

COURT BENEFITS TO THE CITY OF BELLEFONTAINE NEIGHBORS

The Court makes up only 1% of the city's budget. It appears that all of the departments are in the red. Getting rid of the court will make very little difference in the city's budget.

The court is not supposed to “make money” for the city. It is supposed to enhance the city by providing the following benefits to citizens:

- **Faster Case Resolution-** Localized courts process minor infractions and traffic tickets much faster than remote courts. If another court was to take over Bellefontaine's court processes, it is likely that they would first make sure that their cases were processed before processing Bellefontaine's cases.
- **Tailored Local Enforcement** – Bellefontaine can enforce and adjudicate specific municipal codes (ie..zoning, public nuisances and animal control) that reflects it's unique standards and priorities.
- **Revenue Retention** – Fines, court costs, and surcharges collected stay within Bellefontaine's budget to help fund local operations, court administration, and law enforcement training.
- **Increased Civic Accessibility-** Bellefontaine's residents have a localized, familiar venue to resolve disputes and pay fines, which reduces travel burdens and improves community compliance.
- **Strengthened Accountability** – Municipal judges and prosecutors are typically more connected to the community they serve, allowing for greater responsiveness to local public safety concerns.

Voting to get rid of the court at this time will be extremely premature for the following reasons:

- The revenue generated by the court has increased each year that Judge Duffy has taken over the court. We have had staff turnover, compliance

issues (which are almost completely resolved), and a lack of administrative support until now. The court should be allowed to run for a few years to get a clear picture of the revenue that the court will produce.

- If we move our court to another city, they are not going to take over our court for free. We need to know exactly what the cost will be to Bellefontaine Neighbors for having another court run our court processes – something we are quite capable of doing ourselves.
- The salary expenses in the proposed budget are not accurate. The court clerk will make \$37,440 per year not \$52,000 per year.
- This is an overage of \$14,560 for the court department's expenses.

I have spoken with the Presiding Judge Hilton. He said our progress “looks great!” He has given us an extension of time until October 19, 2026, to complete our final task which are:

- File cases
- Shred old cases
- Train court personnel on reports, etc.

I am confident that these task will be completed by that date.