

April 11, 2022 Special City Council Meeting

MINOT CITY COUNCIL – SPECIAL MEETING MEETING – April 11, 2022 AT 8:00 A.M.

Members Present:

Evans, Olson, Pitner, Podrygula, Ross, Sipma

Members Absent:

Jantzer

MUNICIPAL COURT BUDGET TOUR

At 8:01 am Chief John Klug spoke on Municipal Court and how they hold court for Class B Misdemeanors and infractions. He introduced Laurie Nishek, the Clerk of Court, to speak on the whole court process and the current challenges. Laurie gave everyone a tour of the area they use for court and the changes that have been made due to COVID. Laurie spoke on the challenges the court has such as safety and security of citizens and municipal court staff. She mentioned also that the transporting of prisoners is a liability for the Minot Police Department officers. The office space for the municipal court staff is small measuring about 250 square feet, the space also has issues with the heating and cooling system, and when events are going on in the Auditorium it makes it noisy for the court. The location at the Minot Auditorium is also difficult to find.

There has been some low-level discussion on moving the Municipal Court and staff to the Ward County building. Some of the benefits of relocating would include: enhanced security all day, eliminate time constraints for attorneys, larger office space, noise reduction, closer to new City Hall, transporting prisoners would be easier, and it would remove the appearance of bias between the PD and Municipal Court.

Alderwoman Olson inquired about the challenges of relocating. Chief Klug mentioned that in the 2022 budget there was not a budget for possible rent. He also mentioned that the discussion has been low-level so there is no commitment from the County as of yet and it would need to go to vote with the County Commission. Alderwoman Evans then mentioned that parking might be a concern that the County might have due to already congested parking for the Ward County Building.

Mayor Sipma was wondering what the City Council could do to help or even possibly the Liaison Committee. Chief Klug mentioned that starting off it would be good for Laurie and Judge Beall to start conversations with Ward County. Chief Klug could step in if and when needed but they might be looking to council for help once the discussion is started.

Chief Klug mentioned that he is working with Harold to separate Municipal Court and the Police Department by removing them for Chief Klug's budget process. The relocation would make sense for the customer and that right now the PD is currently down 8 Police Officers and there is no dedicated staff to the court due to it only being part-time.

The meeting adjourned at 8:31 am.

ATTEST: Mikayla McWilliams
Mikayla McWilliams, City Clerk

APPROVED: Shaun Sipma
Shaun Sipma, Mayor