

**LAW AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
August 8, 2005**

The Law and Justice Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Monday, August 8, 2005 @ 6:30p.m. in the DeKalb County Administration Building's Conference Room East. Chairman Sue Leifheit called the meeting to order. Members present were Rich Osborne, Pat LaVigne, Anita Turner, Eric Johnson and Roger Steimel and Pat Vary. Others present were Kenneth Johnson, Ronald Matekaitis, Judge Kurt Klein, Greg Millburg and Margi Gilmour.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Moved by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Turner, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the June 2005 meeting.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Moved by Mr. Steimel, seconded by Ms. LaVigne, and it was carried unanimously to approve the agenda.

**STATE'S ATTORNEY'S OFFICE UPDATE**

Mr. Ronald Matekaitis, DeKalb County's State's Attorney, updated the committee on his departments duties. Mr. Matekaitis said that everything is going well in his office and it continues to be very busy. The DUI and Felony caseload seems to be right on par with last year's record year. That is, they had a record number of felony cases, around the low 800 range and they were just below that number of cases for DUI's. He said that it's a type of trend that he hoped he could say will go away, but we all know that it hasn't. He also wanted to point out to the committee that today there were 91 inmates in jail and 8 others were housed elsewhere.

They are actively looking at the drug court issue by visiting with DuPage County and reviewing their drug court. They will be visiting with Kankakee County and will be viewing their court, too. We do need to look at this problem because in our county 1 out of 3 cases are felonies that are drug related, said Mr. Matekaitis.

He further stated that our county has had a break on serious cases such as deaths. Since he took office 5 years ago there has been 21 such cases that went to trial and 19 resulted in felony convictions. When the past State's Attorney was in office there was only 1 case.

He also mentioned that there are space issues again in his office. They have carved out their current conference room and have added two more offices for attorneys. That is the last space that he has available in his office in the Legislative Center. He asked for 2 positions last year during the budget process for his office and he received one position. He will be asking for that one position that he lost last year, again this year. The reason being that the caseload is 2 to 3 times more than other counties. Where would they put the other person? He has some annex space on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Courthouse that he could move the civil attorney and his secretary there. That would make room for the one new attorney that he will be asking for during the budget process. That would be the maximum space that they could do.

The domestic violence grant that they were awarded provided his office with an extra prosecutor, investigator and advocate. They have received very good feedback from the victims regarding this program. They have their first stalking case currently which requires more follow-up work.

His goal for his office now would be to work with Northern Illinois University to help his office obtain a better website so that it is a better full service website.

Ms. Vary asked him if he has talked to the Domestic Violence Center on NIU's campus yet? Mr. Matekaitis said that yes he has, with professors and university personnel.

Chairman Leifheit said that a few of her clients where she works believed that they had been "duped" by some local car dealers and she referred them to his office for help. Was this the correct thing to do? She asked. Mr. Matekaitis said that his office is a good place to start and if they can't help them then they can refer them to the Attorney General's Office.

The committee thanked Mr. Matekaitis for his update.

#### **PUBLIC DEFENDER'S REPORT**

Mr. Ken Johnson, DeKalb County Public Defender, briefly reviewed his monthly report. He said that he would not be asking for anything this year except for computers for his office.

He said that the changes in the law result in more cases for his office and more felony cases. Right now they are at a comfortable bursting point, he said. He further stated that as of 1/1/06 there would be changes in the law dealing with misdemeanors. This will result in more people being put in jail for driving offenses. He feels that felony cases will go up, but also feels that the workload will remain constant. He said that his numbers are consistent with last years at this time.

He also said that he will be replacing older computers, in compliance with the county's policy, to upgrade computers after 4, 5 or 6 years old.

#### **COURT SERVICES MONTHLY REPORT**

Ms. Margi Gilmour, Director of the Court Services Department, briefly reviewed her monthly report. She says that her numbers remain consistent with her adult report. The CRS hours showed 4,000 hours ordered in June with 3,000 hours completed in July.

She also stated that the two (2) juvenile placements at Arrowhead are doing very well and hopefully they will both be released in a couple of months.

In her juvenile report, there were 10 detentions, of which 1 was for the second time, 5 for the 1st time, 1 for the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> time.

She then informed the committee that Ms. Deanne Cada resigned from her office recently and went to work for the Youth Services Bureau. Judge Klein, Judge Stuckart and herself have interviewed prospects last week and hope to have that vacancy filled in about one month.

She received a fully executed copy of the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with Kane County and our county regarding the Juvenile Detention Center. The current IGA, she believes, could now last as long as 2007.

Summer camp will be done in two weeks and is going very well.

She also mentioned to the committee that there are no increases that she is asking for in this year's budget request. However, there is a slight increase in the probation fee budget. It is the EHM line item, whereby it will be a user fee in the budget, it is not taxpayer money.

Chairman Leifheit asked Ms. Gilmour how many people are on Intensive Probation Program? Ms. Gilmour said that there are 17 currently on it with 13 of them juveniles and this is as of 6/30/05.

### **SHERIFF'S JAIL REPORT**

Chairman Leifheit said that the daily population for the month of July was 90 and in June it was 89. As of the month of June they spent \$45,200.00 and as of the month of July they spent \$55,950.00 for the cost of renting jail space from other counties. She has spoken with the local newspapers to see if these reports could appear in their newspapers and she has not seen it yet. She will try to contact them again.

Mr. Johnson asked if the jail referendum would be coming up again? Mr. Matekaitis said that he did not know but that they would do the best that they could to get the word out there. If they do then possibly the voters will have a clearer idea of what's going on in the jail. He did not believe that anything would happen until the fall of 2006.

Ms. Vary said that one of the problems was the distribution at the very last minute by an oil company that confused the voters. We need to "gear up" for it this time.

Mr. Hanson said that we need to come up with a timetable this time, especially if there are other referendums out there from Sycamore and DeKalb.

Ms. Turner said that as far as contacting the press for articles, she suggested that someone from the County write an article and then submit it to the newspapers.

Mr. Stemiel asked Mr. Johnson if the changes in the laws would effect the jail population? Mr. Johnson said that he could see an increase in the numbers of cases because of the changes in the laws. Will we see more people in jail because of it? Absolutely, said Mr. Johnson, but to what extent, he did not know.

Ms. Vary said that with regards to the space problem in the jail, she thought that alternatives were supposed to be introduced to help with this, such as someone calling people to remind them about their court date. Mr. Matekaitis said that the automated service has not been purchased yet, that they could not do it with just a person doing all the calling. Ms. Vary asked how much would this cost? Mr. Hanson said that he thought that it would cost around the \$25,000 range.

**CHILD'S WAITING ROOM UPDATE**

Judge Klein said that he and Circuit Clerk Maureen Josh met with Mr. Hutcheson, Chairman of the Public Building Commission (PBC), Mary Simons and Mr. Gary Hanson regarding the Child's Waiting Room issue. He said that the PBC was concerned about structural changes to be made to the courthouse. He said that they are not looking for that and assured them that there would be no structural changes to implement this room, except for a new paint job. After explaining this to the PBC he now feels that there is no resistance to this request. Mr. Hanson said that the PBC was reluctantly comfortable with the Child's Waiting Room request.

**Moved by Ms. LaVigne, seconded by Ms. Vary, and it was carried unanimously to forward the implementation of the Child's Waiting Room Fee, with an effective date of October 1, 2005, and to forward this recommendation to the full board for approval.**

Judge Klein also wanted the committee to know that the Bar Association showed no concern over this request either.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Turner, and it was carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

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Chairman Sue Leifheit

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Mary C. Supple, Secretary

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