

# Richland County County Facilities Planning Committee

January 29, 2026

The Richland County Facilities Planning Committee convened on January 29, 2026, in person and virtually at 4:00 PM in the County Boardroom of the Richland County Courthouse.

**Call To Order:** Committee Chair Turk called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

**Roll Call:** Committee Chair Turk conducted roll call. Committee members present: Steve Carrow, Sandra Kramer, Rod Perry, David Turk, Steve Williamson, and Marc Couey. Committee member(s) absent: Melvin “Bob” Frank.

**Verification Of Open Meetings Law Compliance:** County Clerk Kalish confirmed the meeting had been properly noticed.

**Approval Of Agenda:** Motion by Perry second by Carrow to approve agenda. Motion carried and agenda declared approved.

**Approval Of Minutes From The January 22, 2026 Meeting:** Committee Chair Turk asked if there were any corrections or amendments to the minutes from the January 22, 2026 meeting. Hearing none, Committee Chair Turk declared the minutes from the January 22, 2026, meeting approved as presented.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Discussion Of Current And Future Space Needs, Structural Soundness, And Safety For The Judge’s Chambers And Family Court Commissioner’s Office:** Judge McDougal thanked the committee for taking the time to review department concerns, noted there are many pieces involved in maintaining a safe, secure, and efficient space, and felt it was appropriate to have Venture Architects present for the discussions. Judge McDougal noted that items from a previous security assessment are still relevant and referenced Supreme Court Rule #68 regarding the standards for updates/renovations. Judge McDougal noted that the office space in Judge’s Chambers is adequate, but the safety and security are not. Judge McDougal also noted the need for the Register in Probate to be located adjacent to the Judge’s office for safety and efficiency reasons. Cory Beyer of Venture Architects noted that it would be difficult to modify the layout in the current building. Beyer also noted that layout and flow are important, and if done correctly, can optimize space. Judge McDougal stated that the Family Court Commissioner (FCC) needs a confidential space that is secure. Register of Probate Jenifer Laue noted concerns with the entry way to the FCC’s office and that the blocked stairway has caused unanticipated congestion issues.

**Discussion Of Current And Future Space Needs, Structural Soundness, And Safety For The Veterans Services Office:** Administrator Clements noted that the space needs are met for the Veteran’s Services Office and that it may need a private meeting room in the future. Supervisor Carrow asked if one was available now and Administrator Clements noted that one is not available and that private meeting spaces are needed for multiple departments.

**Discussion Of Current And Future Space Needs, Structural Soundness, And Safety For The Child Support Office:** Child Support Director Walters noted the following:

- Need for private offices for two FTE

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- Larger front reception area with ADA accommodations
- Need for secured security barrier
- Need for soundproofing between offices due to the confidential nature of their work
- Windows are drafty and do not open

Supervisor Carrow asked if there was legal exposure and District Attorney answered yes.

### **Discussion Of Current And Future Space Needs, Structural Soundness, And Safety For The**

**Register In Probate's Office:** Register in Probate Laue noted that the department has adequate space at the present moment. Laue also noted the need for a private meeting room and voiced concerns of safety with the Judge's exposure to the public. Laue stated it was difficult to have confidential conversations through the security windows, there was a disconnect between the use of office resources and the customer window, and that it is hard to maintain safety and best serve residents. Laue also noted that the court reporter needs a quiet and private space to perform her duties. Beyer noted that touring a new facility may provide valuable insight.

### **Discussion Of Current And Future Space Needs, Structural Soundness, And Safety For The Clerk**

**Of Court's Office:** Clerk of Court Kleist noted the volume of space is adequate for the department. Kleist noted the current service window is small given the department's high volume of interactions and that a larger service window would be beneficial. Beyer noted that service windows are common in newer facilities. Kleist noted that a renovation of the front and center spaces could alleviate space issues and facilitate components of communication. Kleist again highlighted the desire and need for a large service window. Kleist noted that the keypad for the doorway needs to be covered when entering the code if others are present, the department must maintain a vault space, cash drawers must be locked and secured, and a public computer space could be made more private for the users. Kleist also noted that attention must be given to remedying basic environmental needs, properly working windows, eliminating the bats, mice, and mold occurrences within the building, and noted the PA system cannot be heard within the department. Kleist reminded the committee of the need to ensure safety for citizen jurors. Supervisor Perry asked if the department currently had vault and floor space, and Kleist replied that it did. Kleist noted the front counter may be able to be repurposed. Beyer noted that a larger service window may be installed along the wall, but it may be challenging to do so.

### **Discussion Of Current And Future Space Needs, Structural Soundness, And Safety For The**

**District Attorney's Office:** District Attorney Harper noted the following:

- Department does not have adequate space to operate as a functional law firm
- The right to privacy is important as there are concerns with general and victim's rights liability
- Liability increases as concerns are discussed

District Attorney Harper shared and reviewed various pictures of office space, highlighted concerns as displayed in the pictures, and noted the following:

- Current offices are near one another
- Desks are in the way of walking paths making movement within and around space difficult
- Hazardous use of electrical cords
- Staff are on top of one another
- The front desk is too large and is immovable
- Concerns that fire code compliance given limited space to move in and out of
- Limited access to staff in the event of a medical emergency
- Insufficient lighting

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- Offices are too small and not functional
- Lack of security in victim witness room
- Offices are loud even with noise reducing panels already in use

District Attorney Harper noted that short-term solutions could be to move the functional large counter to another location within the office and to install a temporary wall in another room to create a confidential victim witness room which would be functionally possible, but not ideal. District Attorney Harper noted that the lawyers and victim witnesses need private spaces. Committee Chair Turk noted that elements from the 2014 space needs assessment were not implemented due to the cost. Brief discussion of the historic status of building followed. Committee Chair Turk noted that load-bearing walls may present challenges and Beyer noted there are ways to manage those challenges.

Supervisor Couey thanked the staff for working in the conditions stated and noted that short-term items must be attended to.

**Correspondence:** None.

**Adjourn:** Motion by Kramer second by Couey to adjourn. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 5:30 PM.



Derek S. Kalish  
County Clerk