

Minutes of the Justice Committee

The Justice Committee of the McLean County Board met on Monday, May 2, 2005 at 5:00 p.m. in Room 400 of the Government Center, 115 E. Washington Street, Bloomington, Illinois.

Members Present: Chairman Renner, Members Harding, Rackauskas and Owens

Members Absent: Members Nuckolls and O'Connor

Other Board Members Present: None

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

Department Heads/
Elected Officials Present: Ms. Sandy Parker, Circuit Clerk; Ms. Beth Kimmerling, Coroner; Mr. Curtis Hawk, Director, E.S.D.A.; Ms. Roxanne Castleman, Director, Court Services; Mr. Dave Goldberg, Director, Juvenile Detention Center; Mr. Ed Books, McLean County Rescue Squad; Mr. Fred Finck, Chief, McLean County Rescue Squad; Mr. Bill Yoder, State's Attorney

Others Present: Ms. Vicki Gnagey and Mr. Eric Heuer, McLean County Rural EMS Providers

Chairman Renner called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

Chairman Renner presented the minutes from the April 4, 2005 Justice Committee Meeting for approval.

Motion by Owens/Harding to Approve the Minutes of the April 4, 2005 Justice Committee meeting.
Motion carried.

Ms. Vicki Gnagey, a representative of the McLean County Rural Emergency Medical Service ("EMS") Providers, gave an overview of concerns regarding Advanced Life Support ("ALS") service in McLean County. She noted that the current ALS service provider, LifeLine, continues to experience financial problems, and new alternatives need to be addressed. Ms. Gnagey asked

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that rural ambulance service providers be included in any decisions that might be made regarding emergency medical service in the County.

Ms. Gnagey introduced Mr. Eric Heuer who is with the Lexington Ambulance Service and also represents the McLean County Rural EMS Providers. Mr. Heuer gave a presentation and overview of the current EMS system, a breakdown of emergency medical response types within the County and addressed possible solutions for future coverage in the County. He indicated that LifeLine described a proposal that was presented by Advanced Medical Transport (AMT) of Peoria. Mr. Heuer expressed concern regarding the types of response available to the rural areas by AMT and the cost associated with the response.

Mr. Heuer again expressed his concern that LifeLine may be forced to discontinue providing ALS service and the rural areas will be losing advanced life support. He stated that something must be done. Mr. Heuer asked the Justice Committee to support their recommendation that McLean County Rural EMS Providers be designated to facilitate and manage the decision process for securing ALS services in the County. The Rural EMS Providers would address current EMS and ambulance issues and act as a collective voice for the EMS services to facilitate and maintain advanced life support in McLean County.

Ms. Harding asked how they currently bill the calls. Mr. Heuer replied that there is no set rule, but it would likely depend on the level of service the medical emergency required. Ms. Harding asked what would be the flat rate. He responded that the flat rate would be \$275.00 per call.

Ms. Rackauskas asked what expectations the average citizen has on who responds to their emergency call. Mr. Heuer indicated that there is no data to suggest what the citizens expect. Ms. Gnagey stated that she believes most citizens expect the level of response that they see on television shows, which is unrealistic.

Chairman Renner expressed his belief that all citizens should expect the best possible emergency medical service regardless of their geographic location in the County.

Ms. Rackauskas asked if it was expected that Bloomington, Normal and the rural communities would have separate emergency medical service. Mr. Heuer replied that it is planned that the McLean County Rural EMS Providers would encompass all of the areas.

Mr. Zeunik responded to the presentation made by Mr. Heuer. He stated that some of the information provided was incorrect and needed to be clarified for the record. Mr. Zeunik indicated that the hospitals have not provided a time certain when or if LifeLine is going to discontinue providing ALS service. The two hospitals have stated that they are going to do whatever is necessary to avoid a situation where the community would be without ALS coverage. He confirmed that LifeLine is struggling and is losing money due to changes in Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement. Mr. Zeunik noted that the changes particularly affect hospital based ALS providers, as is the case with LifeLine which is wholly owned by the two hospitals in town.

Mr. Zeunik referred to the proposal presented by Advanced Medical Transport, noting that it was not a formal proposal. The meeting with AMT in January was an opportunity to discuss ideas. No formal proposal has been submitted to LifeLine, to Bloomington-Normal or to the hospitals. He stated that one of the concerns raised at the January meeting was the area in the County often referred to as the "donut," which is the area in McLean County where they do not have any ambulance service, including rural Bloomington Township, Downs and Towanda. Mr. Zeunik noted that everyone agrees that whatever solution is brought forward must provide for those areas. He expressed concern with the idea that the need for an ALS response to an emergency medical call would be determined by a BLS service. In many communities, ALS is the standard response for every call and is what people expect. However, in McLean County that does not happen; ALS is the exception.

Mr. Zeunik responded to the revenue-sharing proposal presented by AMT at the January meeting. He stated that this was simply one option and not submitted as a formal proposal. Representatives from AMT who were present at that meeting were repeatedly told that the \$100.00 revenue-sharing proposal was not acceptable and the rural ambulance services could not survive on that and would not work with that proposal.

Mr. Zeunik reported that there is no formal proposal submitted to date either to the hospital or to the local governments. The City of Bloomington is the only entity that has taken steps to prepare in the event that ALS service is no longer available. Bloomington has added an additional ambulance, hired six additional firefighters and is upgrading their level of service from Basic Life Support ("BLS") to Intermediate. Mr. Zeunik stated that there is an interest in working with the rural agencies. LifeLine, Advanced Medical Transport and any of the agencies that have looked at the potential problems have been interested in working with the rural agencies. Mr. Zeunik responded to Mr. Heuer's notion of AMT providing paramedics with "chase vehicles" instead of transporting. He noted that transport

assets exist today with the number of EMS agencies within the County that have transport vehicles in place. Mr. Zeunik indicated that one way to leverage the existing ambulance resources and avoid incurring duplicate expenses is to have the paramedics in vehicles that would intercept the rural ambulances in route. Mr. Zeunik reiterated that there is no final proposal or commitment that says we are going to ignore the areas that are not currently served or charge at one particular level or that the revenue-sharing is set. Mr. Zeunik indicated that, as of last week, he believes the hospitals are still reviewing where they are in terms of LifeLine and are still discussing whether AMT is even an option. He noted that the decisions that Bloomington has made have a bearing on the viability of having someone else provide ALS service within the County.

Mr. Zeunik expressed his belief that there is a lack of strong emergency medical leadership from the physician community. They have not stepped forward and called for a minimal level of service that would be acceptable. Furthermore, there is no corporate demand from the employers for the minimal level of emergency medical service that they will accept. Mr. Zeunik noted that there are communities smaller than McLean County and smaller than Bloomington-Normal that have ALS as their standard of care, not the exception.

Mr. Owens asked if Normal has considered adding to their fire station ambulance service as Bloomington has. Mr. Zeunik replied that Normal has indicated that they are not prepared to make a decision to move to ILS at this point.

Ms. Rackauskas asked how the 911 calls that go into MetCom are routed to Lifeline, the fire departments or the ambulance services. Mr. Zeunik replied that MetCom uses Claussen Emergency Medical Dispatch, which is a standard for determining the severity of the medical emergency. LifeLine also monitors the calls and if they believe the call requires an ALS response, they will respond.

Mr. Owens asked Mr. Heuer if they have contacted their State legislators for their assistance on the State level. Mr. Heuer replied that they have not pursued State legislation at this time.

There was some discussion between the Committee Members and Mr. Heuer and Ms. Gnagey regarding the pending ALS proposal and who becomes the final authority on emergency response for the rural communities.

Chairman Renner thanked Mr. Heuer and Ms. Gnagey for their presentation and concerns regarding ambulance service within McLean County.

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Ms. Sandy Parker, Circuit Clerk, presented the March 2005 Statistical Reports, the First Quarter 2005 Statistical Reports and her Response to Committee Questions on Juvenile and DUI Caseload report.

Chairman Renner asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing none, he thanked her for attending.

Chairman Renner presented the March 2005 Monthly Case Load Report as submitted by Ms. Amy Davis, Public Defender.

Chairman Renner asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Ms. Beth Kimmerling, Coroner, presented the March 2005 Monthly report. She noted that March was a slow month in the Coroner's Office. Ms. Kimmerling reported that year-to-date numbers show that the statistics are consistent with last year. She stated that out of County autopsies have decreased slightly as fewer are coming in from Peoria County. However, in terms of year-to-date revenue, it is right on track.

Ms. Rackauskas asked if the Peoria County autopsies decreased because they were doing more of their own autopsies or going somewhere else. Ms. Kimmerling responded that the agreement with Peoria County is that any cases that involve the State's Attorneys Office are performed by a pathologist in Peoria and non-criminal or routine cases come to McLean County.

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

Mr. Curtis Hawk, Director, E.S.D.A. presented a report on the 2005 Emergency Operations Plan reviewed by the State of Illinois. He reviewed the response to the Emergency Plan by the State of Illinois, noting that there were four areas that needed attention. Those concerns were the Basic Plan, Direction and Control, Communications and the Health and Medical Plan. Mr. Hawk stated that under the Basic Plan, the State asked that the private and volunteer organizations be identified by name and that their roles be listed. Under Direction and Control, the State has asked E.S.D.A. to explain what incidents would trigger opening up the Emergency Operations Center. The State asked that the new Starcom 21 radio system be addressed regarding communications. The State asked that the mortuary and coroner service be separated out of the Health and Medical section. Mr. Hawk indicated that the State asked that nine of the attachments be deleted from the Plan as they were addressed in other areas.

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Mr. Hawk reported that the 2005 Emergency Operation Plan received an excellent grade and was approved by the State of Illinois.

Chairman Renner commended Mr. Hawk on the "usual" good grade and thanked him for his report.

Ms. Roxanne Castleman, Director, Court Services and Mr. Dave Goldberg, Director, Juvenile Detention Center, presented a request for approval of an Accreditation Contract between the American Correctional Association and the McLean County Juvenile Detention Center. Ms. Castleman indicated that the McLean County Juvenile Detention Center received initial accreditation from the American Correctional Association (ACA) in 1996, and was re-accredited in 1999 and 2003. The present three (3) year accreditation will end in January 2006. Ms. Castleman stated that McLean County is one of only two juvenile detention centers in the State of Illinois that is accredited by ACA.

Ms. Rackauskas indicated that it was interesting that McLean County was one of only two juvenile detention centers accredited by ACA in Illinois. She asked how many juvenile detention centers there are in the State. Ms. Castleman replied that there are sixteen and McLean County and Cook County were the only two accredited by ACA.

Mr. Goldberg reported that at one time, McLean County was one of seven Counties in the country that had dual accreditation. Ms. Castleman pointed out that the Juvenile Detention Center is accredited through the American Correctional Association and the Center's medical unit is accredited through the National Commission on Correctional Health Care.

Chairman Renner recommended that the Committee members visit the Juvenile Detention Facility.

Motion by Owens/Rackauskas to Recommend
Approval of the Accreditation Contract between the
American Correctional Association and the McLean
County Juvenile Detention Center.
Motion carried.

Ms. Castleman presented the March 2005 Court Services Adult/Juvenile Division Statistics and the McLean County and Out of County Juvenile Detention Center Statistics.

Mr. Owens asked for an update on the remodel and move of the Court Services area at the Law and Justice Center. Ms. Castleman replied that she has seen and approved the plans but does not know the status of the project. Mr. Zeunik stated that the project is in the final drafting of the plans and bid specifications and they expect to have bids on the street this fall. He noted that Ms. Castleman's area will be worked on first as that area is currently vacant. Mr. Zeunik stated that it should be completed by the first quarter of 2006.

Chairman Renner stated, for the record, that he asked Mr. Lindberg to prepare an assessment on the Sheriff's Booking Fees to see if it would be possible to hire a half-time probation officer to administer the electronic monitoring program. Mr. Lindberg projected that, after eight months of revenue collection, the fee is projected to generate \$28,000 over a 12-month period. He estimated the 2006 cost of a step one probation officer at \$40,600.

Chairman Renner asked if there were any comments, questions or observations. Hearing none, he thanked Ms. Castleman and Mr. Goldberg.

Mr. Ed Books, McLean County Rescue Squad, introduced Mr. Fred Finck, Chief of the McLean County Rescue Squad. Mr. Finck reviewed some of the Rescue Squad events. He noted that they just completed a HazMat refresher class and assisted in the training of eight dog teams from Bloomington-Normal, Springfield, Tazewell County, Utah and Wisconsin. The dogs are trained to find cadavers even under water. Mr. Finck noted that of the 12 members of the squad, seven are divers. He indicated that the Rescue Squad will have a mass casualty training class.

Mr. Finck announced that he and his wife will retire at the end of this month and will move to Kentucky. He presented a letter to the Committee expressing his appreciation to the County Board for the opportunity to serve as Chief of the McLean County Rescue Squad. He acknowledged the professionalism and dedication of the members of the Squad. Mr. Finck thanked the Committee and wished the best to the Rescue Squad, the County and to the families and members of the McLean County Board.

Mr. Owens asked that the letter be included in the record and be placed in the County Board Agenda.

Chairman Renner announced that Ms. Billie Larkin was not able to attend the meeting due to a CASA event commitment. He presented a request for approval of an Interagency Agreement #202306 between the County of McLean on behalf of the McLean County Child Protection Network and the Illinois Criminal Justice

Information Authority. Mr. Lindberg explained that this will allow the Children's Advocacy Center to purchase two new computers and a printer, and to upgrade some of the older computers. He noted that Ms. Larkin has been working with Craig Nelson, Director, Information Services Department, to take advantage of the group purchasing abilities.

Motion by Rackauskas/Harding to Recommend Approval of the Interagency Agreement #202306 between the County of McLean on behalf of the McLean County Child Protection Network and the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.
Motion carried.

Chairman Renner asked if there were any comments or questions on the monthly statistical or CASA reports. There were none.

Chairman Renner presented the 911 Status Reports for March 2005 as submitted by Mr. Bill Gamblin, Director, 911 Administration.

Mr. Owens asked that a monthly statistical report be made available showing the MetCom complaints. Mr. Zeunik stated that Mr. Tony Cannon prepares a monthly report on the complaints received by MetCom and that it could be made available to the Committee on a monthly basis.

The Committee discussed and came to a consensus that the information provided by Mr. Gamblin should be condensed, be more succinct and put into terms that are understandable and easier to read.

Mr. Bill Yoder, State's Attorney, distributed the 2005 Drug Caseload Update Report for January 1 to April 30, 2005. He noted that there is nothing unusual on the April 2005 General Report, noting that all of the numbers are up.

Ms. Rackauskas asked what the Overhear Orders referred to in the Drug Caseload Report. Mr. Yoder replied that those are phone conversations that are being listened to or recorded. He offered to provide this report each month.

Mr. Yoder reported that the State's Attorneys Office is going through a period of high stress. He attributed the stress to the fact that the Office has two attorney vacancies, a traffic contract vacancy and another vacancy due to occur on May 20th. This means there will soon be a total of four attorney vacancies.

Ms. Rackauskas asked what the retention record is for attorneys. Mr. Yoder responded that there are several reasons for the current situation, including the death of Bob Best which created a hole at the top, the departure of the Domestic Violence attorney who left to take a job at Country Companies and the attorney who is leaving on May 20th to take a human resources job with Caterpillar. Ms. Rackauskas asked if the salary is an issue for the attorneys who left. Mr. Yoder acknowledged that salary is the main reason that it is difficult to keep good attorneys. He explained that attorneys are coming out of law school with as much as \$150,000 of debt and cannot survive on a salary of \$37,500. Mr. Yoder indicated that budgetary concerns are a very significant issue in keeping attorneys.

Mr. Yoder reported that the State's Attorneys Office support staff is adequate, although the Juvenile Division needs help. The Juvenile Division currently has one and a half secretaries, but needs two full-time secretaries. It also needs two half-time secretaries to do transcription. Transcription is a fairly new area within the office and it has become a very important part of the duties in the office.

Committee members discussed the low salary range for the attorneys and the staff needs of the State's Attorneys Office. There was a consensus that this is an area that needs to be addressed. Mr. Yoder expressed his frustration over his inability to keep good attorneys due to salary issues.

Mr. Yoder indicated that he has had some communications with Mr. Zeunik and Mr. Lindberg to investigate ways to alleviate the problems. Ms. Rackauskas suggested that this is an issue that needs to be discussed further with a search for possible solutions. Chairman Renner indicated that one possibility would be to place the referendum question for a public safety sales tax on the ballot. Ms. Rackauskas noted that it would be necessary to educate the voters.

Chairman Renner presented the April 2005 McLean County Detention Facility Population Report as submitted Sheriff Dave Owens.

Chairman Renner presented the April 30, 2005 Justice Committee bills for review and approval as transmitted by the County Auditor. The Justice Committee bills include a pending total and a prepaid total of \$1,844,079.71.

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Motion by Owens/Rackauskas to recommend approval
of the Justice Committee bills as of April 30, 2005.
Motion carried.

With no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting
was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith A. LaCasse
Recording Secretary

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