

## Minutes of the Justice Committee

The Justice Committee of the McLean County Board met on Monday, August 2, 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, Nuckolls, O'Connor, Owens and Rackauskas

Absent: Member Harding

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. Billie Larkin, Director, Children's Advocacy Center; Mr. Derick Love, Chief Deputy Sheriff; Mr. Bill Gamblin, Director, 911 Administration; Ms. Sandy Parker, Circuit Clerk; Ms. Amy Davis, Public Defender; Mr. Will Scanlon, Trial Court Administrator and Ms. Roxanne Castleman, Director, Court Services

Others Present: Rev. Tom Shea

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

Chairman Renner presented the July 12, 2004 minutes to the Committee for approval.

Motion by Owens/O'Connor to approve the Minutes of the July 12, 2004 Committee Meeting.  
Motion carried.

Ms. Billie Larkin, Director, Children's Advocacy Center, presented the Center's Monthly Statistical Report, noting that the Center is seeing an increasing number of children, with 29 children in July. She indicated that the statistics reported for 2003 were very light. She referred the Committee to the 2001 and 2002 statistics. Ms. Larkin noted that 2004 is ahead of the highest number ever recorded (July 2002). In total, the Center has seen 163 children in 2004, including siblings and juvenile perpetrators. Ms. Larkin reported that some grants are coming in. However, the Center is looking at a 2.25% decrease in grant funding in 2005. The National Children's Alliance grant went up \$1,500.00. She noted that the Center is fairly close to where it has been in the past.

Ms. Larkin reported that the Children's Advocacy Center went through an accreditation review process on Thursday, July 29, 2004. She indicated that the process was good and the Center did not receive any recommendations from the surveyors, which is very positive. The written report will be available soon.

Ms. Larkin reported that the CASA program is going well, though the numbers are slightly down. The Center is in the process of summer training with 8 CASA's in the program, 6 of which are teachers. Ms. Rackauskas asked what is the average time a CASA volunteer stays. Ms. Larkin indicated that it is difficult to determine, but that each one usually takes 1.25 cases. Usually, they do more than one case and some have had six or seven cases. The Center requests an 18 to 24 month commitment, which is quite significant. Ms. O'Connor asked about the possibility of looking at Illinois State University for volunteers. Ms. Larkin replied that she does not want anyone under age 25 as a volunteer as they need to have some life experiences before they can make such important decisions.

Chairman Renner asked the Committee if they had any further comments or questions for Ms. Larkin. Hearing none, he thanked her for attending.

Mr. Derick Love, Chief Deputy Sheriff, presented the Adult Detention Facility Population Report. He noted that the census statistics are down, with an average of an in-house population of 173, which is excellent. Ms. Rackauskas noted that the male-female in-house statistics do not add to the total in-house count. Mr. Love explained that the in-house count is the average of inmates counted at 6:00 a.m. every day. Some of the males and females may be on work release and not included in the in-house statistics.

Other items provided for information on the agenda, but not discussed, included the purchase of a Boat/Motor/Trailer to be used to patrol Evergreen Lake; the purchase of a 2004 Venture Van, with money from the Sheriff's Asset Forfeiture Fund, for use by the Deputy assigned to Task Force 6; and a \$500 donation from Target Corporation for the purchase of a Taser for use in the Adult Detention facility.

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. None were heard

Mr. Bill Gamblin, Director, 911 Administration, presented his Monthly Statistical Reports, highlighting three new accounting software reports. The first report, *June 2004 Monthly Ring Time Ranges*, indicates how quickly the dispatchers are answering the calls that come into the 911 Center. The state requires 90% of the calls to be answered within three rings (approximately 9 seconds). The report shows that the Dispatch Center is

Justice Committee

August 2, 2004

Page Three

answering 911 calls 99.9% of the time and administration calls at 98-99%, which is within 0-5 seconds. The software verifies the quick response time of the 911 dispatchers. The second report, *June 2004 Monthly Call Counts and Average Times* denotes the volume of calls coming in and out of the 911 Center as well as the average ring time, call duration and average hold times. This information helps determine if telephone lines need to be increased. Mr. Gamblin explained that 911 "hold calls" are non-emergency calls. He further noted that calls are not put on hold until they are determined to be non-emergency. Ms. Rackauskas asked how many dispatchers are scheduled at one time and how they handle 7 calls an hour. Mr. Gamblin replied that Metcom runs 5-6 dispatchers per shift at the MetCom Dispatch Center and at the back-up center. He noted that some Emergency Medical Dispatch calls can last as much as 20-30 minutes.

The final 911 report is the *June 2004 Incoming Calls by Type*. Mr. Gamblin noted that three cellular carriers are now in Phase II. He indicated that AT&T is scheduled to come on line in the middle of August, and Verizon, Cingular and T-Mobile have until the end of the month. Mr. Gamblin reported that if he does not hear from them by that time, he will send a letter to the Federal Communications Commission to lodge a complaint as they had six months to comply, which expires at the end of August. Mr. Nuckolls asked about the status of Nextel. Mr. Gamblin indicated that Nextel is already on the system. He explained that a call from a cellular phone provides the phone number and a tower site that will provide location.

Mr. Gamblin reported that the Governor took \$1.6 million from the 911 Wireless Fund during the 2004 Budget Appropriations, which cost McLean County 911 \$40,000. He said that he wrote a letter to the Governor asking the State not to take money in 2005 and received a letter indicating the State would do what they can.

Chairman Renner asked if the Committee had any questions for Mr. Gamblin. Hearing none, he thanked him for attending.

Ms. Sandy Parker, Circuit Clerk and Mr. Will Scanlon, Trial Court Administrator presented two items for action. Ms. Parker presented the Circuit Clerk's portion of the Request for Approval of the Title IV-D Child Support Enforcement Program and Mr. Scanlon presented the Circuit Court's portion. Ms. Parker reported that the proposed agreement is a flat contract with no changes in the dollar amount from last year. Ms. Parker indicated that she was on the Negotiating Team for the Clerk's Association and there were several Public Aid language changes that she was able to negotiate satisfactorily. Ms. Parker reported that, though the personnel costs have gone up, the State budget remained flat, leaving the Circuit Clerk's office with only \$600 in discretionary funds above and beyond wages and benefits.

Justice Committee

August 2, 2004

Page Four

Mr. Scanlon agreed with Ms. Parker's report, noting that the dollars are exactly the same as in the previous year's contract as well. Ms. Parker indicated that last year there was significantly more money that they could budget for office supplies and other items. This year, because of rising personnel costs and flat dollars, there is only \$600 discretionary money. She reported that \$300 would be used to cover a telephone expense and \$300 to send a child support employee to an Educational Conference.

Motion by O'Connor/Rackauskas to recommend approval of the State of Illinois Intergovernmental Agreement Between Illinois Department of Public Aid and McLean County, Clerk of the Circuit Court Agreement No. 2005-55-007 –Title IV-D Child Support Enforcement Program.  
Motion carried.

Motion by Owens/O'Connor to recommend approval of an Intergovernmental Agreement Between Illinois Department of Public Aid (IDPA) and the McLean County Circuit Court, Agreement No. 2005-55-008-K – Title IV-D Child Support Enforcement Program.  
Motion carried.

Ms. Rackauskas asked the Committee to recognize Ms. Parker's 25 years of service with McLean County.

Chairman Renner asked if there were any questions for Ms. Parker or Mr. Scanlon. Hearing none, he thanked them for attending.

Ms. Amy Davis, Public Defender, introduced Mr. Larry Fitzpatrick, a new Social Worker in the Public Defender's Office hired through a grant from the Department of Human Services. Mr. Fitzpatrick has two primary responsibilities, one grant related and one not. His first responsibility is to go to the Juvenile Detention Center and gather information each time a juvenile is brought into detention to find alternatives so that the juvenile does not need to remain in detention, such as other relatives to take the child. They have seen very good results. His second responsibility is a program Ms. Davis developed to see if, with adequate "TLC," some of the clients could be encouraged to do better on probation. It is an experimental program primarily for first offenders. The program would link the person immediately after sentencing with services in town that can help the juvenile be successful on probation. The planned result is that with this kind of time and concern first offenders will succeed. Statistically, Ms. Davis believes it will be very successful. Ms. Davis noted that Mr. Fitzpatrick was previously a professional football player.

Justice Committee

August 2, 2004

Page Five

Mr. Nuckolls asked how long Mr. Fitzpatrick has been with the program and if there were any statistics to show how many youths have been successfully placed. Ms. Davis noted that Mr. Fitzpatrick started in March and they anticipate data will be available in the near future. Ms. Davis reported that he is a County employee whose salary and benefits are paid through a yearly grant with the possibility of renewal.

Mr. Fitzpatrick gave an overview of his resume. He noted that he is from Detroit, Michigan and went to Illinois State University where he received his Bachelor's Degree in Sociology. He played professional football from 1998 to 2003 with several teams, including Baltimore Ravens, Denver Saints and in Europe and Canada. He served an internship at the McLean County Juvenile Detention Center and worked with the Youth Division at Chestnut Health Systems.

The Committee expressed an interest in seeing the statistics of this program and felt it was a positive trend.

Chairman Renner asked if there were any questions for Ms. Davis or Mr. Fitzgerald. Hearing none, he thanked them for attending.

Ms. Castleman presented the monthly Court Services and Juvenile Detention Center Statistical Reports to the Committee. She noted that the juvenile case loads are increasing. They were down last year and the beginning of this year, but have increased significantly in July.

Ms. Rackauskas asked if there were any statistics showing a relationship between the increase in crime in the County and the closing of Cabrini Green in Chicago. Ms. Castleman replied that most of the juveniles are young people who have lived here the majority of their lives. The influx of people from Chicago would have more of an impact on adult crime. Chairman Renner referred to an editorial by The Pantagraph in early 2003 on the number of people who migrated to McLean County from the closing of Cabrini Green, and The Pantagraph records indicated that it was less than 100 people. Ms. Castleman said the people they see coming down from Chicago are not families, but rather individuals and mostly because of the drug trade, which moves back and forth.

Ms. O'Connor asked for an explanation of Dispositional Detention. Ms. Castleman indicated that a judge can sentence a juvenile as part of probation to spend 30 days in the Juvenile Detention Center.

Justice Committee

August 2, 2004

Page Six

Chairman Renner reported that he expressed at the Board Meeting the Justice Committee's resolve to support the Alternative to Jail program. He indicated that the Chairman of the Finance Committee spoke to him after the Board Meeting and indicated that the County is facing a greater budget crunch than last year. The Finance Committee Chairman noted that, given the reductions in revenue, personnel reductions may be necessary.

Mr. Zeunik explained that when the Governor signed the Senate Bill 2112, which was advertised as a Bill to benefit Cook County, it also increased the amount of the homestead exception and senior citizen exemption, which basically cut the County's growth in assessed values in half over what it would have been. The other issue is that the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts is receiving less money in the State budget than they have previously for salary reimbursement for probation officers, so that the percentage reimbursement is expected to go down, even though State law says that all officers of the Juvenile Detention Center are supposed to be reimbursed at 100% of salary. That has not happened in the last several years and will not happen in this State fiscal year. In response to questions about State funding, Mr. Zeunik said it is the old question "how do you compel the Legislature to appropriate money that they don't have."

There was some discussion between the Committee members on budgeting for the Alternative to Jail program. Ms. Rackauskas indicated that it is necessary to educate the community on the importance of the program and to find a new source from the tax payers to provide the funding.

Chairman Renner suggested that the County could consider a quarter cent Public Safety Sales Tax. Mr. Zeunik indicated that this can only be done by referendum and can only be approved in quarter cent increments. He stated that State law requires that this question be placed on the ballot in a general election and March 2006 would be the next general election. Mr. Zeunik pointed out that both home rule communities have increased their sales tax to support programs within Bloomington-Normal. Therefore, the residents of Bloomington-Normal have seen their sales tax increase by action of their local governing body. He suggested that they probably need some time to let that settle down.

Chairman Renner suggested if the Public Safety Sales Tax is going to bring in \$3,000,000, there needs to be several types of programs and a policy in place to prove its merit. He noted that a sales tax increase also exports some of your tax burden by people who come to Bloomington-Normal to purchase items. He suggested that the Public Safety Sales Tax proceeds should go into several different programs. He noted that \$3,000,000 is far more than what we will need for the Alternatives to Jail program.

Justice Committee

August 2, 2004

Page Seven

Ms. O'Connor suggested that Mr. Fitzgerald position might be one of the programs to be used with the funding and could be considered part of the Alternatives to Jail program.

Chairman Renner indicated that it should be looked at as not the County Board imposing a tax, but as a legitimate discussion for debate to be discussed in a referendum setting to educate voters.

Ms. Rackauskas reminded the Committee that the County Board already stated that the Alternatives to Jail program is a priority. She felt that this needs to go to referendum and that we agree with a tax increase. Ms. Rackauskas stated that the Justice System needs a Master Strategic Plan to pull all of those programs together.

Chairman Renner suggested that by building the constituency we can work towards a referendum.

Mr. Owens remarked that there are more programs nation-wide looking towards public safety. In every workshop NACo held, there were several workshops with justice related funding problems and programs.

Chairman Renner indicated that he brought the budget problems before the Committee as a reality, but it doesn't mean we can't continue to pursue the Alternatives to Jail program.

Ms. Castleman reported that any program that is part of the court system is the responsibility of the Chief Judge. She also indicated that she has been looking for grant opportunities for electronic monitoring, but, to date, she has been unsuccessful.

There was significant discussion between the Committee Members. The following points, suggestions and ideas were expressed:

- the need for a review of the judicial program;
- the need for immediate and long-term master plans;
- Community needs to take responsibility;
- taxes mean you are taking ownership as a community;
- optimism of the Committee needs to be contagious throughout the Board.

Chairman Renner indicated that the Justice Committee is still committed to this program, but given the monetary situation it will be difficult to find where the money is going to come from.

Justice Committee  
August 2, 2004  
Page Eight

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

Chairman Renner presented the July 31, 2004 Justice Committee bills for review and approval as transmitted by the County Auditor. The Justice Committee bills include a pending total of \$199.54, a Prepaid total of \$1,652,363.24 for a fund total of \$1,652,562.78.

Motion by Owens/O'Connor to approve the Justice Committee bills as of July 31, 2004 as presented to the Committee by the County Auditor. Motion carried.

Justice Committee  
August 2, 2004  
Page Nine

Chairman Renner asked if there was any other business or communication for the Justice Committee. Hearing none, the meeting was adjourned at 5:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith A. LaCasse  
Recording Secretary