

**LAW AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
January 26, 2009**

The Law and Justice Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Monday, January 26, 2009 @ 6:30p.m. in the DeKalb County Administration Building's Conference Room East. Chairman Marlene Allen called the meeting to order. Members present were Richard Osborne, Riley Oncken and Anita Turner. Mr. Chambliss was absent. Others present were Sheriff Roger Scott, Margi Gilmour, Regina Harris, Aaron Ruder, Jill Olson and Marilyn Stromborg.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Moved by Ms. Turner, seconded by Mr. Oncken, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from December 2008.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Moved by Mr. Oncken, seconded by Mr. Osborne, and it was carried unanimously to approve the agenda.

**DRUG COURT UPDATE ON THE GRADUATION CEREMONY**

Ms. Stromborg said that there was a wonderful turnout and press coverage for the 1<sup>st</sup> Drug Court Graduation Ceremony. There were about 80 people who attended the event. She stated that there were 4 graduates and that 3 of those 4 graduates stated that the Drug Court saved their lives.

She then informed the committee that when they start the D.U.I. Court, she feels that the numbers will explode once that happens.

Ms. Stromborg handed out some studies that have been done on Drug Courts throughout the country and the costs of the programs.

Mr. Oncken asked how much the actual budget is for this year regarding the Drug Court?

Ms. Stromborg said that the actual budget is around \$150,000 and that's generated by State Statute.

Mr. Oncken then asked why over two years there were only 4 graduates?

Ms. Stromborg said that when you look at the national recommendations they say that if you start a drug court and it is under one year old – you couldn't call it a drug court because people do not turn around in one year.

Ms. Stromborg then informed the committee that her office generates every month between \$12,000 to \$13,000 - that adds up to a lot of money. They receive \$5.00 from each guilty traffic ticket and \$10 from each guilty felony case.

### **CASA INTRODUCTION**

Ms. Jill Olson, Executive Director, of the DeKalb County CASA Department, introduced herself to the new committee members. She explained what her department does and how they obtain funding. The County of DeKalb supports their cause by funding their department annually. This year they supported the department with \$35,000 in funds.

She said that they have served 145 children in calendar year 2008, which amounts to an 18% increase over 2007. They do anticipate that they will see their numbers continue to grow. This year Judge Klein has been assigning her department on occasion to some of the more serious truancy and educational neglect cases.

They have 66 advocates and about 27 volunteer attorneys involved in the CASA Program. They have very little turnovers in their program.

They are very grateful to the County Board and this committee for their support and funding.

Ms. Turner asked Ms. Olson how the fundraising events were going?

Ms. Olson said that the Holiday Tea fundraiser was very successful and that they have another fundraiser set for April at Blumengardens and the annual 50 Men Who Can Cook fundraiser in August.

She also mentioned that Illinois CASA is attempting, at the state level, to obtain funding for the CASA Programs in the State of Illinois. Our state is one of nine states that does not provide funding for CASA Programs. They have been trying to accomplish this for the past 3 years.

The committee thanked Ms. Stromborg and Ms. Olson for their every informative updates and their hard work

### **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 along with the Juvenile report.

She then updated the committee on the Safehouse in Sycamore. She said that they had received a Special Use Permit from the City of Sycamore. She thanked Mr. Andersen, Mr. Russ Josh and Ms. Alice Elliott for all of their hard work on this initiative.

Currently they will be working on a lease agreement with the County and developing a work plan for the staff that will be assigned to the Safehouse. They are also working on a recruiting plan for a family who will be living on the premises. She hopes to get it done within six months. She continued by stating that the sooner that her office gets started on this issue it would be good as they already have kids who would benefit from the Safehouse.

She then informed the committee on the proposed law for raising the juvenile age to 18. She said that it is Senate Bill 2275 and that it has passed in both houses on November 13, 2008 and went to the Governor's office/desk on December 12, 2008. The implementation date for this legislation to begin is January 10, 2010.

Ms. Gilmour said once this bill is adopted and implemented, she feels that it will increase her department's juvenile costs by 30%. She said that the first year (2010) will deal with misdemeanors cases.

Ms. Gilmour said that they hired their new Drug Court Officer that started today.

She mentioned some revenue that is new that they have been generating. One is from the parents who have children in the placement program who can afford to pay something. This has generated a collection of \$7,175.00 that has been placed back into our General Fund. Her department has also collected \$10,700.00 from Medicaid from these same young people in placement, which as gone back into the general fund.

## **PUBLIC DEFENDER'S REPORT**

Ms. Regina Harris, DeKalb County Public Defender, gave her monthly report to the committee. She said that she has looked at comparisons with the years, 2008, 2007 and 2006, and she believes that they were up 90 cases in felonies, 50 cases in misdemeanors, down 70 cases in traffic and up 115 cases in juveniles. She feels that the reason that she is seeing the traffic numbers going down is because more and more private attorneys are handling those cases. Overall, they are holding their own.

She would however, like to begin closing cases more quickly than in the past.

## **JAIL REPORT**

Sheriff Scott said that the numbers have gone down on the Jail Report over last month's report due to what they call the "Holiday Dip". It is still high, but not as high as November's report. They house between 20 to 30 people in Boone County on a daily basis.

Sheriff Scott mentioned to the committee that he has received a letter recently from State's Attorney Ron Matekaitis stating that there is a new law that has been passed relating to violations of an Order of Protections. Our judges here will order a risk assessment that needs to be done, Sheriff Scott explained. Because of this assessment it will be necessary for these inmates to stay in the jail a little while longer because of the time it will take to get these risk assessments completed. So it will impact our jail numbers.

Ms. Turner asked if this law would also impact his budget too?

Sheriff Scott said yes.

Ms. Harris, DeKalb County Public Defender, said that the county board will see claims on risk assessments this year and that these costs were not budgeted for.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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

Respectfully submitted,

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Marlene Allen, Chairman

MA:mcs

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