

**Minutes of the March 6, 2025 meeting of the Sawyer County
Public Safety Committee
of the Sawyer County Board of Supervisors
Board Room; Sawyer County**



Voting Committee Members Present:

- ☒ Chair: Ron Buckholtz
- ☒ Vice Chair: Marc Helwig
- ☒ Jeff Hoehne
- ☒ Marshal Savitski- virtual
- ☒ Jim Evans

Others Present:

Andy Albarado
Liz Klein
Joe Sajdera
Nicole Ripczinski
Sari Torstenson
Kristi Kare

John Froemel
Greg Ripczinski
Doug Mrotek
Chaz Ann Olson
Marge Kelsey
Leslie Strapon

Call to Order – Chair Ron Buckholtz called the meeting to order at 9:00 am. Roll Call taken. Quorum was met.

Certification of Compliance with the open meeting law was met.

Meeting Agenda- Amended to move Emergency Services Reports up

Public Comment – Linda Zillmer

Minutes from the previous meeting dated:

Motion to approve made by: Mr. Hoehne
Motion carried without negative vote.

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Second by:

Mr. Helwig

Emergency Services --

Ambulance Report and Ambulance Billing – Mr. Froemel presented the ambulance runs and ambulance calls per town reports: calls are down, City and Town of Hayward continue to have the most calls. Stop the Bleed Training will be offered at LCO, the new ambulance is almost ready, and upcoming large expenses include the purchase of laryngoscopes and service on the stretchers. A written ambulance billing and Medical Examiner Report were provided.

Mr. Baribeau representing Town of Edgewater and Mr. Langham representing Sand Lake came to speak to the committee about ambulance service. The subject was tabled until Attorney Kelsey arrived.

Circuit Court – Ms. Torstenson introduced Kristi Kare, who is returning to work at the courthouse as the new judicial assistant to Judge Yackel after Anna Amparo took a job at LCO.

Clerk of Court's Office Reports -

A written report was provided. Mr. Albarado discussed the disproportionate revenues and expenses the state and the county pay for Circuit Court and presented a WCA position paper on the topic. A Resolution to request increased funding from the state for Circuit Court Funding was approved on a motion to send to the Board of Supervisors by: Mr. Helwig Second by: Mr. Hoehne Motion carried without negative vote.

Emergency Services (continued)

Discussion on Sawyer County Ambulance coverage of Edgewater and Sand Lake resumed with Attorney Kelsey speaking on behalf of the towns, asking for first steps to look at future solutions. The towns would like to contract

with Birchwood Four Corners and reduce the tax levy they pay for Sawyer County Ambulance Service. The committee reviewed potential issues with the proposal.

Mr. Baribeau discussed conflicts between crews responding to incident scenes. The committee discussed it and concluded that they can be avoided with better communication and understanding of protocol. Mr. Froemel questioned the liability of relying on a volunteer/paid on call service vs. a full time staffed service with a guaranteed response. Mr. Buckholtz asked for a schedule of Ambulance wage rates; Mr. Albarado provided one.

Sheriff's Department Report –

Patrol Report – A written report was reviewed by Lt. Ripczinski.

Jail Report – A written report was reviewed by Chief Sajdera.

Code Enforcement Specialist – A written and verbal report were provided by Ms. Olson. Calls for dogs at large continue to be high. Ms. Olson is working on policies for the enforcement of the TRH Ordinance.

Emergency Management -- Director Ripczinski gave a report on the Birkie, a well-attended disaster training with town officials, and stated that dispatch call volume was down in February.

Public Safety Radio Network Update-- GenComm is working on the system design and exploring building and leasing options; the county is waiting for the Tribal Governing Board to make a decision on a potential lease of space on the WOJB tower. Plan B options include towers in Pipestone or New Post, and possibly Loretta in the future. The plan should be ready for the April Public Safety meeting.

Child Support Department Report – A written report was provided.

Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Update – The LCO-SC CJCC MOU has expired and needs to be renewed. The Tribal Governing Board is reviewing it. The committee supports renewing the existing MOU as is.

Board Appointed Committee Updates-- None

Correspondence, Reports from Conferences and Meetings-- None

Future Agenda Items-- None

Meeting Date/Time – The next meeting of the Public Safety Committee will be Thursday, April 3, at 9:00 am in the Board Room.

Meeting adjourned at 10:15 am

Minutes recorded by Liz Klein, County Clerk