing and the previous hires were already taking a leadership role.

Mr. Gaukel stated there were more applicants ready to start, but in speaking with the trainers, he did not want to overburden them.

Commissioner Anthony asked how staff morale was, and if it was still the same as it was last year.

Mr. Gaukel stated he thought the staff morale varied, where in some aspects things were the same, but there has been some improvement. He further stated that his experience in the past few weeks has been pretty good, and he thought the employees were excited about the upcoming interviews for supervisors.
Mr. Gaukel stated there were some changes being made to the Joint Leadership Team (JLT). He further stated he thought if employees were asked what morale was like, there would be a variety of answers.

Ms. Morton stated from her perspective not working there, morale was not better yet. She further stated there were a lot of newly hired people, and it was stressful to train them, and it had not yet alleviated the overtime and shift coverage issues because the new people were not on their own yet.

Commissioner Anthony asked if the 9-1-1 Center had explored external training for the new employees.

Ms. Morton stated that because the training period was six months long, it was something that had to be done by someone who was working in the 9-1-1 Center. She further stated that she thought they were making progress, but it was a long haul.

Commissioner Anthony asked Tom Krug, CCLP Executive Director, and Sherry Larner, CCLP President and 9-1-1 Center employee, if there was anything they wanted to add to the conversation.

Ms. Larner stated there was low morale at the 9-1-1 Center, some of which could be attributed to some coincidental incidents. She further stated there were more and more people who came in and just faced the wall to do their job, and there was no teamwork because the morale was low.

Commissioner Anthony asked if a lot of the low morale issues could be attributed to the lack of staff.

Ms. Larner stated that staffing levels were part of the issue, but there had also been some policies put in place regarding the employees’ time off and protective leave, as well as the way overtime was calculated.

Mr. Krug stated the bargaining unit had had a tentative agreement on a contract offer from the County which included a substantial raise.

Ms. Morton stated the bargaining unit did not have a tentative agreement.

Discussion.

Mr. Krug stated when the proposed contract had been brought to the bargaining unit’s members, only three had voted to support the contract and 42 had voted against it, with about 90% participation, which could almost be seen as a vote of no confidence. He further stated he found it hard to believe things were getting better when morale was almost nonexistent at the 9-1-1 Center and he had serious concerns.

Discussion.
6. 9-1-1 Center
   f. Controller’s Memo Regarding the Disbanding of the Joint Labor-Management Team (Discussion Item)

Tim Dolehanty, Controller, explained the January 26, 2018 memorandum he had sent to Commissioners regarding the disbanding of the Joint Labor-Management Team (JLT) and starting the Controller’s Organizational Assessment Team (COAT). His comments are included in the minutes as Attachment A.

Commissioner Maiville stated the COAT was quite a big change, and he was curious how this was rolled out. He asked if this change had been discussed with bargaining units and staff, as he had been taken aback when he received the email from the Controller.

Commissioner Maiville asked if Mr. Dolehanty had been putting feelers or giving signs that this change would take place.

Mr. Dolehanty stated the change from JLT to COAT had been discussed at the 9-1-1 Center administrative team meeting. He further stated that it had been intended to include all teams during the JLT meetings, but the thoughts presented there did not match the general thought among staff.

Mr. Dolehanty stated with JLT, new hires were not being heard and thoughts and ideas were not coming to the table. He further stated this was not a new subject.

Commissioner Hope asked what the difference was in the makeup of the two groups, JLT and COAT.

Mr. Dolehanty explained the makeup of COAT as it was described by the handout given to the Committee.

Mr. Dolehanty stated some employees were involved in the hiring process of the supervisors, and he thought input from them was important, as was having the unions at the table.

Commissioner Banas asked how the two groups were different.

Mr. Dolehanty stated JLT had been ad hoc, and there was no organization on who was represented.

Commissioner Celentino asked where the collective bargaining units were on the change from JLT to COAT.

Mr. Dolehanty stated that as the handout given to the Committee defined, they would come to the COAT group that has two seats held for union members and staff that are also part of the union. He further stated that this was to put Dr. Erin Brockman’s report to use as intended and give all units involved a way to vet ideas as they were presented.
Discussion.

Commissioner Celentino stated some of the Committee members had heard of these issues continuing for some time now, and he was shocked that there was devastating morale among employees especially if they were willing to forego a wage increase. He asked if JLT could not come up with solutions about employee morale, why Mr. Dolehanthy thought COAT would.

Mr. Dolehanthy stated he did not think JLT was ineffective about morale, and he had experienced employees taking matters into their own hands and presenting solutions to the JLT. He further stated he was not at the 9-1-1 Center daily, but when he did visit, he generally met upbeat people that seemed fairly excited about their future, and he thought this new work plan had been what was missing.

Chairperson Crenshaw stated the Committee had asked Mr. Langdon to do this and come up with timelines multiple times, and it had not been done.

Mr. Dolehanthy stated that was why he was implementing this more aggressive approach.

Chairperson Crenshaw asked why JLT could not work to get the outcomes. He referred to a JLT agreement that had been revised as recently as November 2017.

Mr. Dolehanthy stated the membership of the JLT did not include all of the active members involved in the 9-1-1 Center.

Chairperson Crenshaw asked why the Controller could not just ask the JLT to include these groups.

Mr. Dolehanthy stated the room was full already, and if they added more people to the JLT, they would have to find a bigger room. He further stated that the JLT did not involve a cross-section of employees at the 9-1-1 Center.

Chairperson Crenshaw asked Ms. Larner if she would be opposed to including more people in the JLT if they could contribute to the outcomes.

Ms. Larner stated she did not know what the name change would do for the situation, but she did know that the employees needed deadlines and someone to be held accountable. She further stated she had spoken with Mr. Dolehanthy and she thought it was a fair group of employees on the COAT and agreed that JLT did not represent everyone at the 9-1-1 Center.

Ms. Larner stated she told members of the union to give COAT three months to see the outcome of the new plan.

Discussion.

Chairperson Crenshaw asked what actions could be taken if tasks were not completed by their deadline.
Mr. Dolehanty stated it depended on the reason why it was not done, for instance, if the 9-1-1 Center lost a lot of employees at once, then that was one thing, but if the person just did not get around to it, then there would be discipline. He further stated part of his role was to make sure these tasks were completed and to make sure staff had resources to complete them.

Chairperson Crenshaw asked why Ms. Morton, as liaison to the Committee, would not be involved in COAT.

Mr. Dolehanty stated Ms. Morton could be involved, but she had a lot on her plate this year.

Commissioner Hope asked if the unions were open to this plan and happy with it.

Ms. Larner stated she had discussed the plan with Mr. Dolehanty, as it had felt retaliatory that the email disbanding JLT came out right after the union had voted down the contract. She further stated the email was harsh, but she listened to Mr. Dolehanty and she liked his plan.

Ms. Larner stated there were many things to do on the plan between now and April to see progress. She further stated she believed Mr. Dolehanty could do it, it just took someone to take control.

Commissioner Hope stated Ms. Larner was more patient than she was, as the Committee had been hearing about employee morale for a long time.

Ms. Larner stated the struggle had come with having deadlines, where there previously had been no leadership and no follow-through.

Commissioner Hope asked if the 9-1-1 Center Director reported to the Controller.

Mr. Dolehanty stated the 9-1-1 Center Director did report to him.

Commissioner Hope stated she had heard the Controller say he had been reluctant to intervene, and she felt like while the Board of Commissioners had no real need to be involved in the day-to-day operations of the 9-1-1 Center, they had been pulled into it. She further stated she was not sure about the new plan and she thought the roll-out was ham-handed, but she would wait and see along with the union.

Commissioner Banas stated what was happening was the top officer of the County was taking control and would have a hand in the operations of the 9-1-1 Center. She further stated that the plan had created strong guidelines for tasks and deadlines, and putting expectation on action was an important step.

Commissioner Banas stated things at the 9-1-1 Center seemed to be melting down and they had not seen progress and had seen a lack of leadership. She further stated the email announcing COAT was an example of poor communications, and in any organization there needed to be relationships and trust built, especially when people’s lives were at stake.
Commissioner Banas stated she was glad there was more structure and accountability, and she was glad upper management was stepping in. She further stated she urged the building of personal relationships at the 9-1-1 Center, because that was the only thing that will keep them going.

Commissioner Banas stated these were not just whining employees, these were people who had been suffering for a long time. She further stated she was glad to hear Ms. Larner say she was willing to keep an open mind, and the Controller was extending his hands as well, but there had to be better communication and coming together to turn a page.

Mr. Dolehanty stated that since the process began last year, he had met with employees on their turf and had accepted invitations to meetings at the union’s lodge. He further stated they had made strides with the employees and now knew them personally and would continue to keep the door open with the Board of Commissioners and the staff.

Mr. Dolehanty stated it was regrettable that anyone took offense to the memo he had sent regarding the JLT, but he did believe it was time to step in.

Commissioner Maiville stated that he understood that in Ms. Larner’s discussions with Mr. Dolehanty, she had gotten over the perception that the change was retaliatory. He asked if she could communicate that to employees as well.

Discussion.

Ms. Larner stated that she would stand tall and say that Mr. Dolehanty told her it was coincidental and one thing had nothing to do with the other. She further stated she hoped the contract would be worked out in mediation.

Discussion.

Mr. Dolehanty stated in his defense, he had not been that involved in the negotiations with the union. He further stated he had not been kept in the dark, but he had not been a participant in negotiations.

Commissioner Celentino stated there was a deadline of March 31, 2018 for one of the tasks on the plan. He suggested that the Controller could report back at the March 29, 2018 Committee meeting on the progress made so far.

Commissioner Hope asked if there had been any thought of reconnecting with Dr. Brockman, who had come up with the plan in the first place.

Mr. Dolehanty stated he had discussed that idea with Mr. Langdon.

Commissioner Hope asked if anything had come of the discussion.
Mr. Dolehanty stated they were trying to figure out what they wanted Dr. Brockman to do, first.

Discussion.

Commissioner Celentino stated Mr. Dolehanty should make sure Chairperson Crenshaw was updated about the plan.

Mr. Dolehanty stated he commended Mr. Krug and Ms. Larner and senior employees at the 9-1-1 Center, as he appreciated their input in the process.

Announcements

None.

Public Comment

Mr. Krug stated another issue, related to the JLT discussion, was when Mr. Dolehanty sent out the email disbanding the JLT, one of the 9-1-1 Center employees was not asked to be on COAT. He further stated that because of an email exchange with Mr. Dolehanty, the employee was now facing a discipline hearing and the union was concerned because Mr. Dolehanty was both the complainant and the staff person that would be there during discovery.

Mr. Krug stated he understood Ms. Larner had spoken to the Controller today, and it was a misunderstanding, but he could only speak to the communication received by the employee. He read the email that was sent to the employee notifying them of the disciplinary hearing.

Mr. Krug stated that 9-1-1 Center employees were discouraged from reaching out to Commissioners, and Commissioners were encouraged to forward any communication from employees to the Controller and not to answer them. He further stated that the Controller insisted that the hearing was not disciplinary, but he thought it sounded disciplinary.

Mr. Dolehanty stated that Mr. Krug was mistaken, and that the meeting was not going to be disciplinary. He further stated the email Commissioners received had stated that if they received emails asking questions from employees, they should feel free to shoot them to him, as he did not expect the Commissioners to have an in-depth knowledge of the situation.

Mr. Dolehanty stated the meeting would be to review proper etiquette when it came to the emails, as there were offensive things in the email he had received. He further stated at JLT, they had discussed being held accountable for their actions, and that was what happened.

Mr. Dolehanty stated that the situation had deteriorated and it would be addressed so it did not continue. He further stated at the meeting, they would review what it meant when an employee was asked to disengage in email communication.

Mr. Dolehanty stated during the meeting, they would ask what exactly the employee was going to accomplish with the email, because he might have missed the point, but there would not be
any record on the employee’s file of discipline. He further stated it was unfortunate language used in the communication to the employee, but it was form language used at the 9-1-1 Center when they called an employee in.

Chairperson Crenshaw asked who the memorandum had come from.

Mr. Krug stated the initial email informing the employee of the hearing came from Barb Davidson, 9-1-1 Center Staff Services Manager, and the charges came from Mr. Langdon. He further stated perhaps they read the emails differently and stated he thought some Commissioners had been contacted.

Mr. Dolehanty stated he never said not to contact Commissioners, but he did often tell Commissioners to refer emails to him if he had any questions.

Chairperson Crenshaw asked that in the future, staff use appropriate language in communications with employees when calling them in to discuss something, because that made it seem like the employee would be disciplined.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:49 p.m.
On Monday morning Law and Courts Chair Crenshaw asked that I appear before you to discuss my January 26 memorandum related to the disbanding of the Joint Labor-Management Team (JLT) and replacing it with the Controller's Organizational Assessment Team (COAT) at the 9-1-1 Dispatch Center. The memorandum was distributed to all 9-1-1 Dispatch Center Personnel and County Commissioners.

Deputy Controller Morton and I regularly attended meetings of the JLT since last April. In our first meeting with JLT I asked that the group re-engage in the most fundamental task of the Brockman Report, the identification of barriers to success. As defined by Brockman, barriers to success are those dynamics within the organization that lead to a destructive work environment (Brockman, pg. 2). Brockman suggests this task begins through identification and prioritization those barriers, coupled with a solid, transparent plan of implementation (Brockman, pg. 7). Although this task was undertaken shortly after JLT was created in 2015, we were surprised to learn the list of barriers had not been referenced in the two years since.

A new list of barriers was created and a few issues were addressed in succeeding months, such as creation of an office cleaning schedule, map displays, revised tow file procedures and a resolution to longstanding phone tree challenges. However, it would soon become clear to
me why JLT struggled to remain on task. Discussion at JLT meetings regularly deteriorated into accusatory personal attacks and airing of grievances on matters of day-to-day minutiae best addressed in real time by department managers. JLT was not designed nor intended to address individual protests about scheduling, complaints about personal animosities between employees, criticisms over individual management style and airing of resentments about the process followed to create the dispatch center years earlier. The JLT itself made note of this shortcoming, observing “there should be a focus on broader issues, with priority given to the most important ones. It is hoped that by focusing on fewer issues, measurable progress can be realized” (April 21, 2017 Email report to Law and Courts Committee Chair). But there we were, month after month, losing precious time better spent on big picture issues.

Appointment of members to JLT was informal at best. No formal vetting of subgroup representation occurred resulting in some important department interests being shut out of the conversation. Brockman warned that, “Lack of input from those who must implement decisions can create confusion and “rework” which frustrates those who must implement or abide by the decisions (Brockman, pg. 6).” JLT membership structure was not created to intentionally silence anyone,
but once again, overall effectiveness was diminished because some voices were not heard.

Lastly, despite everyone’s best intentions, JLT has lacked clear direction. Yes, everyone knew implementation of the Brockman Report was the priority. But what were the tasks? Who was going to follow through? What were the deadlines? These basic questions were largely unanswered. JLT meetings themselves did not conform to a regular schedule which further hampered progress.

I have been reluctant to take an active role in day-to-day Dispatch Center operations. I viewed my role more as a facilitator, someone who provides guidance to help keep the department moving forward toward achievement of its goals. Upon reflection on my experience working with the JLT, employee meetings and countless verbal and written conversations with dispatch center personnel, I have determined it will be necessary for me to be more aggressive in my approach. As you have already seen, I created an action plan citing tasks tied to the Brockman Report, assigned responsibility for completion of those tasks and set deadlines. An advisory group consciously selected from a cross-section of department subgroups would certainly enhance the likelihood of success, but the JLT format does not provide that cross-section. A new group, COAT, was created to fill that role.
I understand this action represents a dramatic departure from past practice, however I strongly believe this change will advance preferred outcomes. This is not to suggest the past work of JLT and/or dispatch center personnel was futile - far from it. Six members of COAT were active participants in JLT which will help assure continuity, and work products of the JLT provide a foundation for future activities. The work of JLT members is sincerely appreciated, and I am proud to have worked with them.

I am happy to report the first task listed in the action plan, establishment of COAT, is complete. Ten of 11 invitations to participate as members have been accepted. Tomorrow we will begin the process of coordinating schedules for our first meeting. Note, too, that none of the tasks included in the action plan requires additional financial resources. Tasks in the action plan are scheduled for completion by June 30, but I anticipate new tasks will be added throughout the year. My confidence in the success of this team is high, and I thank you for the opportunity to share this plan tonight.

BARB BYRUM, CLERK OF THE BOARD