

**LAW AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
July 21, 2008**

The Law and Justice Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Monday, July 21, 2008 @ 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, Ken Andersen, Sally DeFauw, John Hulseberg, Howard Lyle, and Ruth Anne Tobias. Others present were Margi Gilmour, Regina Harris and Janie Torma of the Children's Waiting Room.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Ms. Tobias made a couple of grammatical corrections to the minutes. Moved by Mr. Andersen, seconded by Mr. Lyle, and it was carried unanimously to approve the amended minutes from June, 2008.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Chairman Osborne asked to have Public Comment placed on the agenda. Moved by Mr. Lyle, seconded by Mr. Hulseberg, and it was carried unanimously to approve the amended agenda.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**CHILDREN'S WAITING ROOM UPDATE – MS. JANIE TORMA**

Ms. Janie Torma, Director of DeKalb County's Children's Waiting Room, presented the committee with an update on her department.

Ms. Torma said that their small room located on the first floor of the courthouse could hold up to 7 children. They have been in business for three years now. They should reach their goal of caring for 1,000 children by September 25, 2008. Their office will be celebrating this goal on that day in September from 12:30p.m. to 2:00p.m. at the courthouse.

Ms. Torma continued by stating that they have taken a lot of security measures to ensure safety for these children when they are watching them. There are two teachers on staff watching the children. They watch children from ages six months to ten years old. There are cameras in the room for the courthouse security to keep watch on them and then, of course, the security guards in the courthouse, itself, keep a careful eye on the room. Ms. Torma also said that they run background checks on everyone that works for her office.

One of the many nice things that they do for the children is that each child receives a free book when they leave the Children's Waiting Room. She said that there is no cost for this book or what they offer the public.

They are open now on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. As they see the need to cover more days and times they will adjust the hours and days at that time.

Mr. Andersen asked Ms. Torma what could the committee and county board do to help them?

Ms. Torma said that it would help them if people donated books for the children. They would need books for the younger children.

Mr. Lyle suggested that maybe Chairman Tobias could make an announcement about the celebration in September and ask everyone to donate a book for the Children's Waiting Room.

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

Ms. Regina Harris, DeKalb County Public Defender, said that if you compare her numbers this year to May of 2007, they are about 100 cases less than the six-month period, overall. The difference is a qualitative one because over time they are seeing more serious crimes, more sex offenses, in the county. She feels that it does not really have anything to do with NIU. She said that they do get some cases out of the university, like date rape cases, but there are not a lot of them in her office. She continued by saying that it's more family situations, nieces and nephews, family friends and neighbors that they are seeing in sex offenses. She also mentioned that the increase could be because there is better investigation work being done and increased reporting across the board regarding sex offenses throughout the country.

Ms. Harris then reported that Judge Klein had asked her why she had 100 felony cases assigned to her? She said that it is a little misleading because it also includes all of the drug court cases too. She said that there are about 30-drug court cases included in that 100 total caseload. IMO is working on a new database coding for her department that would just identify cases that are from the drug court. That would give her a better way of tracking the drug court cases when IMO finishes the work on this issue.

Ms. Tobias said that State's Attorney Ron Matekaitis mentioned the other day that he was working towards a DUI Court?

Ms. Harris said yes, DUI Court is the newest trend in treatment court. You take people that are multiple DUI offenders and they are in the felony category. This means that they are on a 3<sup>rd</sup> or greater number of DUI's in their history. They either haven't complied with treatment in the past or treatment just has not worked for them. They need a greater degree of monitoring and they need the same type of monitoring that people receive in drug court. The defendant comes to court every week and they get drug tested many times a

week, the treatment is monitored and there is constant contact between the coordinator and the treatment provider. If they do not do what they are supposed to do there is an immediate sanction, maybe it's jail, maybe it's community service, or maybe it's something else. They are finding in other states where this program is being done is that it is more successful at preventing recidivism on DUI's. She said right now they are looking at having court for this program in the afternoon.

### **COURT SERVICES MONTHLY REPORTS**

Ms. Margi Gilmour, DeKalb County Court Services Director, presented her monthly Juvenile and Adult Report to the committee.

She said that regarding the Adult Report for the month of June 2008 there were 13 new active probation cases. She also said that there were a total of 488 total active cases for that month.

She mentioned that the CRS hours showed 51 adults that were referred to the program in June, who completed 3,154 hours. They are seeing a significant amount of hours ordered in the adult CRS hours with a total of over 6,000 hours in the month of June.

Ms. Gilmour said that the Juvenile Report shows that they have their 4<sup>th</sup> residential placement. They had 9 kids that were placed in detention for the month of June. Of those 9 kids, 1 was detained twice, 3 on the first time, 2 for the second and 1 for the third time and 1 for the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> time.

Compared to the costs for detention from last year, they are under the year to date that they had for detention in June of 2007. They are over in placements, unfortunately. They budgeted \$125,000 for placements and that line item will go over that figure considerably. They are seeing more mental health issues going on that require more specialized placement. All 3 females in placement were sent to out of state placement facilities, which is very unusual for our county. There was not a suitable facility for any of these three children in the State of Illinois, she further explained, and as a result, they will be a little bit more costly.

Their juvenile summer camp will hold their annual graduation celebration will be held next week Thursday, July 31<sup>st</sup> and all county board members are invited to attend. Ms. Gilmour explained that this was a very, very challenging group of kids. They started with 12 kids and the culmination of the summer program is a trip to the boundary waters. Out of those 12 kids, unfortunately only 4 of them are going to the boundary waters program. Several of them are staying here and for some reason the kids have fought the camp counselors this year. She does feel, however, that it was a successful camp this year because anytime you can touch one child is a success and just because some of the kids did not go to boundary waters, we still impacted their lives in a positive way. Ms. Gilmour also said that the young ladies that were denied the opportunity to go will be working on some projects this week while the 4 boys are away at the boundary waters.

**JAIL REPORT**

Chairman Osborne said that the monthly Jail Report shows that the average daily population number was 133 in the month of June 2008 and that the monies (\$64,893.00) spent on out-of-county housing for prisoners has increased too. He mentioned that if any committee member had any questions regarding this report to call the Sheriff's Department.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

Respectfully submitted,

---

Richard Osborne, Chairman

RO:mcs

G:Law and Justice Committee/Law and Justice Committee Minutes 072108.doc