



AGENDA

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORKSESSION

TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 2024

5:30 PM

CITY HALL LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM #119

1. Closed Session:
 - a. Motion to enter closed session to discuss a written legal opinion which is exempt from discussion or disclosure by state statute as permitted by Section 8 (1)(h) of the Michigan Open Meetings Act. (roll call vote)
 - b. Reconvene from closed session.

2. 62-B District Court:
 - a. [Domestic Violence Problem-Solving Court](#) discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENT.

The City of Kentwood does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs or activities. The Human Resources Director, 4900 Breton Ave., SE has been designated to coordinate compliance with the non-discrimination requirements contained in Section 35.107 of the Department of Justice regulations. Information concerning the provisions of the American with Disabilities Act, and the rights provided thereunder, are available from the ADA coordinator.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Committee of the Whole
FROM: Amanda H. Sterkenburg, District Court Judge
Michele White, Court Administrator/Magistrate
Carla Kane, Purchasing Agent
DATE: March 5, 2024
RE: Domestic Violence Problem Solving Court

ACTION REQUESTED: Information only. A request will be made to the City Commission at the March 19th Commission meeting to consider approving the 62B District Court to partner with the Domestic Violence Action Network (DVAN) to implement a Domestic Violence Problem-Solving Court (PSC) with funds of \$142,500 for the first year, \$186,225 for the second year, and an estimated \$189,547 for the third year, from a \$4,000,000 Kent County-awarded reimbursement grant, The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). Initially, funding will come from the 62B District Court’s operating budget and program participant fees to be charged by the PSC.

BACKGROUND: The 62B District Court has partnered with DVAN to create a PSC to enhance supportive services for domestic violence victims and increase accountability for domestic violence perpetrators. Two court locations, 62B District Court and 61st District Court (Grand Rapids) will receive ARPA grant reimbursement through 2026 to provide one FTE, fringe benefits, services, and supplies for the PSC.

DVAN uses a collective impact framework to network between various agencies throughout Kent County for the early identification of high-lethality intimate partner violence situations. In conjunction with the DVAN backbone organization, the PSC will address high-risk offenders and their partners and provide resources consistent with best practices. As a group, the two court locations and other partners will track and react to data, educate stakeholders, support a community-based advocacy plan, and develop and refine successful programming to reduce domestic violence.

To ensure the most promising outcomes, a court staffing team at each court location comprised of a Judge, Victim Advocate, Case Manager, Law Enforcement, Prosecution and Defense attorney, and treatment providers will screen prospective participants after a legal eligibility assessment has been completed by the Kent County Prosecutor. Identification and solicitation of continued grant funding has already begun with DVAN preparing to secure additional grant funding beginning in 2025.

The first year of the PSC will be considered a “soft start” and the program will accommodate approximately ten participants in each of the two courts. Successful participation will be conditioned upon completion of “phases” that address stability, accountability, behavior change, and future planning. Program participants will be charged a fee to participate and will be responsible for their court costs. Each will receive therapeutic services valued at a minimum of \$3,000. The current model projects participation fees of between \$1000-\$1200 per participant.

If you have any questions, please contact Judge Amanda Sterkenburg at (616) 554-0717 or by emailing her at sterkenburga@kentwood.us.

Total Grant Expenses for the 62B District Court			
Direct Costs	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Salaries, Fringe, Supplies, Education, Contractual, etc.	\$142,500	\$186,225	Estimated \$189,547