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Justice Jeffrey Funke, who represents this area on the Nebraska Supreme Court, speaks to local legal officials during a visit to the Cass County Courthouse on Tuesday. At right, Michael Heavican, chief justice of the Nebraska Supreme Court, views downtown Plattsmouth from the normally-closed bell tower at the Cass County Courthouse during a visit on Tuesday. Every year, Heavican leads a group of high-level state legal officials to courthouses around the state to learn about daily operations and whether any assistance is needed from the state.

Chief Justice impressed with county courthouse

TIM ROHWER/JOURNAL REPORTER

PLATTSMOUTH – The verdict is in!

Cass County has a most impressive courthouse – and staff.

That was the judgement made on Tuesday by Chief Justice Michael Heavican of the Nebraska Supreme Court.

“I’m hugely impressed,” he said during a visit to Plattsmouth.

“Old courthouses are so beautiful and this building has been wonderfully preserved. And, the staff is wonderful.”

Heavican led a group of high-level state legal officials, including other Supreme Court members, on a tour of the courthouse in downtown Plattsmouth.

It’s something he has done in

courthouses around the state every summer since becoming a Supreme Court member in 2006. (Last year’s tour was canceled because of COVID-19.)

It’s a chance to view the facilities and meet with county legal officials – basically see how things are coming along and if they need any assistance from the state, Heavican said.

“It is really important for us to get feedback from our local court staff, from judges, from community members, and from lawyers as to how certain programs are working, and what we might be able to do better for a particular community or for a larger statewide program,” he said. “We use that feedback to help make the

system better.”

This was the first time that Heavican’s summer tour group visited Cass County. They toured a courtroom, a jury room and a judge’s office. Some even walked up the normally-closed bell tower. That included Heavican, who wrote his name and date of appearance on a wall.

They also visited the Cass County Probation Office before moving on to Sarpy County.

“We appreciate all the work you do day in and day out,” he told the local officials, including county commissioners. “Funding the courts and access to justice is a joint effort. It will always be a joint effort between the state and counties.”



A group of state legal officials visited the Cass County Courthouse on Tuesday. They toured a courtroom, a jury room and offices like this office of Michael Smith, district court judge.



At left, Nebraska Supreme Court Chief Justice Michael Heavican thanked Cass County Commissioner Janet McCartney, center, for all the support the county has provided in working with the state in legal matters here. There will always need to be a "joint effort" between the state and counties to ensure effective legal proceedings take place, Heavican said.



Above, Heavican writes his name on the wall as he walks up to the bell tower. At left, Cass County Attorney Colin Palm introduces himself to a group of state legal officials.