

## Minutes of the Justice Committee

The Justice Committee of the McLean County Board met on Monday, May 1, 2006 at 5:00 p.m. in Room 400 of the Government Center, 115 E. Washington Street, Bloomington, Illinois.

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

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Mr. John Zeunik, County Administrator, Mr. Terry Lindberg, Assistant County Administrator

Department Heads/  
Elected Officials  
Present:

Ms. Billie Larkin, Director, Children's Advocacy Center;  
Ms. Cindy Brand, Jury Coordinator, Jury Commission Office; Ms. Barb Nafziger, Chief Deputy Coroner, Coroner's Office; Mr. Curt Hawk, Director, E.M.A.; Ms. Roxanne Castleman, Director, Court Services; Mr. Dave Goldberg, Director, Juvenile Detention Center; Mr. Bill Yoder, State's Attorney

Others Present: None

Chairman Renner called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Chairman Renner presented the April 3, 2006 minutes to the Committee for approval.

Motion by Owens/O'Connor to approve the Minutes of the April 3, 2006 Committee Meeting.  
Motion carried.

Ms. Billie Larkin, Director, Children's Advocacy Center, presented the Monthly Statistical Report for the Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) and the CASA Report. She indicated that the CAC report shows that 88 children have been interviewed. Ms. Larkin stated that the last quarter of 2005 was quiet; however, CAC interviews have become more active. This activity should continue to accelerate in the future as the CAC is going into the schools to do prevention work. Ms. Larkin explained that this new program in the schools encourages students to talk.

Ms. Larkin reported that 13 candidates were sworn in as CASA volunteers in March. She indicated that a CASA training will very likely be postponed due to the fact that the Juvenile Courts are currently backed up, which slows down the CASA training process.

Ms. Harding asked what CASA training involves. Ms. Larkin replied that it includes 40 hours of training. A CASA volunteer must do a job interview, must supply three resumes and a criminal background check is done on the volunteer. Ms. Larkin explained that the 40 hours of training is done on a couple of nights a week for five or six weeks. There are guest speakers on every subject, including child development, DCFS, Guardian ad litem, diversity training, etc. Following the successful completion of training, the trainees are sworn in as CASA volunteers.

Ms. Harding asked if there was a high drop-out rate during the training period. Ms. Larkin replied that very few drop out of the program, though she usually exits one person during a training period.

Chairman Renner asked if there were any further questions. Hearing none, he thanked Ms. Larkin for her report.

Mr. Zeunik advised that Ms. Parker, Circuit Clerk, is attending the Illinois Association of County Officials meeting in Springfield. Chairman Renner presented the March, 2006 Monthly Statistical Report and First Quarter report as submitted by Ms. Parker. He asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Chairman Renner presented the Detention Facility Population Report for March, 2006 as submitted by Sheriff Dave Owens. He asked if there were any comments or questions. Hearing none, he asked Ms. Brand to present her report for the Jury Commission.

Ms. Cindy Brand, Jury Coordinator, presented the Quarterly Report for the Jury Commission. She pointed out that, since the report was completed, they have received payment from DeWitt County to reimburse the County for the expenses incurred in the LaGrone trial.

Ms. Harding asked how often a potential jurist can be called to serve on a jury. Ms. Brand said that a jury is chosen at random and a person does not have to serve more than once in two years.

Chairman Renner asked if there were any further questions. Hearing none, he thanked Ms. Brand for her report.

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Ms. Barb Nafziger, Chief Deputy Coroner, presented the Coroner's Office Monthly Report for March, 2006. She noted that there was nothing unusual to report. Ms. Nafziger noted that the overall cases continue to rise over last year, but the out of County autopsy numbers are down.

Ms. Nafziger distributed the Coroner's Year-End Annual Report. Ms. Rackauskas asked that these reports be sent to the high school libraries. Ms. Nafziger indicated that she would pass along the request to Ms. Kimmerling. She noted that there are a lot of high school tours through the Coroner's Office and that the Coroner's Office offers statistical and other information to students who may need assistance with reports.

Ms. Nafziger encouraged the Committee to e-mail any questions they may have regarding the report to Ms. Kimmerling.

Chairman Renner thanked Ms. Naziger for presenting the Coroner's Office reports.

Mr. Curt Hawk, Director, E.M.A., reported on weather activities in March and April. He noted that there were two thunderstorms and a snow storm in March, and four thunderstorms in April. Mr. Hawk indicated that the April storms caused approximately \$600,000.00 of damage around the County.

Chairman Renner asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, he thanked Mr. Hawk.

Ms. Roxanne Castleman, Director, Court Services, presented a request for approval to accept a grant from the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority/Juvenile Crime Enforcement Coalition to fund participation in the Performance-based Standards Project. Mr. Dave Goldberg, Director, Juvenile Detention Center, explained that, in 1995, the Juvenile Detention Center (JDC) became one of seven pilot sites for the performance-based standards federal initiative. This initiative was launched to help detention centers improve the safety, programming and conditions of confinements within their facilities. Mr. Goldberg stated that the JDC received federal grants over the past ten years due to its participation in this process. He reported that the JDC was informed that there would be an annual fee of \$5,000.00 per year to continue participation in this process. Mr. Goldberg noted that the Commission recommended that the JDC apply for a grant from the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority/Juvenile Crime Enforcement Coalition to pay for this fee. He advised that there is a 10% cash match for this grant, which would be funded through existing funds in the Detention Center's budget. Mr. Goldberg stated that the same grant will be requested again next year.

Mr. Owens asked what happens if the grant is not received. Mr. Goldberg replied that if the grant request is denied, the JDC will not participate in the program.

Motion by Nuckolls/Rackauskas to Recommend Approval to Accept a Grant from the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority/Juvenile Crime Enforcement Coalition to fund participation by the Juvenile Detention Center in the Performance-based Standards Project.  
Motion carried.

Ms. Rackauskas expressed her appreciation that the newspaper published an article regarding the two national accreditations received by the Juvenile Detention Center.

Chairman Renner asked if there were any comments or questions on the monthly report. Hearing none, he thanked Ms. Castleman and Mr. Goldberg for attending.

Chairman Renner presented the 911 Status Reports for March as submitted by Mr. Bill Gamblin, Director, 911 Administration. Chairman Renner asked if there were any comments on the 911 Administration report. There were none.

Chairman Renner presented the March Monthly Caseload report as submitted by Ms. Amy Davis, Public Defender. He asked if there were any questions or comments. There were none.

Mr. Bill Yoder, State's Attorney presented a request for approval of a First Renewal and Amendment of the Intergovernmental Agreement between the Department of Healthcare and Family Services and the McLean County State's Attorney – Intergovernmental Agreement #2006-55-013Kj2. He explained that this is a renewal of the IV-D Child Support Enforcement Program.

Motion by Owens/O'Connor to Recommend Approval of a First Renewal and Amendment of the Intergovernmental Agreement between the Department of Healthcare and Family Services and the McLean County State's Attorney for the IV-D Child Support Enforcement Program – Intergovernmental Agreement #2006-55-013Kj2.  
Motion carried.

Mr. Yoder reviewed the Monthly Caseload Report and the Asset Forfeiture Fund Report, noting that there is nothing major to report this early in the year. He stated that the projected felonies are up a little bit, and he anticipates this trend will continue.

Ms. Harding asked if the State's Attorneys Office is now fully staffed. Mr. Yoder replied that he is close to being fully staffed. He reported that he currently has two positions open, one of which will remain open until he hires a person in the fall. Mr. Yoder stated that the other position is one he wishes to discuss with the Committee, namely the continuation of a grant-funded Assistant State's Attorney position assigned to the Children's Advocacy Center. He reported that the position slot has been vacant since Ms. Stephanie Wong resigned. Mr. Yoder stated that, on an interim basis, he has assigned to this position an Assistant State's Attorney who previously held the position. He pointed out that these cases are too important to not have a dedicated attorney.

Mr. Yoder reported that he is in the process of finding an appropriate candidate for the position. He expressed his concern that the FTE position is dependent upon funding of \$45,000.00 through an Intergovernmental Agreement with DCFS. Mr. Yoder indicated that he anticipates the funding will be renewed when the contract comes up on June 30, 2006 and will run through May, 2007. He stated that he is hesitant to hire someone in the position not knowing if the funding from the State will be available and not knowing the Justice and Finance Committees' feelings regarding the connection between the revenue source and the position. Mr. Yoder explained that he does not want to hire someone for one month if the funding will not be available in June.

Mr. Yoder recommended that the funds for this position not be dependent upon the funding from DCFS. He advised the Committee that the position is too important to lose should the money no longer be available.

Ms. O'Connor asked if the salary for the position is \$45,000.00. Mr. Yoder replied that \$45,000.00 is the grant amount received from DCFS. The actual salary has ranged from \$60,000.00 to approximately \$75,000.00. He indicated that the position is a high stress job and requires an attorney with a great deal of ability. Mr. Yoder stated that if the revenue source goes away, he cannot afford to lose the position.

Chairman Renner indicated that it would be necessary for the Board to look at revenue sources to accommodate the position. Ms. Rackauskas asked if there were funds in the budget that would cover this position. Mr. Zeunik replied that there will be some growth in the 2007 budget, but the 2006 budget is dependent

upon the \$45,000.00 grant to help cover the salary for this position. He indicated that if the State should decide not to fund the position after July 1, 2006, the County would be short half of the \$45,000.00, or approximately \$22,500.00 to cover the FTE for the position. Mr. Zeunik indicated that, between now and the end of the year, funds may become available to cover the necessary funds.

Ms. Rackauskas stated that she believes that the Justice Committee's role is to identify the need and make a recommendation to the Finance Committee regarding funding for the position.

Mr. Owens stated that he remembers the Finance Committee had asked for a report on what other Counties are paying for this type of position. Mr. Zeunik replied that the Finance Committee may want a report on the salary ranges from comparable Counties in Central Illinois. This will determine if the salaries McLean County is offering for the same skill levels are comparable to other Counties, such as Peoria or Champaign. Mr. Zeunik noted that the attorney Mr. Yoder is recruiting to fill the Children's Advocacy Center position is someone from outside of McLean County. He noted that the Finance Committee will likely ask these questions at its meeting tomorrow when Mr. Yoder appears before the Finance Committee.

Mr. Zeunik reported that Mr. Lindberg did some research on the salary ranges and found that the salary ranges are very comparable and competitive to other Counties. He noted that the level of experience of the attorney helps determine the salary.

Ms. Harding asked how the Counties were chosen to be used as a comparison with McLean County. Mr. Lindberg replied that the peer group that the County uses has been recognized in various labor arbitrations as Counties being similar to McLean County in size and demographics within Illinois.

Mr. Yoder indicated that he expects the funding from DCFS to continue for at least another year. His concern is that he needs that position to be filled by a competent attorney.

Chairman Renner stated that Mr. Yoder has the support of the Justice Committee. He asked if there were any other questions or comments regarding this issue or on the monthly report. There were none.

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Chairman Renner presented the April 30, 2006 Justice Committee bills for review and approval as transmitted by the County Auditor. The Justice Committee bills include a pending total of \$1,059.53 and a prepaid total of \$2,087,322.88 for a Fund Total of \$2,088,382.41.

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Motion by Harding/Rackauskas to recommend approval of the Justice Committee bills as of April 30, 2006.

Motion carried.

Chairman Renner asked if there was any other business or communication for the Justice Committee. Hearing none, the meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith A. LaCasse  
Recording Secretary