

Minutes of the Justice Committee

The Justice Committee of the McLean County Board met on Monday, July 12, 2004 at 5:00 p.m. in Room 700 of the Law and Justice Center, 104 West Front Street, Bloomington, Illinois.

Members Present: Chairman Renner, Members Harding, Nuckolls, O'Connor, Owens, Nuckolls and Rackauskas

Staff Present: Mr. John Zeunik, County Administrator and Ms. Jude LaCasse, Assistant to the County Administrator

Department Heads/
Elected Officials

Present: Ms. Roxanne Castleman, Director, Court Services, Ms. Sandy Parker, Circuit Clerk, Ms. Cindy Brand, Jury Coordinator, Jury Commission; Mr. Ed Books, McLean County Rescue Squad

Others Present: None

Chairman Renner called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

Chairman Renner presented the June 7, 2004 minutes to the Committee for approval.

Motion by Owens/Rackauskas to approve the Minutes of the June 7, 2004 Committee Meeting.
Motion carried.

Ms. Castleman presented the monthly Court Services and Juvenile Detention Center Statistical Reports to the Committee.

Chairman Renner asked if the Committee had any questions for Ms. Castleman.

Chairman Renner informed Ms. Castleman that the Committee suggested at the June 7th meeting, which Ms. Castleman did not attend, that the Committee was still committed to pursuing the alternatives to jail programs.

Ms. Castleman commented that Tuesday morning, July 13 there would be a piece on the Juvenile Detention Center on WGLT at 5:30 a.m., 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. The program will feature a visit by Judge Reynard to the Center where he read some poetry with the youth.

Chairman Renner asked if there were any further questions. Hearing none, Chairman Renner thanked Ms. Castleman for attending.

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Chairman Renner noted that Ms. Larkin's Statistical and CASA reports from the Children's Advocacy Center are included in the agenda packet, pages 7-8, and asked if anyone had any questions or comments on them. None were heard.

Chairman Renner noted that the Sheriff's Department reports are included in the agenda packet, pages 9-12 and asked if the Committee had any questions or comments. Chairman Renner noted that the overall numbers are well below what they had been on average over the last several years.

There was some discussion regarding the reasons for the statistics. One suggestion is that the statistics reflect some of the natural changes in the screening of cases and charges filed by the State's Attorney's Office. Some of the programs put into place in 2003 had some abrupt short-run changes and then returned to a normal pattern. Chairman Renner indicated that there seems to be some leveling off. He warned that it doesn't suggest that we should be less diligent about the alternatives to jail program.

Mr. Nuckolls asked if the report indicated how many inmates are being housed out of County. The report noted that in April, May and June there were no inmates housed out of County. Chairman Renner suggested reducing the out of County housing expense, but indicated that there was no way of knowing how these patterns will play out in the future.

Ms. Rackauskas explained that the purpose of the alternatives to jail was not to save money. She warned that it should never be assumed that you could save from one budget to use for another budget.

Chairman Renner observed that Sheriff Owens communicated the cost of the electronic monitoring program. The initial cost of electronic monitoring over a year ago was \$180,000 a year and, with the new equipment cost, it was bumped up to over \$300,000 today. Chairman Renner noted that projecting cost is always difficult and the figures may not be the best forecast.

Ms. Rackauskas indicated that when dealing with technology, cost is often predicated upon "timing." She felt it would be nice to have it set into a budget and ready to go at the right time.

Ms. O'Connor suggested that the commitment should be made and then a way should be found to budget the money. Chairman Renner noted that it is hoped it could be added to the budget this year.

Chairman Renner asked if there were any more questions or concerns by the Committee. None were heard.

Chairman Renner noted that Mr. Yoder's reports for the State's Attorneys Office are included in the agenda packet, and asked if anyone had any questions or comments on them.

Ms. Rackauskas asked for an explanation for the -\$29,848.88 Fund Balance for the State's Attorneys Office Asset Forfeiture Fund.

Mr. Zeunik explained that in FY 2002, the State's Attorneys Office made a commitment to transfer \$80,000.00 from Asset Forfeiture to the General Fund. The money was to be used for programs and services that were budgeted in the General Fund and were related to drug enforcement, drug interdiction and drug prosecution. When Fiscal year 2002 ended on December 31, the State's Attorneys Office did not have that amount of money available. The Treasurer's Office was only able to transfer the amount that was available on that date. The Treasurer's Office is showing that there is still an amount owed of almost \$48,000. The negative \$47,895.49 is actually money which is still due to the General Fund, which is still not available, as the State's Attorneys Office has not generated enough revenue to pay it back.

There were several questions by Ms. Rackauskas and Ms. O'Connor regarding the future of the deficit. Chairman Renner reported that, until the \$80,000 is paid back, the deficit will be carried forward.

Mr. Zeunik noted that \$20,000 was generated in asset forfeitures during the current year and the State's Attorneys Office spent \$2,600, indicating the deficit is slowly being reduced. Mr. Zeunik further reported that the Treasurer's Office will make up whatever they can with the deficit as the money is still owed to the General Fund and what cannot be made up will carry into the next Fiscal Year.

Mr. Zeunik explained that, when the \$80,000 was budgeted, the State's Attorney Office anticipated that the Illinois State Police were going to begin a much more stringent enforcement on the interstates looking for drug traffic. Arrests on drug trafficking can generate funds as civil proceedings can be initiated to entitle the State's Attorneys Office to receive the proceeds from the sale of vehicles, private property and real estate.

Chairman Renner asked if there were any further questions. None were heard.

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Chairman Renner asked if the Committee had any objections to moving Ms. Parker ahead to be the next speaker.

Chairman Renner noted that Ms. Parker's reports are included in the agenda packet, pages 33-41.

Ms. Parker reported that in addition to her statistical report, there are two items for information. She indicated that, beginning tonight, July 12th, the Circuit Clerk's Office would be instituting electronic filing to be transmitted tomorrow morning, July 13th, to the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, the Illinois State Police, as well as Secretary of State and the Mandatory Insurance Division of the Secretary of State's Office regarding traffic arrests and criminal convictions. This will be the system used to update driving records or FBI rap sheets. Previously, these disposition reports were done manually.

Ms. Parker informed the Committee that the McLean County Circuit Clerk's Office is making an application to the State Treasurer's Office to participate in the E-PAY State of Illinois Treasurer's Internet Payment System program. This will allow the Circuit Clerk's Office to offer traffic violators the option of paying their ticket over the Internet using their credit card. There is a plan to put in two more public access terminals on the fourth floor for the use of customers who would like to use their credit card. Credit card regulations do not allow the Circuit Clerk's Office to do a face-to-face credit card transaction.

Mr. Owens asked if the electronic reporting would cut down on man-hours. Ms. Parker indicated that the new system will save time on the traffic side, as it will eliminate the five copies of the traffic tickets, which are disbursed. She noted that law enforcement officer can go on-line to get a copy. If they request a report, one will be sent to them weekly or monthly. On the criminal side, a printed copy of the electronic report will be filed.

Chairman Renner asked if the Committee had any questions for Ms. Parker. Hearing none, Chairman Renner thanked Ms. Parker for attending.

Chairman Renner noted that Ms. Kimmerling's May and June reports from the McLean County Coroner's Office are included in the agenda packet on pages 17-18 and asked if anyone had any questions or comments on them. None were heard.

Chairman Renner noted that Mr. Gamblin's Statistical Reports from the 911 Administration are included in the agenda packet on pages 19-32. He asked if the Committee had any questions or comments. None were heard.

Chairman Renner indicated that Ms. Davis' monthly case report for the Public Defender's Office is included in the agenda packet on pages 42-44. He asked if the Committee had any questions or comments. None were heard.

Chairman Renner recognized Ms. Cindy Brand, Jury Coordinator, to present her Statistical Report.

Ms. Brand noted that, as shown in the Comparative Jury Trial Statistics, the number of jury trials held during the first half of 2004 is similar to past years. The numbers are considerably higher than last year when they had difficulty holding trials because of relocations after the explosion.

Ms. Brand reported that there is a possibility of having a trial here for Logan County in August related to the Lincoln Development Center. It will involve more jurors, but Logan County will be charged with the expenses of the jurors, bailiff and any other potential needs.

Ms. Brand reported that they have made the Jury Assembly Room available to other departments. She noted that in April, May and June, they had several meetings in the room.

Chairman Renner asked if the Committee had any more questions or concerns for Ms. Brand. None were heard.

Chairman Renner recognized Mr. Ed Books, McLean County Rescue Squad to present his report.

Mr. Books reported that the County Rescue Squad has had several runs, including 2 drownings, 2 fires, one at a Lexington trailer court which was the result of arson and one in Dale Township. Mr. Books reported that they have started visiting area fire departments for "show and tells." They have been to Lexington and LeRoy and plan to visit Dale Township next Monday.

Mr. Books discussed MABIS (Mobile Aid Back Up System), which the fire departments put together. All fire departments were given a protocol to fill out indicating whom they wanted as a back up. When MetCom came together a few years ago, the County Rescue Squad filled out a form. He noted that they were not invited this year. Mr. Books reported that Lexington has listed the McLean County Rescue Squad as their first backup.

The Rescue Squad is listed number two for Chenoa. We are meeting with the various fire departments to learn where we are on their lists.

Ms. Rackauskas asked how many departments there are. Mr. Books indicated there are several communities that go together. He indicated that the McLean County Rescue Squad has responded to calls in Peoria, Ford County and Livingston County.

The County Rescue Squad chief, who retired two years ago, was responsible for organizing the Squad in 1968. In 1979, there was a break-off from ESDA and it became an independent department, and a one-page Standard Operating Procedure was written, with rules and regulations. Mr. Books submitted a six-page McLean County Emergency Squad Policy Statement, which was constructed with the assistance of Ms. Jennifer Ho and Mr. Eric Ruud. Mr. Books discussed some of the salient points, noting that there is a significant gap in the 30-year old volunteers. He noted that the under 21-year old volunteer cannot drive the trucks with red lights and sirens. He pointed out that on the bottom of the last page there is a signature line that must be signed by all volunteers.

Ms. O'Connor asked if the document will enable them to visit the high schools for recruiting purposes. Mr. Books indicated that due to turnover at the early ages, it was not an advantage to recruit from the high schools. He further noted that there are 12 volunteers on the County Rescue Squad. Mr. Books also discussed the probationary rules and reasons for them, as well as use of the Hazmat equipment.

Ms. Harding mentioned that she recently toured the building and found it very interesting. She noted that much of the equipment is aging and will soon need to be replaced. Mr. Books noted that their trucks are old, one is 1968 and one 1983, and indicated that they may request a transfer of money for repairs.

Ms. Rackauskas asked how volunteers are recruited. Mr. Books indicated that most recruiting is by word of mouth or by people who specifically make an effort to volunteer.

Chairman Renner asked the Committee if they had any questions or comments for Mr. Books. Hearing none, Chairman Renner thanked Mr. Books for attending.

Chairman Renner presented the June 31, 2004 Justice Committee bills and transfers for review and approval as transmitted by the County Auditor. He noted there is a transfer of \$7,500 from the Circuit Clerk's office for Contract Services, line item 706.0001.

Motion by O'Connor/Harding to recommend approval of the transfer.
Motion carried.

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The Justice Committee bills include a prepaid and fund total, which are identical at \$1,649,814.32. He asked for a motion to approve.

Motion by O'Connor/Harding to approve the Justice Committee bills for June 31, 2004 as presented to the Committee by the County Auditor.

Motion carried.

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Mr. Owens reported to the Committee that he will be attending the National Association of Counties meeting in Phoenix and serves on the Transportation Steering Committee. He noted that there is a Judicial Oversight Committee for NACo. He suggested that if any members would like to serve on this Oversight Committee, it is great informational tool on the national level. It meets in Washington in February or March and at the National Convention in July. If interested, please talk to Chairman Sweeney and he will submit your name for consideration by the NACo president to be added to various committees. He also noted that the County will pay for travel, lodging and food.

Chairman Renner thanked Mr. Owens for his help and information.

Chairman Renner asked if there was any other business or communication for the Justice Committee. Hearing none, the meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith A. LaCasse
Recording Secretary