

To: Commissioners Court

From: Hon. Christine Nowak, Local Administrative District Judge
Sheriff Jim Skinner

Date: Thursday, January 20, 2026

Re: Recommendation of Purchase of Portable Magnetometers and Hand Wands
(Courthouse Security)

Recommendation

The Courthouse Security Committee respectfully recommends that the Commissioners Court approve the use of courthouse security funds to purchase two portable magnetometer and nine hand wands to support enhanced security during high-profile and high-threat-level court proceedings. See Gov't Code, § 74.0922 (authorizing a courthouse security committee to recommend use of the Court Facility Fee Fund to a commissioners court). The estimated cost is approximately \$13,889.00

Background and Justification

The courthouse currently operates four magnetometers that are fixed units and not designed for portability. When enhanced security is required for specific court proceedings, staff must move one of these fixed magnetometers from the screening area of the main public entrance to another location within the courthouse. It takes at least two employees to lift a magnetometer onto a cart, transport it, and lift it again to place it back into service. These units are heavy and not equipped with wheels, requiring staff to lift them multiple times during each move, which presents risks of employee injury and equipment damage. During calendar year 2025, three court proceedings required the relocation of a magnetometer. The committee anticipates several high profile trials in 2026 and expects these to increase courthouse traffic and overall security concerns. When a magnetometer is removed from the main entrance, security staff must close one screening lane, creating delays for the public, courthouse staff, and judicial officers. These delays are magnified during high profile trials when attendance and visitor volume are significantly higher.

The acquisition of portable magnetometers will allow the courthouse to deploy additional screening at alternate locations without dismantling existing entrance operations. This reduces screening delays and minimizes the risk of employee injury and equipment damage during periods of heightened security. To support these portable screening

operations, the purchase of nine secondary search hand wands is also necessary. Five of the requested hand wands will replace existing units that are more than ten years old and no longer function reliably. These aging devices experience inconsistent performance, which slows secondary screening and increases the likelihood of equipment failure during high volume periods. The remaining four hand wands are required to support the deployment of two portable magnetometers at separate locations. Each portable magnetometer must be paired with dedicated hand wands to conduct secondary screening when an alarm is triggered. Providing sufficient, reliable, hand wands ensures that secondary screening can be conducted promptly and consistently at all active screening points, improving overall security effectiveness while reducing delays and supporting safe, efficient courthouse operations.

Fiscal Impact

The Committee recommends using the Court Facility Fee fund, which currently has a balance of **\$1.4 Million**. This purchase directly supports the fund's mission to enhance courthouse safety and security. The Committee expects the purchase price to be below \$100,000, therefore the County does not have to use competitive-bidding procedures. See LGC § 262.023(a).

Conclusion

Approval of this request will strengthen courthouse security operations, improve employee safety, reduce operational disruptions, and ensure the courthouse is adequately prepared to manage high profile and high threat level court proceedings without negatively impacting public access or screening efficiency.

Respectfully submitted,

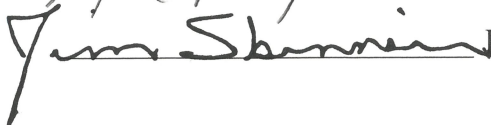
Courthouse Security Committee



David Holcomb, Sergeant, Courthouse Security



Nicol Bristow, Captain, Courthouse Security



Jim Skinner, Sheriff, Collin County