

AGENDA MATERIAL

DATE 5-10-22 ITEM NO. BH6

Green Valley Justice Court

Budget Proposal FY 22/23

Chair Bronson, Honorable Board Members, thank you for your time this morning.

I am Judge Ray Carroll and I preside over the Green Valley Justice Court. Although most of the Justice Precincts consolidate in Tucson, two rural courts serve distant communities in the farther reaches of our county. Justice Precinct 7 serves Green Valley, Sahuarita, Arivaca, Amado, Sasabe and other rural areas. In 2023, due to the reprecincting that this body approved months ago, my precinct will grow by approximately 40,000 more constituents from Vail and rural areas to the county line to the east.

Although we are a small court, we are mighty in the ways of expanding access to justice for our constituency and we are committed to encouraging a higher level of engagement with the court process, increasing cooperation with community partners and piloting specialty programs with the EELS team and with other County departments. The needs of our exurban and rural community differs from those of the denser city center, and we have ensured we can meet those needs with justice, compassion and flexibility.

- We are an extremely efficient court; our expenditure to revenue ration is favorable for a small court
- We are conservative in our expenditures and work hard to increase revenues through ensuring Justice Precinct 7 cases are filed in our precinct, per statute.
- We had a modest adopted budget of \$647,022 in FY 21/22.
- We are requesting a similar base budget for FY 22/23, with three necessary supplementals:
 - Supplemental 1, \$62,350.00, ONE TIME ONLY deferred maintenance
 - Facilities states two AC units must be completely replaced
 - Minor repairs, upgrades, preventative maintenance
 - Supplemental 2, \$190,000.00, ONE TIME ONLY security upgrades
 - Security alarm, camera upgrades, other upgrades determined by AO 2017-15 and a safety assessment by Richard Tracy, Pima County Director of Court Security
 - Secured parking for staff and judge
 - Supplemental 3, \$55,000.00, PER YEAR personnel
 - As we will be expanding to take on approximately 40,000 new constituents, it is imperative we are well-staffed and we slow down the rate of turnover
 - A clerk position was converted into a security position a few months ago, leaving the office short-handed
 - In addition, in a wage comparison study, Green Valley Justice Court employs the lowest paid staff in the court system.
 - Starting "Phone Team" clerk at Consolidated Court starts at \$16.80/hour, while Green Valley Justice Court clerks start at \$15.75/hour
 - Consolidated Court security starts at ~\$18.50/hour, while Green Valley Justice Court security starts at \$15.75/hour
 - Turnover is high as Green Valley Justice Court cannot match wages offered at Sahuarita Municipal Court and the courts in Tucson
 - We propose to raise wages for existing staff to match Consolidated, and hire a part-time clerk to cover the busiest days

Budget Proposal Totals are incorrect,
Here is our itemization:

- \$650,000 base budget for FY22/23
- \$62,350 Suppl. #1
- \$190,000 Suppl. #2
- \$55,000 Suppl. #3

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Green Valley Justice Court

Supplemental Funding Request - Maintenance

FY 22/23

The Pima County Justice Court, Precinct 7, is requesting additional funds for deteriorated infrastructure and deferred maintenance of the courthouse at the Pima County Government Center. Some of these projects include front parking lot resurfacing, seal coat wood, painting of metal trim and failing stucco. Repairs to courtyard gates to allow for full operation including closing and locking every evening and weekend. Overgrown fire hazard desert areas along La Cañada between Desert Bell entrance and La Cañada Dr. parking lot entrance at south end of government center need to be cleared. Abandoned storage cabinet needs to be removed from area of former vending machines next to public restrooms. A community restitution tool crib is needed for defendants, willing and eligible to work off fines by doing community service at the Government Center in Green Valley. While community restitution is appropriate in many instances it also invites security concerns pertaining to the underlying defendants needs and management of the programs norms and limitations. Public restrooms also need privacy locks to ensure safety of users. The court expects larger in person traffic at the courthouse, due to the growth of the jurisdiction, projected to be a 40,000 person increase by the end of next Justice of the Peace term.

The reason for the critical point of deferred maintenance scheduling in the Green Valley Courthouse is the cost associated with capital renewal needs in the near future. One dollar in maintenance this year, avoids up to four dollars to cure in the post pandemic economy. Since March of 2020 we worked hard to keep up with preventative maintenance due to forecasted shortfalls related to the global pandemic, but now conditions are serious and threaten the life cycle of the government center. Green Valley Justice Court is requesting \$62,350.00 to complete these projects.

Green Valley Justice Court

Supplemental Funding Request - Security

FY 22/23

The number of threats and violent incidents targeting the judiciary has increased dramatically in recent years. Since Covid-19 began in March of 2020 courts have seen a rise in violence at the courthouse and hostile litigants. The Justice of the Peace and his wife recently had to obtain a Protective Order against a defendant that is continually harassing and stalking them. Authorities were called at least 6 times in the last two years due to various defendant's erratic and violent behavior, harassment, and other courthouse incidents.

On July 1, 2017, the Arizona Supreme Court adopted the Court Security Standards (A0 2017-15) recommended by the Security Standards Committee. A Security Assessment of the courthouse was conducted by Richard Tracy, Pima County Director of Court Security on May 4, 2021 and although the court has not yet received a report, there were some initial recommendations. An assessment was also conducted on June 5, 2017 that listed security requirements. The main concern that Mr. Tracy expressed was the extreme need for a secured private parking for the Judge and staff.

Green Valley Justice Court is still in the process of implementing some of the requirements due to lack of funding. The court would like to request supplemental funds for FY22/23 in the amount of \$190,000.00 for court security expenses. Security enhancements include fisheye lenses for all solid doors, privacy locks for public restrooms, secure parking for Judge and staff, and a secure separate entrance to the courthouse for Judge and staff. If this supplemental package is not approved, the safety of the Judge and staff will be at risk. The court is expecting an increased growth of traffic at the courthouse due to the Pima County Board of Supervisors consolidation of Precinct 5 and 7. The court is estimating an addition of thirty to forty thousand people in its jurisdictional boundaries by the end of 2026.

Green Valley Justice Court

Supplemental Funding Request - Personnel

FY 22/23

In 2020, the Pima County Justice Court, Precinct 7, was in need of security and gratefully contracted with the Arizona Rangers (Madera Company) to secure the courthouse during the global pandemic. Recently, the availability of the Arizona Rangers has declined and the court has been left without a security guard and bailiff, due to mandated state training requirements, on several occasions. The only option for the court, has been posting the armed Justice of the Peace at court security entrance during these times. The Justice of the Peace has now converted a full time clerk position into a Security Guard position to ensure the safety of the court at all times to coordinate with the Arizona Rangers.

Currently, the court has been able to maintain workflow with only four Court Clerks. The court has been working on cross training these clerks to ensure the court is fully staffed in all areas. In January of 2023, Pima County Precinct 7 is scheduled to expand, adding a potential 40,000 residents to its jurisdiction. This will have an impact on the number of cases filed and processed through the court. The Green Valley Justice Court is requesting another full time clerk position to accommodate the growth of the precinct.