

**LAW AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE
MINUTES
April 16, 2007**

The Law and Justice Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Monday, March 19, 2007 @ 6:30p.m. in the DeKalb County Administration Building's Conference Room East. Chairman Richard Osborne called the meeting to order. Members present were Marlene Allen, Sally DeFauw, Ken Andersen, Howard Lyle and John Hulseberg. Ms. Tobias was absent. A quorum was present. Others present were Margi Gilmour, Ken Johnson, Judge Klein, State's Attorney Ron Matekaitis, Circuit Clerk Maureen Josh, Marilyn Stromborg, Kevin Hickey and Sheriff Scott.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Moved by Mr. Andersen, seconded by Mr. Lyle, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes for March 2007.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

INFORMATION NOTE ON PUBLIC DEFENDER AND STATE'S ATTORNEY PAY SCALES.

Chairman Osborne, said that Ms. Allen asked him if he could find out what the pay structure was for the Public Defender's Office versus the State's Attorney's Office. He said that the pay structure was the same for both departments from the information that he received from the Finance Department.

PUBLIC DEFENDER'S REPORT

Mr. Ken Johnson, DeKalb County Public Defender, said that this was probably going to be his last month in the office. He wanted to thank everyone for the opportunity to work with the committee for the last seven years. He further stated that the County Board has been more than generous to the Public Defender's Office. He said that he is leaving the office with a very healthy budget. His caseload numbers are consistent and a little higher than past years because of the increased population in the County. He also wanted to announce that there will be two attorneys in his office who will be leaving in the next two weeks.

COURT SERVICES REPORT

Ms. Margi Gilmour, Director of DeKalb County Court Services, reviewed her Adult Report, which shows that they have 19 new active probation cases.

Under the Community Services (CRS) the juvenile numbers are pretty consistent.

In her Juvenile Report, Ms. Gilmour, said that they had 2 kids in residential placements. There were 14 kids that were detained in the month of March with 2 kids detained twice. She also mentioned that they had their first Juvenile Swap day on April 7, 2007, with 22 kids showing up.

She continued by stating that she has interviewed for a new adult officer recently. Ms. Gilmour said that she has hired a woman from the State of Michigan, from their probation department. Her start date is May 14, 2007.

JUDICIARY UPDATE:

Judge Klein said that the courthouse is always a problem. There is no room for anything there anymore. He feels that the space problem will "hit the wall" in less than 5 years.

He continued by stated that there are some changes going on in the Probation Department where it is necessary to hire more probation officers. He would like to add one more probation officer, which will be paid out of the probation funds. He said that they have not added a new position in that department in 17 years. He feels that we need to hire people with life experience. The pay structure is lower and because of this, we have hired a lot of college graduates. He would like to have some older people as probation officers.

He further stated that he did not know when the new Public Defender would be starting. There will be two new Associate Judges hired for the Judicial Circuit by May 1, 2007 and he hopes to get one of them for DeKalb County. He said that the County does have the facilities for 1 more judge. He feels that it will quicken up the traffic and family law courtrooms.

Mr. Andersen asked Judge Klein if judiciary hearings have to be held in the courthouse? If we were building a new jail, have we looked at whether or not a facility could be built in conjunction with that so that you could have court hearings and that at the same time?

Judge Klein said that it is certainly a possibility. To his understanding it has never really been successfully elsewhere. The Sheriff and the Circuit Clerk would now have two different places that they would need to be. The problem with having other sites is when he finishes his call he usually calls down to traffic court to see if they need help. They all try to chip in and help each other out. It is the only way to get through it. If they are to be separated then they lose that ability to help each other. Other counties have tried it, but eventually they always come back together.

Courtrooms and jails are not a bad idea for a criminal call to occur in a jail. It saves the transportation of the prisoners from the jail to the courthouse. But, it increases more civilian population entering the jail to get to that

courtroom and it causes a little bit more concern and security concerns for the Sheriff. It has worked in some counties, though, he further stated.

CIRCUIT CLERK'S UPDATE

Ms. Maureen Josh, DeKalb County Circuit Clerk, said that her office is working on the Information Systems that the courts use. It is the same system that Kane and Kendall Counties are on because of a directive from the Chief Judge back in 1985. She wants to reduce redundant data entry that they do as much as possible. She wants a system that works for DeKalb County, that serves the Sheriff, the State's Attorney, Court Services, Public Defender, and anyone else that wants to use their system. The current system does not do that. She has spoken with Judge Hudson to hire an outside consultant to look at the system that they currently have and come up with some suggestions. They did do that and in cooperation with the judiciary, they hired a consultant, paid for by court automation monies. That team came in and interviewed everyone that uses the system. They came up with a comprehensive study and they will begin evaluating the study in May. She does not know where this will go, but all of the people that she has mentioned that are department heads are very supportive of this and are very interested in trying to do something. She has invited both Kane and Kendall Counties to come and take a look at the study because they too are very dissatisfied with what they all have right now.

STATE'S ATTORNEY'S UPDATE

Mr. Matekaitis, DeKalb County State's Attorney, said that they filed 764 felonies in 2006, which is a 6 year average. They also filed 922 D.U.I.'s last year, which was a significant jump in cases.

In 2004 they filed 794 felonies and last year he felt that it would have been closer to 800 cases filed if the Task Force made arrests as usual. They had some personnel changes last year and that affected the numbers.

A couple of years ago caseloads were over 150 felony cases per attorney. That represents open cases, predispositions, and not on a warrant status. Because of some staffing assistance, through the budget process that the board has made, that number is just at 100 cases now. This helps the attorneys to give better attention to individual files. Only 20% of cases opened between 2001-2005 are still at open status.

He also said that his department is in the process of creating a comprehensive awareness page on his department's webpage by the end of this year.

Since they moved into the Legislative Center, from day one, they were out of space. Their conference room had to be turned into two offices now for attorneys. The Juvenile secretary and attorney are now over at the courthouse. There simply is no more space for them in the building. He feels that his department needs to be brought back to the courthouse.

DRUG COURT QUARTERLY REPORT

Ms. Marilyn Stromborg, said that the drug court pilot program has been running for six months now. They have 9 people in the program. With the generosity of Judge Klein they had an evaluation consultant right from the beginning, which is one of the Federal guidelines recommendations. They met last week and they did a process evaluation and a formal report was put together. She will present it to the team this Friday. In 7 or 8 months the consultant will meet with the whole team and we will decide what outcome evaluation we want, Ms. Stromborg said. The consultant will do a formal outcome evaluation with the process and it will be presented to this committee at that time.

Some of this came about because of the strong desire to submit a federal grant. They did submit a federal grant, which is a 2-year grant, submitted to the Bureau of Justice Assistance for \$478,000. There is only at this point, \$10 million in funding. She went online today and saw that it passed the House of Representatives to increase the funding.

Ms. Stromborg said, what have we found in the last 6 or 7 months of operation? They found the biggest thing is the lack of resources in our county. We have only one recovery home for women only and none for men. We have very limited transportation. It is a problem to get people employment that do not have transportation - it is a formidable problem.

Relapses are a problem, said Mr. Stromborg. It is a very intensive program, they come in 3 days a week, they have to call in every day, they have to come into court every Friday, they either are in counseling 3 times a week or they are in self-help groups. They have to add alcohol observation, too.

Ms. Stromborg said that the county board members could attend the graduation ceremony in Kane County this Sunday at 5:00p.m at Geneva High School. She also said that the county board members could come and visit the drug court team that meet on Fridays.

JAIL REPORT

Sheriff Scott said that the jail report for the month of March 2007 shows the average daily population at 117 inmates. The total amount today is 96 inmates.

SHERIFF'S ANNUAL REPORT

The Sheriff briefly reviewed his annual report highlighting important sections for the county board members. Chief Deputy Kevin Hickey said that on page 44 it discusses the Investigator that is shared with the State's Attorney's Office. He said that the number of investigations have increased over FY2005 by 28% or 359 cases. Page 73 discusses New Horizons, which are

major projects and milestones that the department has reached. Mobile Command Post is this year's selection, said Sheriff Scott. On page 52, the Sheriff discusses the need for a new jail or expansion of the current one.

Sheriff Scott said that at last month's meeting there was discussion of a halfway house to help alleviate the overcrowding in the current jail. Sheriff Scott passed out a list of defendants that may be able to go into a halfway house. This list reflects the jail population that was in the jail last week. The list shows the history of the defendants, too. He said that out of the 20 people, you might pick 2 or 3 of them to go into a halfway house.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Osborne, Chairman

RO:mcs