

Justice Committee Meeting Minutes

The Justice Committee of the McLean County Board met on Monday, March 5, 2001 at 5:15 p.m. in Room 700 of the McLean County Law and Justice Center, 104 W. Front Street, Bloomington, Illinois.

Members Present: Chairman Sommer, Members Emmett, Renner, Kinzinger, Johnson

Members Absent: Member Pokorney

Staff Present: Mr. John Zeunik, County Administrator; Mr. Terry Lindberg, Assistant County Administrator; Ms. Martha B. Ross, Assistant to the County Administrator

Department Heads/
Elected Officials

Present: Chief Deputy Derick Love, McLean County Sheriff's Department; Ms. Billie Larkin, Director, Children's Advocacy Center; Ms. Joan Naour, Director, Correctional Health Services; Mr. Charles Reynard, State's Attorney; Ms. Sandra Parker, Circuit Clerk; Mr. Bill Gamblin, Administrator, E-911

Chairman Sommer called the meeting to order at 5:22 p.m. Hearing no objections, the minutes of the February 5, 2001 and February 20, 2001 meetings were approved and placed on file as presented.

Charles Reynard, McLean County State's Attorney, presented an Interagency Agreement between McLean County and the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority for the Committee's consideration. The Agreement covers the implementation of the Domestic Violence Protocols. He noted that it was his understanding that this Agreement had been approved previously by the Justice Committee, and it has been operating since November 2000. After checking with the Administrator's Office, Mr. Reynard learned that the Intergovernmental Agreement had not been presented to the Committee for review and approval.

Mr. Emmett asked whether the four (4) attorneys working in the domestic violence area work full-time in that area. Mr. Reynard responded that all four attorneys work full-time in the area of domestic violence. Mr. Emmett then asked for clarification on whether the grant indeed funds a fifth attorney. Mr. Reynard responded that the Agreement is a continuation of a grant that has supported one of the attorneys for the past three and one-half years. He noted that this grant has already been budgeted in the Fiscal Year 2001.

Mr. Emmett asked whether it would be possible to place a survivor of domestic violence on the current domestic violence team. He stated that having someone who has been through the system and is accessible to those using the system would be advantageous.

He explained that he is aware of a citizen who is not finding the current domestic violence system to be of demonstrable help to her, and suggested that an experienced system user could be of help in a resource capacity to those who are currently involved in the system. Mr. Reynard responded that the Victim Advocate community through Neville House is the current voice for domestic violence victims. He noted, however, that he would present Mr. Emmett's suggestion to the members at the next Victim Task Force meeting for their consideration.

Chairman Sommer asked whether the Domestic Violence Protocol grant proposal would be altered in the event that Mr. Emmett's suggestion of including a domestic violence survivor as a part of the Victim Task Force is acted upon. Mr. Reynard responded that the grant would not be affected.

Motion by Kinzinger/Renner to approve an Interagency Agreement between the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority and the County of McLean for Implementation of the Domestic Violence Protocol. Motion carried.

Mr. Reynard presented the Case Load Report for the month of February 2001. He noted that there was an increase in case numbers in nearly all categories.

Chairman Sommer asked when funds would be transferred from the Asset Forfeiture Fund into the General Fund. He explained that, in the process of approving the FY' 2001 budget, the recommendation was made to transfer the Asset Forfeiture Fund funds into the General Fund, on a date specific, and then allow it to begin accumulating once again. This would be done on a regular basis. He explained that it was previously suggested that June 30th would be an appropriate date for such a transfer to take place. Mr. Reynard stated that he and the County Administrator would review the balance of the fund closer to the mid-year point and report to the Committee what the recommended transfer amount would be.

Mr. Emmett asked how long it has taken to accumulate the present Asset Forfeiture Fund balance. Chairman Sommer stated that the current balance is close to the amount that is generated each year, rather than an amount that has been accumulating over a period of years.

Mr. Reynard stated that an average yield of between \$60 - \$70,000 has been generated over the life of the fund during the past ten (10) years. Some years will show a higher balance and other years will show a lower balance.

Ms. Joan Naour, Director, Correctional Health Services, presented an Affiliation Agreement between BroMenn Healthcare Mental Health Services and McLean County.

Chairman Sommer stated that BroMenn Health Services is the only facility in the area that currently provides mental health services and that this is a renewal of a continuing agreement with BroMenn for such services.

Ms. Naour explained that the Agreement before the Committee is a renewal of the original Agreement, which was negotiated in 1992. She stated that the Agreement has worked well over its term. She estimated that the mental health services from BroMenn have been utilized 3-5 times within the past eight (8) years. She noted that it is necessary to have a place to hospitalize inmates for mental health concerns, and BroMenn has been very cooperative in providing the necessary care.

Motion by Kinzinger/Emmett to Approve the Affiliation Agreement
Between BroMenn Healthcare Mental Health Services and McLean
County. Motion carried.

Ms. Sandra Parker, Circuit Clerk, presented the Statistical Reports for January 2001, Statistical Reports for the Fourth Quarter of 2000, and the Statistical Reports for All Cases during the year 2000.

Mr. Renner asked whether it is customary for the civil law category of Dissolution of Marriage to consistently have the heaviest case load, with the exception of Probate. Ms. Parker responded that the area of Dissolution often experiences high case load activity because the individual cases must remain open until the property settlement has been completed. She explained that bifurcated judgments are often granted, with the dissolution granted at one hearing and all remaining issues addressed at a separate hearing.

Ms. Parker stated that Probate cases often pend for other reasons. When disabled adults and disabled minors are involved in a Probate case, the case must remain open until the ward is deceased.

Chief Deputy Derick Love, McLean County Sheriff's Department, presented the Detention Facility Population Report. He noted that some of the inmates are currently being housed outside of McLean County.

Mr. Kinzinger asked how many inmates are currently housed outside of McLean County. Chief Deputy Love responded that there are currently eight (8) inmates housed outside of McLean County. The previous week there was one (1) inmate housed outside the County; that number increased when 11 newly-sentenced inmates arrived at the McLean County Detention Facility. The addition of the new inmates required that some inmates had to be moved to other facilities.

Mr. Kinzinger asked where inmates are generally sent when they are housed outside of McLean County. Chief Deputy Love responded that inmates are housed wherever space is available. DeWitt County, Ford County, and Sangamon County are often chosen sites.

Chairman Sommer asked whether the Preliminary Information Regarding a Grant for Mapping Utilizing the EJS System would be presented to the Committee at the present time. Chief Deputy Love responded that it would not be presented at this time.

Chairman Sommer asked whether an Intergovernmental Agreement would be presented with regard to utilizing the matching funds available to implement the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Program. Chief Deputy Love explained that McLean County would pay for the program initially, and the Intergovernmental Agreement would be the mechanism by which the County would recover its costs.

Chairman Sommer asked about the life span of bulletproof vests and whether there is a replacement schedule in place. Chief Deputy Love responded that the vests generally approach the end of their life span after approximately five (5) years following the date of manufacture.

Chairman Sommer asked whether the proposal for the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Program is in its preliminary stage, with the grant application to be submitted in the future. He asked whether the Intergovernmental Agreements would be submitted for approval at the same time as the grant application. Chief Deputy Love responded that the vests would cost \$21,000. When and if the grant is received, McLean County will pay that amount out of the Sheriff's Department budget, with the Intergovernmental Agreements being used as a means to verify that the other law enforcement entities participating in the grant would pay back what they owe for the items they ordered. He remarked that the total number of vests ordered would be 50, but that McLean County would only be purchasing 19 of those vests.

Mr. Emmett asked whether McLean County's actual cost for its purchase would be just slightly in excess of \$4,000.00. Chief Deputy Love confirmed that the costs to the County would be approximately \$4,000.00.

Chairman Sommer presented the Monthly Caseload and Disposition Report for the Public Defender's Office. He remarked that in the event that Committee members have questions regarding the reports, those questions should be submitted to Mr. John Zeunik, County Administrator, who will forward them to Public Defender Ms. Amy Davis.

Chairman Sommer presented the Court Services Monthly Statistical Reports and the Juvenile Detention Center Monthly Statistical Report. He noted that the Juvenile Detention Center Report showed a large drop in the number of residents.

Mr. Kinzinger asked whether the Intensive Probation Unit (IPS) has always had two officers on staff or more. Mr. Zeunik responded that the Adult Intensive Probation Unit has three (3) officers on staff, and Juvenile Intensive Probation Unit has one (1) officer on staff. The staffing levels have been consistent throughout the years.

Ms. Billie Larkin, Director, Children's Advocacy Center, presented a Request for Approval an Emergency Appropriation to Fund Leasehold Improvements for Office Space in the 200 West Front Street Building. Chairman Sommer advised that this request was in relationship to the anticipated move by the Children's Advocacy Center to new offices in the 200 West Front Street building, and the subsequent remodeling of that space. He explained that the amount requested is \$50,000.00 and would include major renovations, which would benefit the building as a whole, as well as the space specific to the Children's Advocacy Center.

Motion by Emmett/Renner to Approve the Request for approval of an Emergency Appropriation Ordinance to Fund Leasehold Improvements for Office Space in the 200 West Front Street Building.

Mr. Renner asked whether capital improvements to the building itself would be made. Ms. Larkin replied that new HVAC units, thermostats, and carpet would be added. She noted that some permanent improvements would be made specifically for the Children's Advocacy Center as new tenants, and other improvements would be non-permanent.

Mr. Kinzinger asked for examples of the non-permanent additions to the building. Ms. Larkin replied that walls added to improve soundproofing for privacy, and new carpeting, are examples of non-permanent additions to the building. Mr. Zeunik remarked that sinks would also be added for the Center.

Chairman Sommer asked how many Child Advocacy Centers are presently operating in Illinois. Ms. Larkin responded that there are approximately 35 full member centers in operation, out of a total of 102 counties in Illinois. She noted that there are satellite centers that are affiliated with some of the full members centers, making a total of 56 counties in Illinois served in some capacity by a Children's Advocacy Center.

Chairman Sommer noted that the Child Advocacy Centers are mandated by the State of Illinois. Beginning on January 1, 2001, the Centers will be mandated to serve physically abused children as well as sexually abused children. Ms. Larkin noted that such service has been provided already, but will now be under a state mandate.

Chairman Sommer asked whether the move to a new office location would provide more personalized attention for children involved in different types of cases. Ms. Larkin responded that separate waiting areas would be provided for families so that confidentiality could be maintained. Two interview rooms will be utilized, each with dual entrances for easier access, and both will be located in close proximity to the observation room.

Chairman Sommer asked what the projected increase in cases will be following the implementation of the mandate. Ms. Larkin stated that there are many changes occurring within the local office of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) at this time, and changes within the Advocacy Center may result from the reorganization of the local DCFS office.

Chairman Sommer asked whether the Advocacy Center's staffing level would continue to be adequate, once the changes are fully implemented at the DCFS office. In the event that staffing levels become inadequate, Ms. Larkin advised that the Advocacy Center will approach the local office of DCFS for staff increases. She stated that the local office has been supportive of staff increases in the past, and will continue to be supportive.

Chairman Sommer asked whether all of the Center's work was mandated by statute. Ms. Larkin responded that the State of Illinois mandates both the physical and sexual abuse components. At this time, there is no mandate for serving neglected children.

Chairman Sommer remarked that the child protection system has been under scrutiny with regard to the practice of removing children from their homes due to imminent danger. He explained that local print media coverage has recently been critical of McLean County in that regard. Ms. Larkin explained that each case is unique in its facts and circumstances and should be examined in that light. She further explained that the local DCFS office has experienced some rather drastic changes in leadership and the result of some temporary disorganization.

Mr. Renner commented that a recent editorial regarding the removal of children from their homes was subject to many misunderstandings. He cited a recent conversation with a local radio reporter who had conducted her own investigation. He stated that she discovered several situations in which parents were not following prescribed service agreements on a regular basis, and those were the events that precipitated children being removed from their homes.

Ms. Larkin remarked that over 58% of the cases that pass through the Children's Advocacy Center involve people who have a previous history of reports labeled as

indicated by the Department of Children and Family Services. She stated that such statistics show that many parents and guardians are not strangers to the system.

Chairman Sommer called for a vote on the Motion before the Committee.

Motion carried.

Ms. Larkin explained that the Study of the CASA Program in McLean County shows that there are many long-reaching complications that accompany a child abuse case. She cited sexual abuse, alcohol abuse and drug abuse as some of the most obvious contributing factors in a case.

Mr. Larkin explained that the Children's Advocacy Center has asked the Circuit Court to appoint the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) at an earlier point in the cases. She noted that the CASAs are important to the case in terms of providing continuity and a sense of the history of the case, as well as their primary role of providing support for the children involved. She remarked that CASA turnover, often within the midst of the case, is high and the sooner the CASAs can begin to advocate for the children, the more beneficial their role will be.

Ms. Larkin stated that 70% of the time CASAs advocated for children to be returned to their homes. She noted that this is contrary to some local published reports, which expressed concern for children being removed from the home too liberally. She stated that approximately 28% of children are taken from their homes, as opposed to the 35% reported in the print media.

Chairman Sommer stated that the County Coroner would not be present at the meeting but that the Monthly Report is included in the agenda packet. As per the customary practice, any Committee member with questions regarding the Coroner's report may address those questions to the Administrator's Office. They will subsequently be forwarded to the Coroner.

Mr. Bill Gamblin, Administrator, Emergency Telephone Systems Board, presented a status report on the status of the E-911 system. Chairman Sommer stated that he had expected much further progress to be achieved by this time.

Mr. Gamblin stated that McLean County has now taken over the entire addressing project. It was felt that the third party vendor was delaying progress towards completing the addressing changes. Mr. Gamblin stated that by the County's taking over the project, more time could be devoted to the project, and County-trained contractors could be

utilized. He stated that engineers from the City of Bloomington and the Town of Normal are completing the city component of the Enhanced 911 project.

There are also two (2) local contractors who are in the process of completing the addressing component.

Mr. Gamblin stated that the wireless plan has been granted, and upgraded equipment has been ordered. It will be placed in service prior to going online.

The plan that must be filed with the Illinois Commerce Commission will need to be amended. Woodford County and DeWitt County are now in the process of readdressing and Woodford County is converting from direct trunk lines to a router system. Mr. Gamblin stated that this change would require the plan to be redone.

Chairman Sommer asked how many communities would be affected by the change in plan. Mr. Gamblin stated that all communities in the system would be affected. He explained that the router system is advantageous because it allows for individual residences to be pinpointed by the E-911 system. This is a feature not available in a direct trunk system. Additionally, Woodford County has been mandated to convert to a router system, and therefore, must be in compliance.

Mr. Renner remarked that the E-911 system, in its present state, is convoluted and its progress is remarkably slow. He asked whether there is a more efficient method that could be employed in order to achieve the desired results in a more timely fashion. Mr. Gamblin responded that accounting for all the service addresses in the database has become a formidable problem. Since addresses previously listed as a rural route address, or a post office box, must be reassigned, there have been several obstacles to overcome in order to achieve the new addressing system. He noted that the new addresses must account for all properties, conform to the telephone company standards, and comply with United States Post Office standards.

Mr. Gamblin explained that the first addressing company, that was hired to convert present addresses to E-911-compliant addresses, did not finish the task. The second addressing company ceased operations when the owner died. The present company is the third company to perform addressing operations for the system. He explained that when a new company begins such a project in mid-course, the new company will not utilize any information or work done by the previous company.

Mr. Renner asked how long it would be to achieve 100% protection for all residents who will utilize the E-911 system. Mr. Gamblin responded that readdressing is in progress at this time. He noted that the new addresses are sent to the post office, which in turn notifies the consumer. The post office also notifies the E-911 office that the new

addresses are complete; E-911 then notifies Verizon, the telephone provider. Verizon enters the new addresses into their system. Mr. Gamblin stated that the projected date for finishing the E-911 project is September 26, 2001. There will be two (2) weeks of testing, rather than the customary six (6) months. This is due to the fact that the network is already in place. He noted that in June 2001, a Final Error Resolution process would be completed. Following that is end-to-end testing and receipt of final certification. The last step in the process will be placing the E-911 system on "live" status.

Mr. Renner asked when "live" status could be expected. Mr. Gamblin stated that the target date is September 26, 2001. Mr. Renner then asked whether or not that date is a firm date. Mr. Gamblin explained that the Emergency Telephone Systems Board (ETSB) has given him the date of September 26th. The last step will be to attend an Illinois Commerce Commission hearing in June to determine whether all requirements have been met and testing may proceed. Mr. Gamblin explained that random test calls would then be made as part of the final testing process to determine the viability of the system.

Mr. Renner asked whether there are any dates beyond October 11, 2001 that should be considered. Mr. Gamblin stated that the October 11th date is the target date for all five (5) telephone companies to integrate their systems. He noted that there are two (2) separate databases, which will need to be integrated prior to that date. Any other such problems, which may be unforeseen at this time, should be discovered during the final testing.

Chairman Sommer noted that the City of Bloomington represents 45% of the numbers that will be utilized within the E-911 system. Mr. Gamblin explained that the entire zip code will need to be examined and addressing discrepancies will be changed. Chairman Sommer expressed concern that this will be a significant task. Mr. Gamblin then responded that the work in this area is set to begin on March 6, 2001 and there will be three (3) full-time staff positions and himself at work on this project. Mr. Gamblin advised the Committee that he is now spending 50% of his time on completing the requirements for enhanced 911 service.

Chairman Sommer stated that both he and County Board Chairman Sweeney are not confident that the stated deadlines will be met on time. He cited past deadlines that were missed. Mr. Gamblin responded that the County's offices now have control over the process and are no longer at the mercy of outside companies.

Chairman Sommer remarked that in previous reports, Mr. Gamblin had stated that as much as 90% of the project was completed. At the present time, Chairman Sommer stated that Mr. Gamblin is now reporting that the project is only 10% completed. Mr. Gamblin responded that 100% of the database is built, but it has yet to be completely reconciled with corresponding postal records.

Mr. Kinzinger asked how long the project, in its entirety, has been in process. Mr. Gamblin responded that he began work on the project in 1997, and that the Ordinance structuring the framework of the E-911 system was passed in 1991. Collection of the surcharge to fund the project began in December 1991.

Mr. Emmett noted that Mr. Gamblin has stated that he and his staff will now be held to firm deadlines. In the past, outside forces beyond control of the staff affected the progress of the E-911 project. Mr. Emmett explained that now, as Mr. Gamblin has stated, he and his staff have complete control over the process. Therefore, the likelihood of objectives being met is much greater.

Mr. Gamblin stated that in 1997, when he took over as Administrator of the E-911 project, there was very little in place. During his tenure, progress has been made.

Chairman Sommer remarked that his constituency has regularly expressed great concern over the fact that the surcharge has been assessed since 1991, and the E-911 system still is not online. Mr. Gamblin explained that the ETSB makes a significant contribution to the dispatch center and the telephone company for the basic 911 system. Those expenses are estimated at \$5,000.00 per month.

Chairman Sommer stated that he did not think he was overstating his concern regarding the fact that insufficient progress has been made on the E-911 system to date. He noted that Mr. Emmett stated previously that control of the work is now with the ETSB staff, and therefore, should be more easily managed to completion.

Mr. Renner asked what is the significance of a constituent complaining that there has been an ongoing surcharge, but no resultant service. Mr. Gamblin explained that a portion of the funds that are currently being collected are going back to the telephone company to pay for the network. It provides for the 911 basic service. He further noted that the 911 calls that currently come in are subject to charges from the telephone company.

Mr. Emmett asked how much money has been collected to date, how much has been expended, and whether there is any surplus. Mr. Gamblin estimated that between \$8 and \$9 million over a period of 10 years has been collected, with approximately \$7.5 million already expended. He stated that ETSB purchased the radio system that was installed and built the dispatch building. Payments are still being made to the PBC on the \$3.1 million bond issue.

Chairman Sommer asked when would be the next report to the Committee. Mr. Gamblin stated that he intends to provide a monthly report to the Committee. He further stated that he would research the request made by Mr. Emmett with regard to the amounts of

money that have been collected and expended since the passage of the Ordinance establishing the E-911 system.

Mr. Zeunik stated that the County Board approved three (3) new work orders regarding the IJIS System at the February 2001 meeting. He explained that it is anticipated that the April Justice Committee will include a demonstration of the System for the Committee members.

Mr. Zeunik remarked that the Justice Committee, along with all other pertinent Committees, would receive the Space Study Report at the April meeting. He explained that the Committees would need to decide together on a method and time frame for reviewing that study in its entirety.

Mr. Renner asked what the Committee has already received. Mr. Zeunik responded that the Committees has received the preliminary report, that dealt primarily with the jail and the projection of additional beds that would be needed in the future.

Chairman Sommer presented the bills and two (2) transfers for the approval of the Committee. He stated that the amounts to be transferred are: 1) Sheriff – Fund 0001, \$18,530.00; 2) Sheriff – Fund 0141, \$970.00. Fund 0141 addresses the need for the transfer of funds from police equipment line item, into the operational supplies line item. Mr. Zeunik explained that the transfer is an accounting adjustment, based upon what constitutes a capital expense versus what constitutes a non-capital expense.

Mr. Zeunik stated that the Auditor addressed the Finance Committee previously with a redefining of what constitutes a capital purchase. Previously, the threshold was \$250.00; it has now been raised to \$750.00.

Motion by Renner/Emmett to approve the bills and transfers as presented by the Auditor's Office. Motion carried.

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There being nothing further to come before the Committee at this time, Chairman Sommer adjourned the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha B. Ross
Recording Secretary