



Department Updates

April 2017

Clerk of Courts

Sharon Millermon
Clerk of Courts

The last department update Judge Babler informed you that litigants in juvenile cases could agree to receive text message reminders of their next court hearing. April 1, 2017 we are excited to add this feature to all case types. The real focus will be on criminal cases. Judges will ask defendants in court if they would like to receive a text message reminder of their next court hearing. If the defendant agrees, the clerk in court will make the necessary changes to the party screen. We are hopeful a little extra work on the “front” end will result in providing a positive customer service to those we serve and a better use of time for many offices within the court system especially if a warrant is issued for a defendant’s non-appearance.

Just to give you an idea, the Clerk of Court Office

prepare the warrant, a Judge signs it, District Attorney’s Office delivers the warrant to the Sheriff Department for service, Sheriff Department arrests defendant, defendant appears before a Judge with his/her defense attorney and a prosecuting attorney from the District Attorney’s Office must appear. Court Reporters and Clerk of Court staff are also present in Court for all hearings. A warrant involves the time of many people that work within the court system, but the defendant’s employer and family is also negatively impacted. We are optimistic that text reminders of court hearings will benefit many.

Mandatory e-Filing became effective on March 1, 2017 for criminal cases along with ordinance violations in Barron County. It is important to distinguish Barron County as all counties within the State are not prepared at this point to accept e-

Filings and become paperless. The Clerk of Court Office and District Attorney Office have spent many hours working together and preparing for this transition. Both offices have had major changes in procedures. This is another positive example of the court system becoming more efficient.

Total number of cases filed in 2016 was 6,262 compared to 6,960 in 2015 and 6,661 in 2014. Clerk of Court staff have not realized a huge time savings with electronic files yet as we are basically relearning procedures. The e-Filing software continues to improve and we are hopeful we will see time saving advantages in the very near future.

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County Clerk

DeeAnn Cook County Clerk

Turnout for the April Spring Election was fairly typical but a little less than predicted for the Spring General Election. In Barron County, 19.7% of registered voters and 15.1% of eligible voters cast their vote. There were school referenda questions for Barron, Cameron, Rice Lake and Turtle Lake. Barron and Cameron failed and Rice Lake and Turtle Lake passed. At the state level, incumbent Tony Evers defeated challenger Lowell Holtz for the Superintendent of Public Instruction race. Justice of the Supreme Court Annette Ziegler was unopposed. There were several contested municipal level races; some of which will result in new people serving in various

municipal capacities. Two open city seats on the Rice Lake School Board prompted four registered write in candidates so extra time and effort was required to count votes once the polls closed. All results were reported and posted before 10 PM, which is a testament to the efficiency of our municipal clerks and poll workers.

Huge thanks go out to Vonnie Ritchie, Jeff & Pam French and Julie Henningsen who volunteer their time helping take in results on Election night. Special thanks to my deputy, Jessica Hodek, for her tireless efforts before, during and after the election. Also, thanks to Jeff Sirek in our IT Department for all his work in developing the system for displaying results on our website so media and the

general public can watch as our results come in. He refreshes results remotely as we enter them and they are visible on our website almost in real time. A recent change in legislation requires counties to post election results from all levels of government on their website. A large share of counties had previously only been posting state and county level results. Thanks to the tremendous cooperative team effort we have here, we have been posting federal, state, county, municipal and school results for quite some time already.

Employee Recognition Lunch!

April 19, 2017 11:30 am-1:00 pm

Short program at each location:

11:15a-Hwy, 11:45a-JC, 12:15p-GC.

All employees and County Board are invited to attend!

Lunch provided (brats, cheesy potatoes, veggies/dip, pickles & cookies)! Bring your own beverage.