

**LAW AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
June 12, 2006**

The Law and Justice Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Monday, June 12, 2006 @ 6:30p.m. in the DeKalb County Administration Building's Conference Room East. Chairman Sue Leifheit called the meeting to order. Members present were Paulette Tolene, Anita Turner, Pat LaVigne and Roger Steimel. Rich Osborne and Pat Vary were absent. There was a quorum present. Others present were Ray Bockman, Jill Olson, Ken Johnson and Margi Gilmour.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**Moved by Ms. LaVigne, seconded by Ms. Tolene, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from May, 2006.**

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**Moved by Mr. Steimel, seconded by Ms. Turner, and it was carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.**

**CASA UPDATE**

Ms. Jill Olson, Executive Director, of the DeKalb County CASA Organization, updated the committee on the duties of her office. She said that they served 103 children in 2005. The year before they served 114 children, which shows that their numbers are remaining consistent.

Her report explains that the ethnicity of the children they serve now shows that African Americans equaled 30 children serviced. The Caucasian numbers are going up too, and is still the largest group served, but the African Americans numbers show an increase from last year, said Ms. Olson.

Currently they have no bilingual advocates and she is trying to connect with a local Hispanic organization in the County to try and get volunteers who are bilingual to work with them when they visit the clients' homes.

She has very little turnover with her volunteers. They usually stay awhile, which is a huge benefit for them. Her staff consists of herself, a coordinator, an NIU law clerk and a former law clerk that is helping them with special projects.

She is very grateful for the County's monetary support, which helps them out immensely. She said that her funding is broken down as the following: 1/3 from the County and grants; 1/3 from fundraising efforts; and 1/3 from donations.

Ms. Olson explained to the committee that the bulk of their files are abuse and neglect cases. They serve more males than they do females. The hardest children to serve are the older kids, in the age ranges of 15 years old and older. In 2005, there were 650 cases filed for abuse and neglect in DeKalb County.

The volunteer advocates not only go through training, but they also have to go for 12 hours of continuing education annually, said Ms. Olson.

The committee thanked Ms. Olson for her very informative report.

#### **RESOLUTIONS – COURT AUTOMATION AND DOCUMENT STORAGE FEES**

Mr. Ray Bockman, DeKalb County Administrator, briefly informed the committee about the court automation fee and the document storage fee resolutions. He said that the County would be raising the fees from \$5 to \$15 and that he supports the implementation of both of these fees. These fees would be for people who are filing the first pleadings, paper or other appearance filed by each party in all civil cases or by the defendant in any felony, traffic, misdemeanor, etc., cases. He further stated that the people filing the papers in the courts are the ones who will be paying these fees.

**Moved by Ms. LaVigne, seconded by Ms. Tolene, and it was carried unanimously to forward this recommendation to the full board for approval.**

#### **RESOLUTION – DRUG COURT FEE**

Mr. Bockman continued by explaining to the committee members that the resolution on the drug court fees is before them this evening because the Illinois State Statutes provides for a \$10 fee to be paid by defendants on a judgment of guilty or a grant of supervision under Section 5-9-1 of the Unified Code of Corrections. These funds being collected for a \$10 fee are to be deposited in the County's General Fund and used to finance the County's Drug Court.

**Moved by Ms. LaVigne, seconded by Ms. Turner, and it was carried unanimously to forward this recommendation to the full board for approval.**

#### **RESOLUTION – PUBLIC DEFENDER'S REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM**

Mr. Bockman explained to the committee that the County of DeKalb in the past has treated the Office of the Public Defender as a part-time position allowing those occupying the office to maintain a private practice if they wished to. The compensation for a full-time Public Defender must be equal to 90% of the current State's Attorney's salary. Recently approved funding will provide reimbursement from the State of Illinois for 2/3rds of the public defender's salary. He is recommending that through this resolution the Public Defender's position will now be treated as a full-time position and the County will apply for reimbursement from the State of Illinois Department of

Revenue for the salary amount. Mr. Bockman said that he feels that this is a good time for the County to recognize this position as a full-time position.

**Moved by Ms. LaVigne, seconded by Mr. Steimel, and it was carried unanimously to forward this recommendation to the full board for approval.**

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

Mr. Ken Johnson, DeKalb County Public Defender, said that last month they closed out as many cases as they opened. He said that the juvenile files are staying open longer and are increasing slightly. He does not know the reason why.

Mr. Johnson then said that he is losing his first assistant public defender, Ms. Chuffo. She has been offered the public defender's position in Kendall County. One of his misdemeanor attorneys, Mr. Criswell, will be promoted to her position. Mr. Criswell has only had two years experience with his department so Mr. Johnson will have to be training him, and work side by side with him on the felony cases for awhile. This will leave an opening in his department for a misdemeanor attorney.

#### **COURT SERVICES REPORT**

Ms. Margi Gilmour, Director of DeKalb County Court Services, said that they had 480 active cases currently. This is a record number of cases in one week that has just occurred.

They had 5 residential placements in the month of April with 1 being released. This leaves 4 remaining cases currently.

She said in the Juvenile Report that out of the 12 detentions that they had in April, 7 kids were detained for the 1<sup>st</sup> time, 2 for the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1 each for the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> time. She also said that the IGA is showing a balance of a little over \$7,000 that will be depleted in the month of June. She further explained that Mr. Bockman had previously negotiated a 2<sup>nd</sup> IGA (intergovernmental agreement) with the County of Kane. We still have a charge of \$80 a day. The money to pay for this will now be coming out of the Board and Care line item. The 2<sup>nd</sup> IGA is good for two years and it was negotiated in 2005, Ms. Gilmour further explained.

The committee asked Mr. Bockman when does the 2<sup>nd</sup> IGA begin? Mr. Bockman stated as soon as the first one runs out of money.

Ms. Gilmour's office is starting a Girls Group that has been very successful in other counties. This will be a pilot program this summer where the girls will learn life skills.

## **JAIL REPORT**

Chairman Leifheit informed the committee that according to the Jail Report the average daily population for the jail last month was 92 inmates. The Sheriff has spent \$83,000 through the month of April already and they have budgeted only \$100,000 for this year for the boarding and transportation of prisoners to out-of-county facilities. We still have six months to go, said Chairman Leifheit.

She further stated that if the committee had any questions regarding the report to call the Sheriff with them.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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

Respectfully submitted,

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Sue Leifheit, Chairman