



2021 BUDGET PRESENTATION

CORPORATION COUNSEL

What has been your department's greatest challenge in meeting your mission during the pandemic?

Each Unit of the Office of Corporation Counsel has been faced with its own unique set of challenges....



THE CIVIL LITIGATION UNIT

- The demands on the unit have increased dramatically as a result of the need to support Public Health Madison Dane County's mission to control the spread of COVID-19.
- As a result, other important priorities had to be shifted among staff in order to continue with our mission to provide legal advice and support to the County's various departments.

THE PERMANENCY PLANNING UNIT

- Child protection, involuntary commitment, and guardianship cases continue to grow exponentially from last year's numbers.
 - Mental Health Commitments – Up 14%
 - Child Protection Cases – Up 33%
 - Guardianships – Up 18%
- Successfully advancing these cases has been challenging since much of the trial preparation and jury trial themselves must be conducted remotely because of the pandemic.

CHILD SUPPORT AGENCY

- The economic impact of COVID-19 has ravaged many families (intact or not).
- As a result, many non-custodial parents have struggled to meet their child support obligations, and the Child Support Agency has had to try to address these individuals' needs without jeopardizing the stability of the family and children that need it.

What has been your greatest accomplishment?

- In every unit, these challenges fell on the shoulders of our employees. From the attorneys in our office to the investigators, paralegals and other support staff.
- Despite the impact that COVID-19 has caused in their own lives, each and every one of them rose to the occasion and has been providing the same level of excellent service to the public as before.

What unmet needs do you have?

- Time! In every division, we are constantly facing deadlines: statutory, regulatory and contractual.
- The difficulty of providing the level of service that we expect from ourselves, in the face of technological difficulties, and remote work, can impact our ability to respond as quickly as we would like.
- We are currently meeting these needs through the hard work of our staff.

In light of the budget guidelines, how has your department made required cuts while bearing in mind the county's commitment to racial equity?

- By working collaboratively with the Dane County Regional Airport, the Office of Corporation Counsel was able to reduce its reliance on GPR for the 2021 Budget Year. This action has allowed us to retain all of our staff, including our clerk I's and LTEs.
- Open positions have been rare, and only as a result of retirements.
- When such openings have occurred, the Child Support Agency continues to increase the number of bilingual investigators to ensure that we are meeting the needs of the community.

BUDGET SUMMARY

- A couple of DI's are administrative only (no expense or revenue changes). These are the result of an employee transferring between 2 of our divisions because of business needs.
- A few DI's reflect an increase in outside revenue, such as federal reimbursement dollars and others, as a result of an equal increase in expenses due to personnel salaries and benefits.
- In order to meet the required reduction of GPR revenue, our department has worked with the Dane County Airport to have a portion of an attorney's salary and benefits to be covered by airport revenue. This collaborative partnership will ensure that the Airport has someone dedicated to assisting with various legal matters associated with PFAS.

GENERAL OPERATIONS

Decision Item #1 – Increase Groundwater Initiative Revenue

- Attorney position #1601 is partially funded by the Groundwater Initiative Revenue line (landfill). It is anticipated that the costs for that attorney will rise in 2021.
- Revenue Increase: \$4,572.

GENERAL OPERATIONS

Decision Item #2 – Airport Revenue from attorney time spent on PFAS related matters

- Since the detection of PFAS on airport property last October, Corporation Counsel has provided specialized legal services to the DC Regional Airport as it navigates the regulatory hurdles that govern the airport's mitigation and remediation efforts. Based upon the time devoted to PFAS matters in 2019 & 2020, Corp. Counsel estimates that approximately 43% of an Asst. Corp. Counsel's time will be necessary in 2021.
- Revenue Increase: \$84,523.

GENERAL OPERATIONS

Decision Item #3 – Transfer Pos. #3158 from PERM to GNOP

- Transfer of position #3158 (Assistant Corporation Counsel) from 1890/Permanency Planning to 1815/General Operations.
- Budget Neutral.

PERMANENCY PLANNING

Decision Item #1 – Increase the projected IV-E Reimbursement Revenue

- The estimated IV-E reimbursement revenue will increase.
- Revenue Increase: \$28,000.

PERMANENCY PLANNING

Decision Item #2 – Transfer Pos. #3158 from PERM to GNOP

- Transfer of position #3158 (Assistant Corporation Counsel) from 1890/Permanency Planning to 1815/General Operations.
- Budget Neutral.

CHILD SUPPORT

Decision Item #1 – Increase IV-D Revenue

- Increase the intergovernmental revenue as contained in the 2020-2021 biennial budget.
- Revenue Increase: \$62,000.