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## IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Monday, March 21, 2022** - Sue Carlson served as the clerk of courts for the Marshfield Municipal Court for many years, retiring from this position at the end of 2020. The new Municipal Court Clerk almost immediately discovered severe discrepancies in the Court's recordkeeping, dating back to at least 2010. The Clerk, along with members of the City's Finance Department, began examining records and found that records related to the payment of fines to the court were incorrect, incomplete, or in some cases had not been created at all. Many payments had not been processed or deposited in city accounts, and required reports to the State of Wisconsin and Wood County had not been filed for many years. In addition, a significant total of cash receipts was found to be missing. At that time, law enforcement was contacted, and an investigation was completed by the Wisconsin Department of Justice, resulting in felony charges being filed in Wood County Circuit Court.

The Wisconsin Statutes specify that a clerk of a municipal court works under the sole supervision of the municipal court judge without oversight by the city administration. This is intended to ensure that the court is independent from outside influence. In this case, it appears that there was a failure in the supervision of the former municipal court clerk's duties by the judge.

The City is working to develop processes, within the framework provided by the state, to assume oversight of the financial responsibilities of the municipal court clerk position. Examination of the court records will establish the level of financial loss to the City; however, the City has insurance coverage for such losses, and we are in the process of submitting a claim to our insurance company.

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