

VILLAGES OF WALWORTH AND FONTANA
AD HOC JOINT SERVICES COMMITTEE

March 24, 2008

4:00 P.M.

The clerk called the meeting to order, noted that Chair Matt Long was absent and asked for nominations for an acting chair. Simonson/McConnell motion to nominate Nordmeyer carried by ayes without negative vote.

Present: Committee members Nordmeyer, O'Connell, Petersen, Simonson, Spadoni, Fontana Administrator Kelly Hayden, Walworth Police Lieutenant Andy Long, other Fontana and Walworth employees, Town of Walworth Chair Joe Abell.

Petersen/O'Connell motion to approve January 15, 2008, minutes carried by ayes without negative vote.

Continued Discussion on Joint Services:

Nordmeyer noted that the clerk had sent copies of the Genoa City/Bloomfield information related to their Fire/Rescue joint services to all committee members. Hayden had also provided some requested information and had checked into the procedure for dissolution of courts. Our two municipal judges are elected in opposite years for two-year terms. Papers are taken out in December for the April election; therefore, the dissolution will need to take place before the next election which will be Walworth's in April 2009.

By combining the two municipal courts, the objective will be an improvement in services and efficiency and a cost savings. Lt. Long noted Walworth has been very satisfied with establishing a municipal court in early 2006. Prior to that, Walworth court was held at the county. Now Walworth keeps more of its dollars. Costs savings have also been realized because the Chief and Lieutenant handle pre-trial plea agreements, with the permission of Walworth's attorney's. According to Hayden, Fontana spends about \$24,000 per year on this service. Walworth's attorney only appears for a not guilty trial. There have been no complaints from defendants. If an agreement is not reached, the defendant is informed he/she can plead "not guilty".

Walworth court meets two times a month on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays. Either the Chief or Lieutenant is always at present at court. The first court is for initial appearances and juveniles. The second one is for initial appearances and trials. Language interpretation is done by an over-the-phone provider and is not billed to the defendant. Nordmeyer asked if the two courts could combine and maintain a two times a month schedule. Long believes this would be possible. Walworth processes all traffic tickets in 30-45 minutes.

McConnell asked if there were many continuances. Only if a plea bargain is in the works per Long. Long noted there were approximately 1,600 cases, with 11 not-guilty pleas that went to trial. Petersen asked if the defendant loses rights. Long noted that, if he has

issued the ticket, Severt does the plea agreement and vice versa. They have strict guidelines and standards to follow that have been approved by the Board. Long said the county also handles plea agreements this way.

Having our own municipal court has also resulted in a time savings. Otherwise they were at county court 3-4 times a week. Fines were established by comparing to those in Sharon, Darien, Fontana and Linn. The state sets traffic fines.

Nordmeyer would like statistics from both courts—total number of cases, trials, revenue, expenses, range of fines and court schedule. Hayden noted that Fontana did an extensive breakdown about 1 ½ years ago. She will send a spreadsheet to Walworth.

The next meeting will be held on May 5th at 4:00 p.m. in Fontana Village Hall.

O'Connell/Simonson motion to adjourn at 4:40 p.m. carried by ayes.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Schut, Clerk