

**LAW AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE
MINUTES
May 21, 2007**

The Law and Justice Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Monday, May 21, 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, Ruth Anne Tobias and John Hulseberg. Others present were Margi Gilmour and Regina Harris, the new DeKalb County Public Defender.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

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

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

PUBLIC DEFENDER'S REPORT

Ms. Regina Harris, the new DeKalb County Public Defender, introduced herself to the committee. She has been a resident of DeKalb County for 21 years. She said that she worked for the Kane County Public Defender's Office for 18 years. Thirteen of those years she served as the First Assistant to the Public Defender.

She explained that she really could not comment on the Public Defender's Report that is before the committee tonight since she did not write it. She said that in DeKalb County their caseload is determined by the cases that are filed. In Kane County the caseload for each attorney is determined by the amount of clients they serve. An example of what she means would be in Kane county if an attorney handled 150 cases, it could mean that they only have 45 clients. She is just now getting used to DeKalb County's way of reporting.

Mr. Andersen asked Ms. Harris if she could evaluate what her office has here in DeKalb County as far as cases filed vs. clients and get back to the committee next month about that number?

Ms. Harris said that, by law, the Public Defender is supposed to report how many cases they are appointed to. She could give an impression as to how the workload is distributed, she said.

Mr. Hulseberg asked Ms. Harris how many attorneys are in the office now?

Ms. Harris said that one person is gone and one attorney who did leave is returning back to her office after Memorial Day. The one vacant attorney position will be filled by a woman attorney from Kane County that Ms. Harris knows. She will start on June 4, 2007.

COURT SERVICES REPORT

Ms. Margi Gilmour, Director of DeKalb County Court Services, said that in the month of April they had two new intensive probation cases that they have received. They have a total of 462 active cases between the 4 Adult Probation Officers in April, too.

She said that she would be pointing out to the committee from now on the number of criminal violations or number of arrests, which in April were 16. When individuals under the jurisdictional court receive a new charge, it is their responsibility to report it to the State's Attorney's Office. The State's Attorney's Office then has the discretion as to whether or not they are going to violate the present case or handle it separately. Those are the things that they are working on in her office currently. They are kind of shifting their philosophy as to how they are doing business. It is a statewide initiative that tries to be a little bit more outcome-based, said Ms. Gilmour.

The CRS hours are consistent again for the month of April. She also mentioned that the Sheriff's Work Alternative Program had two juvenile dates in the month of April that were road pickups.

In her Juvenile Report there were 2 kids in placement. There were 14 kids detained and 1 was for the 2nd time. Out of those 14 kids detained, 7 were for the 1st time, 4 for the 2nd time, 1 for the 3rd, 4th, and 8th time. She then informed the committee that in her May Report it would show that another person was placed in residential placement.

She will have a fully staffed office starting in June of this year. She has hired a woman from Michigan to replace an adult officer. The juvenile supervisor position has been vacant for well over a year. They have offered the position to a woman from the Kendall County Probation Office and she will start on June 4, 2007.

Mr. Andersen asked Ms. Gilmour what "Transfer In and Transfer Out Cases" mean? Ms. Gilmour said that Intra-State would be another county from Illinois or Inter-State which would be from outside of the State of Illinois. The State has really tried to fine-tune their policy procedures so that only certain cases can be transferred. However, with the Inter-State Transfers offenders are not allowed to move from state to state, through the Interstate Compact.

Mr. Lyle asked Ms. Gilmour where Arrowhead Ranch is?

Ms. Gilmour said near the Quad Cities area.

JAIL REPORT

Chairman Osborne said that the jail report for the month of April 2007 shows the average daily population at 101 inmates.

Before adjourning, Ms. Allen asked, what is the status on the Halfway House? Are we not going to be discussing this any further?

Mr. Hulseberg said that we are just waiting to see what happens. There has been no formal discussion on this item yet.

Mr. Andersen asked if this committee could send a recommendation to the Finance Committee or the Executive Committee regarding other sources to fund the jail? He was

wondering if the county board would be willing to look at the transfer tax fee as an alternative revenue for the jail?

Ms. DeFauw said that she would like more information on the subject.

Mr. Andersen said that he feels that the county board should be working on this item for the next month, it needs to be jumpstarted again.

Mr. Lyle said that he feels that the citizens of the county did not fully understand the situation at the jail.

Ms. Allen agreed with his comment and feels that we really need to “tighten our belts”. If we don’t cut services then we don’t need to threaten it, either.

Mr. Andersen said that he felt that we needed to show the public that the county is trying to save other tax dollars. He feels that through the department heads they need to look how they can operate their individual departments more efficiently and save money.

Mr. Lyle said that people didn’t really understand the sales tax referendum.

Mr. Andersen said that the problem with the sales tax, when people who worked with him from large lumber yards and home building supplies firms, said that is was a big dollar amount in sales tax. If you raise that a ½ cent or whatever, it is very easy for an “XYZ” to transfer that point of sale to another county that is ½ cent or ¼ cent less. On a \$200,000 home, that adds up to a lot of money. That is why a lot of people were opposed to it, he feels.

Ms. Tobias asked if the transfer tax would work with farmland?

Mr. Osborne said that all of the cities would need to cooperate with the county on this issue. He feels that it might be a challenge.

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