



To: Judge Krista LaFave
cc: Financial Affairs
Committee

Regarding staffing of the court functions, I think we can all agree that the common goal is to provide the best customer service to our customers and residents and to provide the Court with the resources they need to continue efficient operations. The City's proposed solution is to move the court's day-to-day functions into the City Clerk's office. We believe this solution provides for the most efficiency and gains in customer service:

- Over the past several years, the City has realized much success in combining administrative functions for efficiency in operations as well as customer service. With every position that turns over in the City, we conduct an analysis on that position to determine 1) how have the duties of the position and the department changed over time, 2) what technical gains have we made and how does that impact the work, 3) what efficiencies are to be gained from adjusting the position. We have done this successfully in the City Clerk's Office, DPW, Engineering, Finance, Administration, Police and Development. We have also implemented an administrative floating pool which allows cross-coverage amongst many departments.
- Office Assistants in all of our departments require critical attention to detail and a high-level of accuracy. You will find that the City Clerk's Office does a lot of unique and detail-oriented work that requires accuracy and confidentiality, such as voter registrations and permitting.
- Moving the court clerk daily operations to the Clerk's Office location allows for the three Office Assistants in the Clerk's Office to be trained in court functions. Although it may seem initially overwhelming to train 3 individuals, the long-term benefit of having multiple individuals trained in court functions will best serve our customers and the court's operations. We will assist in creating a training plan that will include in-person rotations as well as documenting court procedures, which is best practice for operational continuity and is something that the City has implemented in many departments. The notion that .25 of a person





(assuming 3 people are trained) is primarily for budget purposes. In actuality, as customer interactions occur, the individuals in the office will learn and train organically by shadowing the Office Assistant for Municipal Court.

- The Court Clerks in partnership with other departments have made significant technology improvements in the Court function over the past 10 years that have stream-lined their jobs including online payments beginning in 2017 and integration with State databases.
- The Office Assistants in the City Clerk have the requirement for some night work in their job description so we are confident that we can work out a rotation that works.
- We will maintain the Court Clerk Office for record storage, a work station and a meeting space for the Judge. With the other Office Assistants trained in daily operations, the Office Assistant for Municipal Court can easily return to that office as needed for paperwork, analysis and filing. A reorganization of supplies in the Clerk's office is underway to allow Court access to locate locked files adjacent to a work station that are needed more often.
- This solution will allow the Office Assistant for Municipal Court more flexibility to participate in employee events, wellness offerings and take full-weeks of vacation at a time. It will also provide more of a team environment and opportunity for more daily interaction with peers.
- Perhaps the biggest opportunity is to improve customer service continuity. Often times, customers that come to the window to pay tickets are economically disadvantaged. They have taken off work and rode the bus to City Hall to pay the ticket. There have been many times when the court office has been closed and City Hall employees have had to turn customers away. Our solution provides an office that is always open during city hall hours.
- While we endeavor to fill the vacancies in the police department, given the anticipated retirement eligible staff over the next few years, it is highly improbable that we will fully close the gap of

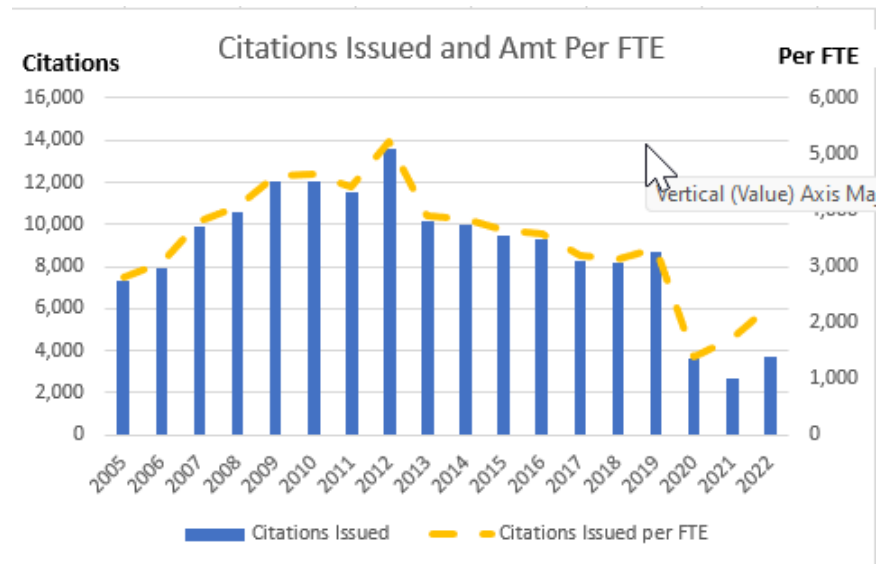




unstaffed positions. In addition, our Police Chief has discussed his policing model of issuing warnings in part and tickets to a lesser degree.

- Adding staff to the Police Department is entirely related to the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center (MRMC) contracts. On the MRMC campus, there are no public roads. This sector will yield substantially fewer traffic citations than other sectors in the city.

We completed a workload analysis based on the number of citations issued per FTE in Municipal Court and that data is below. It shows that workload per FTE has decreased since 2005 even with reductions in staffing.



Citations per FTE	
Min	1,392
Avg	3,407
Max	5,238

We have handled an average of 3,407 citations per court clerk and a maximum of 5,238. We believe we should plan for 5,000-7,000 citations which could be handled by 1.6 FTE or less, especially when considering the technology improvements that have been made.





Regarding how the events unfolded at Financial Affairs, it wasn't our intention to mislead you about the funding of the .6. We apologize that it wasn't clear, it was certainly not intentional. The Municipal Court narrative is copied below and shows how we communicated the change. We also discussed this plan with you at a meeting on October 6, as well as in phone calls with various staff members.

their ability to pay with the Judge. At this time, there are 250 open warrants. No commitments for jail time have been issued since 2019.

- In 2022, the court processed drivers license suspensions on 616 citations and 325 in the first half of 2023.

2024 SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

- The Court requests an increase from the part-time clerk position (.6 FTE) to full-time. The Court predicts an increase in citations in 2024 to levels that have not been seen since before the pandemic, when the Court was staffed with 2.6 FTEs. In order to ensure collection of fines, enforce the Judge's orders, and contemplate the additional changes that the Judge wishes to implement (see further bullets below), a full-time second clerk is needed. A second full-time clerk will permit the Court to staff the Court office for the same hours as City Hall without needing overtime. The second full-time clerk will be able to cover court nights and will ensure continuity into the future.

At a minimum, the Court needs 1.6 dedicated employees. The .6 position cannot be staffed by different employees from other Departments. In addition to the impossibility of training multiple individuals as "clerks" and the reality that it takes 1-1.5 years for a clerk to operate independently, the Court deals with sensitive information and cannot have multiple different individuals working in the court office. The additional payroll cost is \$38,074.48 to change from a .6 to a 1.0 FTE. More information on this request is provided in the

Finance Department Note:
Recognizing the Municipal Court as a co-equal branch of the City government, the narrative as submitted by the Court has not been changed. However, this request was not included in the Executive Budget due to financial constraints. Instead, existing personnel in other City Hall departments are proposed to replace the 0.6 FTE part-time position. City Administration will develop a more detailed plan with current Court staff and the Municipal Judge prior to the start of the fiscal year.

The fact is we had a \$1,000,000 budget gap and not funding the 0.6 was part of the way that we closed that gap. However, we did not reduce staffing in other departments. Instead, we reduced our floating capacity as we are assigning some time that would be spent filling in for vacant positions to support the work of the court.

We also recommend refraining from increasing the Court Revenue. We are starting to see the delayed impact of reduced citations. The monthly





collection amounts for 2021-2023 are indicated below. Based on prior years, it looks like we will end the year around \$275,000 compared to a budget of \$390,000. Back in July, we thought we would be closer to \$370,000. Particularly telling is period 3 and 4 (March and April) when tax intercept revenue comes in and that was down significantly in 2023. We think you are right, that as citation numbers go up, revenue will go up but it will likely take several years.

Row Labels	2021	2022	2023
P0			0
P1	-21,736	-18,750	-19,413
P2	-21,892	-23,221	-22,534
P3	-51,056	-57,611	-42,130
P4	-57,047	-35,908	-25,707
P5	-30,574	-35,603	-23,158
P6	-31,417	-30,304	-23,738
P7	-37,754	-25,478	-23,735
P8	-22,515	-18,616	-20,422
P9	-28,030	-20,956	940
P10	-23,538	-18,881	0
P11	-20,946	-16,770	0
P12	-13,918	-14,876	0
P13			0
Grand Total	-360,424	-316,974	-199,897

We realize this is a significant change for the Court but we request the opportunity to try this model. If it does not work to your satisfaction, it will not be difficult to change direction. On the contrary, if we hire an additional person and find that there is insufficient work, it will be more difficult to make adjustments. We look forward to our continued partnership with you as we work to best serve the City of Wauwatosa.

