

INTERIM JOINT COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS AND REVENUE

Budget Review Subcommittee on Justice and Judiciary

Minutes of the 2nd Meeting of the 2020 Interim

August 19, 2020

Call to Order and Roll Call

The 2nd meeting of the Budget Review Subcommittee on Justice and Judiciary of the Interim Joint Committee on Appropriations and Revenue was held on Wednesday, August 19, 2020, at 8:30 AM, in Room 171 of the Capitol Annex. Senator Stephen West, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Senator Stephen West, Co-Chair; Representative Jason Nemes, Co-Chair; Senators Denise Harper Angel, Christian McDaniel, John Schickel, and Whitney Westerfield; Representatives Daniel Elliott, Angie Hatton, Nima Kulkarni, and Jason Petrie.

Guests: Danny Rhoades, Executive Officer, Department of Court Facilities, Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC); Carole Henderson, Budget Director, AOC; and LaDonna Koebel, Executive Director, Office of Senior Protection and Mediation, Office of the Attorney General.

LRC Staff: Zachary Ireland, Savannah Wiley, and Amie Elam.

Update of Judicial Facility Construction and Renovation Projects

Mr. Rhoades and Ms. Henderson provided an overview of ongoing and upcoming Judicial Branch construction projects.

In response to questions from Chair West, Ms. Henderson noted that the Judicial Branch would be requesting additional monies in the 2022-2024 fiscal biennium. Mr. Rhoades noted that a project doesn't normally take six years to complete. Mr. Rhoades noted that the Nicholas County courthouse and the Henry County courthouse both experienced various delays. Mr. Rhoades noted that a normal completion timeframe is four to five years. Mr. Rhoades stated that the AOC estimates that the Bath County courthouse would begin construction in either spring or summer of 2021 and that it will take 18 months to complete. Mr. Rhoades confirmed that the county governments hire county employees for maintenance and then the AOC reimburses them for the percentage of a building that the AOC occupies.

In response to questions from Senator McDaniel, Mr. Rhoades noted that AOC is seeing an increase in construction and equipment replacement costs.

In response to questions from Co-Chair Nemes, Ms. Henderson stated that funding is deferred for projects that were authorized in the 2020 Regular Session. Ms. Henderson noted that several courthouses would be paid for by FY 2024.

In response to a question from Chair West, Ms. Henderson stated that the AOC will not ask for additional construction funding in FY2021.

Grant Concerning Elder Abuse

Ms. Koebel provided information concerning elder abuse fraud and a Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding grant that the Office of the Attorney General is seeking to assist victims of and to help combat elder abuse fraud.

In response to a question from Chair West, Ms. Koebel stated that the grant amount would be \$146,000, specifically used to fight coronavirus related scams targeting the elderly.

In response to a question from Senator Schickel, Ms. Koebel stated that the Office of Senior protection does not handle physical elder abuse claims, rather fraud and scams.

There being no further business before the subcommittee, the meeting was adjourned at 9:21AM.