

**FINANCE MEETING
COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM**

Wednesday, December 9, 2015, 1:30 p.m.

Present: Commissioners Barbara Cross, Jim Hertzler and Gary Eichelberger; Larry Thomas, Chief Clerk; Judge Tom Placey, Melissa Calvanelli, Court Administration; Lori Radle, Melissa Horner, Warrant Collections Unit; Darby Christlieb, Adult Probation; Ron Anderson, Jody Smith, Sheriff's Department; Bob Dagrosa, Mike Clapsadl, Controller's Office; Denny Lebo, Clerk of Court; Dana Best, Finance, Rebekah Finkey, Criminal Justice Planning & IP Program; Kirk Stoner, Planning; Alex Smyser, IMTO; Jake Austin, The Sentinel; and Ruth Ann Ciecierski, Recording Secretary.

Cumberland County Collections Update

Chief Clerk Larry Thomas welcomed everyone to the Finance Meeting and explained that as part of PFM's recommendations for cost savings, there was a potential opportunity to increase revenue with the collection of court costs and restitution. In 2014, after a thorough analysis was done on how to fund a unit, a Funds Collection Unit was formed. In March, 2015, there was a change in leadership with Lori Radle coming on board.

Lori Radle, Court Program Coordinator of the Warrant Collections Unit (WCU), stated that a lot of work has been done within the WCU, along with other departments that are involved with the process for collecting fines, costs and restitution, and she will provide updates periodically throughout the year (see attached slide show presentation). Mike Clapsadl stated that the total court costs, fees, fine and restitution collections from January 2015 to November 2015 increased \$137,622 compared to the same eleven month period in 2014.

Initial Assessments

- Assessed what was working and not working.
- There were no standard policies in place or methodology of collections.
- Collection Advisory Group (CAG) formed.

Initial Conclusion:

- Collection Advisory Group Objectives:
 - Assess offenders' ability to pay.
 - Create a standard formula for payment plans.
 - Establish guidelines for handling indigency.
 - Utilize a progressive enforcement tool for handling non-compliance.

The Plan:

- A draft policy and procedures was created and presented to the Board of Judges on 9-18-15.
- Policy was approved on 10-9-15 and began implementation with the coordination of training with Adult Probation, Sheriff's Department, etc.
- Non-profit organization-Marannatha Group, will assist with assessment of defendants' ability to pay.

Implementation Process

- Phase I – Adult Probation (95% completed).
- Phase II – Sheriff's Department (80% completed).
- Phase III – DA's Office & Victim Services (25% completed).
- Phase IV – Judges.

Adult Probation Update

- Darby Christlieb discussed the two groups of offenders (recently sentenced to jail or sentenced to probation).
- Due to policy changes made by the Warrant Collections Unit, collections have increased by \$300,000 from 2014 to 2015.

Sheriff's Department Update

- Sheriff Ron Anderson discussed a graph depicting total collection amounts (see attached).
- \$60,000 was collected from October 2014 to March 2015 after posting on Facebook.
- Issued 327 warrants from March 2015 through November, 2015 to the WCU.
 - 74 were served by constables.
 - 44 were served by other law enforcement agencies.
 - 76 were recalled by Probation.
 - 58 were returned by WCU as no service (other prison, out of state, etc.).
 - 57 open that the WCU still has.
 - Miscellaneous (deceased, etc.).

Judicial Update

- Judge Brewbaker is assigned to handle Fines & Costs warrants and Contempt Court to be implemented in January 2016.
- Contempt Court is scheduled to occur every Tuesday as needed and will include victim notification.
- Chief Clerk Thomas stated that the Contempt Court is a huge piece of what was missing from the system.

Warrant Collection Unit – 2014 (Melissa Horner)

- 2014 Collections (8/14-12/14)
 - \$83,099.38 (266 Payment Plans).
 - \$3,041.93 (Cases paid in full w/no payment plan)
- Total collection amount for unit - \$86,501.31.
- Drop Box to date: \$9,058.25 (\$250 investment paid off).
- Constable Review Board (for all constables).

Constable Review Board

- Will consist of Judge Placey, Sheriff, one Constable, Mike Clapsadl and Jamie Mitchell.

Constable Update

- Total Constable Collections - \$35,817.22

Warrant Collections Unit – 2015 Year to Date (1/15 – 11/15)

- Accumulated 364 payment plans (\$106,814.62).
- Cases paid in full w/no payment plan (\$33,768.78).
- Constable effectuated payments (\$35,817.22).
- Total collection amount for unit (\$176,400.62).

Summary – Chief Clerk Thomas

- Numbers are very positive in terms of the potential monies for fines, costs and restitution.
- The downward slide of funds collected through the years has been improving.
- Monies that have been brought in to cover the cost of the new collections unit, plus extra.

- Reinforce collaboration with Adult Probation, Sheriff's Department, and constables.
- Set targets for collections improvement for 2016.
- Suggest funding the Warrant Collections Unit for at least another year.
- Continue with quarterly reports.

Melissa Calvanelli reported that Judge Guido apologized for not being able to attend the meeting, but he expressed his support and stated that they are engaged and fully support the process going forward.

Clerk of Court Dennis Lebo wanted to clarify that not all the money collected by the Collections Unit was returned to the County (a portion went to the restitution, the State or municipalities). Commissioner Cross stated that without the Collections Unit, we would have received nothing.

Commissioner Hertzler clarified that the Warrant Collections Unit from the beginning of 2015 through November 2015 was directly responsible for the setting up of 364 payment plans (\$106,814) and asked if the unit had not existed, would those monies have been collected? Lori Radle stated no, because those were old cases, some maybe twenty or thirty years old, and that was nothing more than sending out letters to those people who owe money to the County.

Bus Transportation Needs – Allen Road Vicinity Companies (Kirk Stoner)

- Kirk Stoner passed out a Circulator Bus schedule that will be effective on Monday, December 14, 2015.
- Cumberland Area Economic Development corporation (CAEDC) identified a need that warehouses on Allen Road need transportation for their employees to the businesses.
- A group Carlisle Circulator Funding partners Meeting was held with a big turn out from the warehouses and staffing temp agencies who expressed their needs and concerns.
- CAEDC was following up with surveys to see the best times to drop off and pick up at different locations.
- Following surveys, met with CAT to discuss how to best serve the transportation needs.
- He explained that this was a first step for now and put together some routes, but there is more work to be done.
- The route will come from Harrisburg with stops at Ross Distribution, Ames True Temper, Amazon and Logistic Drive.
- A route will be brought back with the Carlisle Circulator Ridership circulating through Carlisle.
- Mike Clapsadl reported that 80% of the employees for the warehouses on Allen Road come from Harrisburg.
- There was discussion that this did not include any connectors for the West Shore or serve the general population of Cumberland County.
- Kirk Stoner stated that drastic changes were not made at once, but this is a first step and there will be more discussion on other routes in the future.

Ruth Ann Ciecierski
Administrative Assistant