

**LAW AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
November 17, 2008**

The Law and Justice Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Monday, November 17, 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, and Ruth Anne Tobias. Others present were Margi Gilmour, Dennis Miller, Marilyn Stromborg and Jill Olson.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Ms. DeFauw said that her name was omitted from the members present and asked to have it listed in the minutes.

Moved by Mr. Andersen, seconded by Ms. Tobias, and it was carried unanimously to approve the amended minutes from October 2008.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Chairman Osborne said that public comment needed to be added to the agenda. Mr. Andersen asked if he could speak on a couple of items after the jail report.

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**ESDA AND CORONER'S UPDATE**

Mr. Dennis Miller, both the ESDA Director and Coroner for DeKalb County, updated the committee on both offices.

He said that under the ESDA office the County would not receive any public assistance, which amounts to about \$160,000. The good thing is that it wasn't as bad as years in the past, the bad thing is that we do not receive any funding. The individual homeowners have received funding though.

Under the Coroner's office, Mr. Miller said that the cases have increased. The current number for deaths is 439 cases and said that they will surpass last year's numbers. Cremations may stay the same as last year, about 306 cases. He hopes that in Springfield they will be able to get a law passed to increase the permit fees for cremations. Currently he charges \$10 for the permit and he would like to have it increased to \$25 or even \$50 a permit. With the increase, it will help to cover all costs of the cremation.

Mr. Hulseberg asked if the County could implement a fee to offset the costs?

Mr. Miller said that he thinks that the County could and that it can only be for the actual cost of the expenses. It costs his office now about \$14 for a permit.

Mr. Andersen said why not raise the rate in DeKalb County if we can, why wait for someone else, because it could be a while yet. We should cover all costs. He further stated that we, as a committee, could make a recommendation to the full board for the increase in the permit fees. He also asked Mr. Miller to bring it back next month and let the committee know what the rest of the coroners feel.

Mr. Miller said sure, he can do that. He did remind the committee that if a person requests an autopsy report, he has to charge what the statute says on that procedure.

#### **DRUG COURT SIX-MONTH REPORT**

Ms. Marilyn Stromborg, Coordinator for the Drug Court, said that they now have 30 people in the drug court system. They take about 1/3 of the people that they see. They have 10 women and 20 men in the program and the mean age is 27 years old. They only accept people into the drug court program that have committed non-violent crimes.

She mentioned that there are several major issues that have occurred in the past six months that directly affect drug court. The first issue is that the Governor cut the Department of Substance Abuse and Alcohol funding for substance abuse facilities throughout the State of Illinois. This budget cut does affect the Ben Gordon Center, too, regarding the case managing reporting. Ben Gordon does see the bulk of her clients. The Mental Health 708 Board grant has been written and hopefully the drug court will be awarded that grant. She further mentioned that there are no halfway homes for men or women in DeKalb County. She and Judge Stuckert have met with Gateway about a halfway home in DeKalb County and then after that meeting Gateway closed down one of their homes in Aurora. So she doesn't know what will happen with that.

The drug court fees collected each month amounts to about \$170,000 a year. They received an earmarked federal grant that amounts to \$162,000.

Ms. Stromborg said that the future personnel for the drug court would be to hire a new full time probation officer. They have started the advertising for this position and have received 3 applications so far.

She reminded the committee that the graduation ceremonies for 4 people from the drug court is scheduled for January 9, 2009 @ 6:00p.m. in the Legislative Center's Gathertorium.

They committee thanked Ms. Stromborg for her very informative report.

## **CASA UPDATE**

Ms. Jill Olson, Executive Director of the local CASA Office, said that from November 18, 2007 to the present they have seen 144 children and last year it was 123 children. Their caseload obviously is increasing. With regards to the demographics in terms of age, gender, etc., she said it was pretty typical in terms of percentages. The truancy cases are contributing to the increase. Lately they are also seeing more children from domestic violence cases.

They currently have 61 people who are volunteer advocates for CASA. The volunteer advocates with over 5 years of service involved in this program is the largest number of people included in this number.

They continue to be very prudent with the funds given to them by the county board.

They have a new website, [www.casadekalb.com](http://www.casadekalb.com), for the community to review.

They will be holding a fundraising even called the "Holiday Tea Event" that will be held on December 6, 2008 @ 10:00a.m. to 1:00p.m.

## **PUBLIC DEFENDER'S REPORT**

Ms. Regina Harris, DeKalb County Public Defender, was not able to attend the meeting tonight. Chairman Osborne told the committee that if they had any questions pertaining to her report to please call her office.

## **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 the adult report showed that the numbers remained consistent. Regarding the CRS hours she said that a huge amount of these hours were ordered in October at 9,026 hours ordered. Some of the cases were transferred here to our system and many are from traffic cases that had no insurance. She also mentioned that included in this large number were 6 cases that totaled 480 hours ordered and 11 cases where 200 hours or more hours were ordered.

With regards to the juvenile report, Ms. Gilmour stated that there were 6 detention admissions with 2 being for the 1<sup>st</sup> time, 2 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time and 2 for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time.

She then stated that the Safe House is pending approval by the full county board in November to pass the resolution on the Co-application for the Safe House between the County of DeKalb and the Court Services Department before they take the first step. She said that the judges are very supportive of this idea.

## **JAIL REPORT**

Chairman Osborne said that the monthly Jail Report shows the average daily population in the jail for the month of October was 135 inmates and the costs are still high for out-of-county housing.

## **COMMENTS FROM MR. KEN ANDERSEN**

Mr. Andersen said that he has received emails from Mr. Pete Paulson who heard that there is a courthouse expansion. Mr. Andersen asked if anyone knew what this would be all about?

Ms. Tobias said that there is a citizen's committee formed under Judge Klein, she believed, that is studying this issue.

Mr. Andersen then asked that the county no longer put the skating rink up on the courthouse lawn. He said that it was not maintained properly and not many people used it.

Before adjourning the committee thanked Mr. Howard Lyle for his years of service to the community and to the County Board.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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

Respectfully submitted,

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Richard Osborne, Chairman

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