

Minutes of the Justice Committee

The Justice Committee of the McLean County Board met on Tuesday, June 2, 2009 at 4:30 p.m. in Room 400 of the Government Center, 115 E. Washington Street, Bloomington, Illinois.

Members Present: Chairman Renner; Members Rackauskas, Hoselton, Wendt, Rankin, and McIntyre

Members Absent: None

Other County Board
Members Present: None

Staff Present: Mr. Terry Lindberg, County Administrator; Mr. Bill Wasson, Assistant County Administrator; and Ms. Judith LaCasse, Assistant to the County Administrator

Department Heads/
Elected Officials
Present: Mr. Bill Yoder, State's Attorney; Mr. Curt Hawk, Director, EMA; Mr. Don Everhart, Circuit Clerk; Ms. Lori McCormick, Director, Court Services; Ms. Cathy Waltz, Superintendent, Juvenile Detention Center; Sheriff Mike Emery; Ms. Beth Kimmerling, Coroner; Ms. Elizabeth Robb, Chief Judge, 11th Circuit Court; Mr. Will Scanlon, Trial Court Administrator-11th Circuit Court

Others Present: None

Chairman Renner called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Chairman Renner presented the minutes from the May 5, 2009 Committee meeting for approval.

Motion by Rackauskas/Rankin to approve the Minutes of the May 5, 2009 Committee Meeting.
Motion carried.

Mr. Bill Yoder, State's Attorney, reviewed his Monthly Caseload Report and Asset Forfeiture Fund Report. He advised that the Asset Forfeiture Fund is, for the first time since he was elected, in the black.

Chairman Renner asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing none, he thanked Mr. Yoder.

Mr. Curt Hawk, Director, Emergency Management Agency ("EMA") presented a request for approval of a Resolution authorizing the McLean County Emergency Management Agency to participate in the State of Illinois Federal Surplus Property Program. He explained that this is a resolution and application to reinstate the County's participation in the State of Illinois Federal Surplus Program.

Mr. Hawk indicated that this program will allow all County Departments to purchase items that are surplus in the State of Illinois through our approved account. He noted that the previous Resolution allowed ESDA/EMA, Highway and Sheriff's Departments and many of the local communities to purchase items utilizing this service, thereby saving dollars for the County and other local communities.

Ms. Rackauskas asked why the State has surplus equipment. Mr. Hawk replied that there could be many reasons for the surplus. He noted that the State may have purchased items they thought they could use and then found that they did not need them. He stated that some of the items are brand new and some are slightly used. Mr. Hawk noted that they typically purchase the items at five cents to the dollar.

Mr. Hawk advised that the previous agreement expired, making it necessary to reapply to ensure continuing eligibility.

Motion by Hoselton/Rankin to Recommend Approval of
a Resolution Authorizing the McLean County
Emergency Management Agency to Participate in the
State of Illinois Federal Surplus Property Program.
Motion carried.

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

Chairman Renner presented the Public Defender's Monthly Caseload Report as submitted by Ms. Amy Davis, Public Defender. There were no questions on the report.

Chairman Renner presented the Children's Advocacy Center Monthly Report and the CASA Report as submitted by Ms. Judy Renner, Director, Children's Advocacy Center. He noted that Ms. Renner is out of town today. There were no questions on the reports.

Mr. Don Everhart, Circuit Clerk, reviewed his April 2009 Statistical Report Report. He indicated that there was nothing out of the ordinary in the report.

Chairman Renner asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing none, he thanked Mr. Everhart.

Ms. Lori McCormick, Director, Court Services, presented a request for approval of a State of Illinois Intergovernmental Agreement between the Department of Healthcare and Family Services and McLean County regarding Medical and Behavioral Health Services. She stated that this Intergovernmental Agreement was previously with the Department of Public Aid and now is with the Department of Healthcare and Family Services.

Ms. McCormick stated that, since State Fiscal Year 1999, McLean County has been able to utilize the State's automated claims processing system to facilitate Medicaid reimbursement for those youth whose guardianship is transferred to McLean County Court Services for placement purposes. She indicated that the Agreement will ensure that Court Services will be able to continue to receive reimbursement for a percentage of the medical and behavioral health services that youth receive while in placement.

Ms. McCormick advised that McLean County presently expends approximately \$115,000.00 to \$125,000.00 annually for the placement of youth in residential treatment programs. The Public Aid program reimburses McLean County a certain percentage of the cost of the placement for these youth. Ms. McCormick explained that, presently, a youth who is placed at a treatment program such as Arrowhead Ranch at a daily cost of \$127.91 per day, the County is reimbursed \$29.82 by Medicaid for every day the youth is in placement. Ms. McCormick indicated that, since 1999, Court Services has received over \$200,000.00 in reimbursement.

Mr. McIntyre questioned the information on page 29 of the agenda packet that refers to an automatic renewal of the Agreement. Ms. McCormick responded that there has not been a new Intergovernmental Agreement signed since 1999. She stated that, because there is a new administration in the Department of Healthcare and Family Services, a new Agreement needed to be signed.

Ms. McCormick stated that Court Services is due over \$12,000.00 from July 2008 to now.

Ms. McCormick indicated that the Court Services office has and will continue to be responsible for the data entry and filing the claims for the reimbursement.

Motion by McIntyre/Rackauskas to Recommend Approval of a State of Illinois Intergovernmental Agreement between the Department of Healthcare and Family Services and McLean County regarding Medical and Behavioral Health Services.
Motion carried.

Ms. McCormick reviewed the Court Services Adult/Juvenile Division Statistics for April 2009, as well as the Juvenile Detention Center statistics. She noted that the out-of-County statistics reflect an increase of youth in detention from 91 days in March to 213 in April. Ms. Cathy Waltz, Superintendent, Juvenile Detention Center, added that the May statistics look about the same as April. She advised that these figures reflect an average number of days in detention. Ms. Waltz noted that the average daily population in 2008 was 18 youth.

Mr. Wendt asked how many youth have been sent to Arrowhead Ranch. Ms. McCormick replied that there are currently three youth at Arrowhead Ranch. She indicated that rarely do they place youth out of the County due to the cost. Ms. McCormick added that the average stay is six to twelve months.

Mr. Wendt asked how do we determine who gets sent to Arrowhead Ranch. Ms. McCormick replied that there are several factors, including family involvement and the youth. Mr. Wendt asked if the youth behave better when they come back. Ms. McCormick responded that parents have been pleased with the results.

Chairman Renner asked if there were any additional questions or comments. Hearing none, he thanked Ms. McCormick.

Sheriff Mike Emery presented the McLean County Detention Facility Population Report for May 2009. He advised that the jail population is decreasing. Sheriff Emery noted that, last year at this time, \$272,000.00 was expended on out-of-County prisoner housing and this year \$52,000.00 has been expended.

Chairman Renner asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, he thanked Sheriff Emery.

Ms. Beth Kimmerling, County Coroner, presented her Monthly Report. She indicated that the number of deaths being reported are down. However, the autopsy numbers are slightly up for both McLean County and out-of-county. Ms. Kimmerling advised that, although this report ends with the month of April, the Coroner's Office is close to realizing 40% of its revenue prediction for 2009.

Ms. Kimmerling announced that she would be happy to answer questions anyone may have on the Annual Report that was distributed last month. She added that she is available to answer questions during the meeting, or by e-mail or in her office.

Mr. McIntyre commented that the Report was very informative and well done.

Chairman Renner indicated that Ms. Kimmerling would be willing to provide tours of the Coroner's Office should any of the new members wish to take a tour.

Ms. Kimmerling pointed out that she went into more detail in her report to assist the new members of the committee.

Chairman Renner asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing none, he thanked Ms. Kimmerling.

Ms. Elizabeth Robb, Chief Judge, 11th Circuit Court, presented a request for approval of a Resolution of the McLean County Board supporting the recommendation to form a Criminal Justice Coordinating Council ("CJCC) and appointing members to the same. She introduced Judge Freitag, Presiding Judge of the Criminal Division. Judge Robb also acknowledged other members of the Council, including Mr. Don Everhart, Circuit Clerk; Mr. Bill Yoder, State's Attorney; Mr. Ron Lewis, Attorney, Public Defender's Office; Sheriff Mike Emery; Mr. Will Scanlon, Trial Court Administrator-11th Circuit Court; Ms. Lori McCormick, Director, Court Services and Ms. Cathy Waltz, Superintendent, Juvenile Detention Center. Judge Robb noted that the group started as the Jail Overcrowding Task Force and is now proposing the new name and new organization, the "Criminal Justice Coordinating Council."

Judge Robb advised that a lengthy written report, drafted by Mr. Scanlon, was included in the Committee packet. She noted that there was a preliminary discussion with the Committee several months ago regarding the efforts to organize the Council. Judge Robb added that she and other members did not anticipate how long the organizing process would take, nor did they anticipate the on-going time commitment the project might require.

Judge Robb indicated that in order to efficiently utilize the jail and to try to manage a criminal justice system from the beginning to the end, it is necessary to regularly focus on examining what we do, why we do it, and how we can do it better. She noted that the proposal will include involvement by other participants in the criminal justice system, including the chiefs of police for the major agencies and Illinois State University, and will also include non-government employees and interested members of the public. Judge Robb added that it is important to look at this from all perspectives to find out how we can better function as a criminal justice system.

Judge Robb stated that the National Institute of Corrections ("NIC") Report, which was released to the McLean County Board for review in March, was a comprehensive report and helped the group focus in on what it needed to do. She indicated that in order to manage a successful criminal justice system, it is necessary for all of us to make a commitment to the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council as proposed.

Judge Robb pointed out that Mr. Lindberg has been instrumental in identifying the fact that we have a lot of access to statistical information that has not been accessed or analyzed, which is a key component to moving forward. She noted that the jail population is down right now. Judge Robb indicated that she would like to think that this is the result of the system working, but added that, at this point, it is impossible to tell precisely what is contributing to lower out-of-county housing costs. She stated that it is necessary to study and analyze the available data and statistics.

Judge Robb advised that a commitment has been made to make the justice system for McLean County a better one for all of the citizens. She added that there has been uniform agreement that we need this Council, and every person who has been asked to be part of this group has quickly agreed.

Judge Robb asked the Committee to support the creation of this Council by supporting the resolution appointing the County Board Chairman and the Justice Committee Chairman to the CJCC.

Mr. Wendt asked what is the anticipated future cost of this project in terms of new employees. Mr. Lindberg replied that the NIC Study recommended that there be a staff capability that would work directly for the CJCC and not be beholden to the County Board, the Sheriff, the County Administration or any other single entity. He noted that Illinois State University faculty have been identified as a possible resource to conduct statistical analyses.

Mr. Lindberg indicated that software is also available that can collect the data from the County's E-Justice System and organize it into a more meaningful format that may assist in determining the reason for the decrease in jail population these last couple of months. He added that no financial commitment has been made to purchase any proprietary software.

Mr. Lindberg stated that the participating agencies are very committed to this project and have been willing to step up and take on an extra load. He noted that our goal is to institutionalize the data gathering and the analysis to the point where the data people might tell the decision makers what they think is going on and provide a quantitative framework for considering future policy changes. Mr. Lindberg anticipated that this project would require a modest investment and resources can be found within current department budgets.

Mr. Wendt expressed concern that the cost of the project may increase in the future. Mr. Lindberg responded that the NIC suggested that there may be some limited grant funding available through the NIC and their parent organization at the federal level. He stated that we are not at a point where we would seek outside funding. Mr. Lindberg indicated that funding within local resources can be identified. He added that we do not anticipate hiring new full-time employees. Mr. Lindberg noted that much of the work might be done on a contractual basis.

Judge Robb indicated that she has been in communication with the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, which put out an RFP pre-grant type of inquiry. She noted that a narrative of the County's plan was submitted to the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority in anticipation of a potential grant.

Ms. Rackauskas commended everyone on the Council for their hard work and dedication to this project. Judge Robb replied that it is a great group of people.

Motion by Rankin/Hoselton to Recommend Approval of
a Resolution of the McLean County Board Supporting
the Recommendation to form a Criminal Justice
Coordinating Council and Appointing members to the
same.

Motion carried.

Chairman Renner presented the May 31, 2009 Justice Committee bills for review and approval as transmitted by the County Auditor. The Justice Committee bills include a Prepaid Total of \$1,652,211.77 and a Fund Total that is the same.

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Motion by Hoselton/McIntyre to Recommend Approval
of the Justice Committee Bills as of May 31, 2009, as
transmitted by the County Auditor.
Motion carried.

Chairman Renner asked if there was any other business or communication for the
Justice Committee. Hearing none, the meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith A. LaCasse
Recording Secretary