

**LAW AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE
MINUTES
September 15, 2008**

The Law and Justice Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Monday, September 15, 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 and Regina Harris.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

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

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Anderson asked if he could update the committee about Evergreen Village and the flooding.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

PUBLIC DEFENDER'S REPORT

Ms. Regina Harris, DeKalb County Public Defender, said that they are maintaining the rate steadily regarding the number of cases in her office.

She is requesting in the budget for FY09 an additional half-time attorney. While the private bar is extremely active in the lesser felonies, they are not as active in the more serious felonies because the fees that they need to charge are much higher. People would be less likely to hire private counsel because of these higher fees. Therefore, her office usually will handle the more serious cases. The more serious cases require more time for an attorney to handle. She did not feel that she needed a full-time attorney, but she feels a half-time person would help to alleviate the crunch a little bit. She said that one of the current felony attorneys would be handling additional felonies and the new half-time attorney would take over part of that person's caseload, like misdemeanors.

Mr. Anderson asked Ms. Harris how many hours are we talking about for this half-time position cost on an annual basis?

Ms. Harris said that the initial request is the same as it would cost for a conflict attorney, which is about \$40,000. She continued by stating that the \$40,000 figure includes not only the salary, but also everything that this person would need, like their desk, computer, and those items to perform their job. Also there would be some stipend included in the figure to include the purchase of private health insurance.

COURT SERVICES MONTHLY REPORTS

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

Ms. Gilmour said that the CRS ordered for the month of August was almost 7500. She called the judicial office to see why such a high number and they responded by stating that most of the cases are traffic and misdemeanor cases. There were about 20 traffic cases that had 2800 hours and the misdemeanors made up another 1300 cases. This is a very big jump in the numbers, she said. They had a little over 3,000 hours completed in August for the Adults and the Juveniles completed 280 hours for 8 referrals.

She stated that they did have another residential placement occur in August 2008. This is for a young man who is up for allegations of some sexual offense related charges. The court felt that for the best interest of the community that he needed to be placed in a facility that deals with sex offenders. The per diem for this new placement will cost almost \$250.00 a day. She also informed the committee that this would put their budget well over on residential placements.

She said that regarding the Adult Report for the month of August 2008 there were 6 admissions of which there were 3 detention admissions for 3 separate times. All of these detentions would be for the first time.

Mr. Andersen said that at the Executive Committee last week he heard a proposal to purchase the old funeral home on the corner of Locust and State Street. He was wondering if this home might be used for a possible halfway house? Is there still a need for this?

Mr. Gilmour said that there is still a need and that the residential placement is used for therapy and she doesn't see that happening here because it would be very costly to bring in therapists and training. However, they have many kids that would benefit from the sort of "Engh Farm Project proposal" that would reduce detentions and it could also be used as transitional housing for certain kids.

Mr. Andersen said that when we go before the County Board Meeting on Wednesday he would like to propose this idea. He would like to bring it to the attention of our administrators. He knows that it has not been used as a funeral home for years.

The committee discussed that possibly it may have to go to the Planning & Zoning Committee first to make sure that the home would be brought up to public use.

Ms. Tobias said that she feels that Mr. Andersen should speak to County Administrator, Ray Bockman, first and that it is a good place to start.

Ms. Gilmour then informed the committee that she spoke with Judge Klein about a possibility of appointing someone for a Sex Offender Officer. He has given her his blessing to proceed. They are going to designate one of her officers as a Sex Offender Officer. She feels that with the laws changing as quickly as they do, and with the fact that the population is increasing with those individuals on probation that they often times require heightened monitoring. The Kane County Unit is up and running already on this position. This person that Ms. Gilmour is going to appoint has already gone to training and will be back in a few weeks at which time she will be appointed.

Ms. Gilmour then addressed her request in the FY09 budget calling for an adult probation officer to be hired as a full-time position. She said that this person would be hired to be a new drug court officer. This person would be trained as a regular probation officer too. The half-time position is already filled in the drug court. This young man has taken a full-time position at the Juvenile Justice Center and will begin there shortly. He will be helping out DeKalb County in the interim. The salary for this position equals \$53,000, which includes salary and benefits.

Ms. Tobias informed the committee that she recently attended a juvenile justice meeting in Kane County. Ms. Tobias said that one of the items that was discussed at this meeting was about seventeen year olds who will be regarded as juveniles for misdemeanors starting in 2009 and 2010 for felony charges. Kane County is beginning to prepare for this and they have started a task force. They may expand the justice center, they are not sure. However, our costs at the juvenile center will be the same for this year. A series of meetings will begin to take place on this issue.

JAIL REPORT

Chairman Osborne said that the monthly Jail Report shows the average daily population in the jail for the month of August was 127 inmates and the costs are still high for out-of-county housing.

Mr. Ken Andersen updated the committee about his visit to Evergreen Village today. He met with Mr. Denny Miller, DeKalb County's Emergency Management Director who told him that the power was turned off yesterday around 4:00p.m. Most of the residents were evacuated from the flooding to St. John's Episcopal Church in Sycamore, except for 10 households. The Kishwaukee River was still rising at 2:00p.m. today.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Osborne, Chairman

RO:mcs

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