

**LAW AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE
MINUTES
June 29, 2009**

The Law and Justice Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Monday, June 29, 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 Riley Oncken, Richard Osborne and Anita Turner. Mr. Chambliss was absent. Others present were Ray Bockman, Judge Klein, Jill Olson, Margi Gilmour, Regina Harris, and Ron Klein

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Moved by Mr. Oncken, seconded by Ms. Turner, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from May 2009.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

PRESIDING JUDGE'S REPORT ON THE COURTHOUSE COMMITTEE:

Presiding Judge Klein summarized for the members the Courthouse Committee's mission and assignment. Judge Klein said that the report that the Law and Justice Committee received shows that something needs to be done for additional space issues and that the County should look at 25 to 50 years into the future. The report addresses the time frame as to when the expansion to the courthouse and jail issue would need to be done. The final issue addresses the fact that the Courthouse Committee decided that the County needs to keep the court system here in the existing courthouse and expand it.

Mr. Ronald Klein, Chairman of the Courthouse Committee, said that everyone on the committee agreed that the court system needs to stay here at the Sycamore Campus and to add on to the existing facility. They would like to see all of the court related offices moved back into the courthouse. He said that they looked more at the concept instead of the costs. The majority of the committee favored wings to be added on to the existing building on the east and west sides and to blend them into the existing building. His committee felt that both additions address 25 to 50 years into the future for planning. The current courthouse has 40,000 square feet and the recommended addition would equal around 30,000 square feet. Mr. Klein said that the other addition considered, the North addition, and the recommended addition with 2 wings – both would have the same amount of square footage.

Mr. Ray Bockman, County Administrator, said that he appreciates and thanks Mr. Ron Klein and the Courthouse Committee for their time and effort.

Judge Klein discussed the costs for the courthouse Wings addition that would cost the County around \$10 million according to the Courthouse Committee.

Mr. Bockman said that a resolution would need to go before the board that would allow him and Mr. Gary Hanson, Deputy County Administrator, the ability to investigate ways of funding the plan to expand the County Courthouse and the DeKalb County Jail beginning at the earliest possible date.

It was moved by Mr. Oncken, seconded by Ms. Turner, and it was carried unanimously to forward this recommendation to the full board for approval.

CASA UPDATE – MS. JILL OLSON

Ms. Jill Olson, Executive Director for DeKalb County CASA Office, presented a summary on her department's duties and happenings in her office.

Currently they are serving 121 children and have served 148 kids since the beginning of this year. They are surpassing the total amount of children they served in all of 2008 and they are only halfway through this year. She then mentioned that their agency is being assigned more to truancy cases and that they are seeing a slight increase in Hispanic children.

They have 65 advocates so far this year. The large majority of their advocates have been with them for over 5 years. Ms. Olson said that they need to increase the amount of male advocates to CASA. She explained that they only have 13 male advocates out of the total 65 advocates.

Ms. Olson said that their budget is still in good shape financially. She explained that the County's portion of their budget is about 19% of their total budget funding. They also receive funding from foundations, private donors and fundraising events.

PUBLIC DEFENDER'S REPORT

Ms. Regina Harris, DeKalb County Public Defender, gave her monthly report to the committee. Ms. Harris said that their numbers have gone up because of juvenile cases. She said that they have seen an increase of 40 cases for abuse and neglect and 100 cases for delinquency. She feels that children's services are very active out here in DeKalb County, which is good.

Ms. Harris said that she is performing a study of trends, across the board, for categories of crimes for the last 5 years. She will be looking at what's changing and what is not in our County. She hopes to be done with the study this August.

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 they had 29 new cases in May in the adult court arena.

She said that the CRS ordered hours have been busy as can be seen in her report. The State's Attorney's Office has implementing a diversion program for lower class of cases in adult probation. Out of 6966 hours ordered, 40 of those hours were ordered for the diversion program.

With regards to the Juvenile Report there were two people in residential placement. The one person at Focus House was released in June. The other placement will be in there yet for a while. There have been 6 detained admissions with 3 being for the 1st time, 1 each for the 3rd, 4th and 6th time.

Ms. Gilmour said that Lowe's has been supplying paint and offering manpower with regards to the new Safehouse. She believes that they helped with painting the house this past weekend. She also mentioned that no one has stepped up as foster parents for this home yet.

JAIL REPORT

Chairman Allen said that the Jail Report shows the inmate population for the month of May as 112 inmates and that the report shows high costs for rental space in out-of-county jails and transporting inmates to these facilities.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,

Marlene Allen, Chairman

MA:mcs

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