

JUSTICE COMMITTEE MEETING

April 24, 2014

3:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jay Dunn, Vice Chair
Merv Jacobs
Jon Baxter
Dave Drobisch
Bill Oliver (arrived @ 3:02p.m.)
Matt Brown

MEMBERS ABSENT

Greg Mattingley
Gary Minich

COUNTY PERSONNEL PRESENT

Lois Durbin, Circuit Clerk
Lt. Jon Butts, Sheriff's Dept
Lori Long, Probation Director
Jay Scott, State's Attorney
Mike Baggett, State's Attorney's Office
Thomas Wheeler, Public Defender's Office
Pat Berter, Probation
Amy Stockwell, Auditor
Sheri Wallace, HR
Judge A. G. Webber
Jerry Lord, DPBC
Jeannie Durham, County Board Office

This meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Jay Dunn at the Macon County Office Building.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING

Motion to approve the minutes of prior meeting (March 27, 2014) made by Merv Jacobs, seconded by Matt Brown, and motion carried 5-0.

CLAIMS

Motion to approve and send the claims to the full board as presented made by Dave Drobisch, seconded by Jon Baxter, motion carried 5-0.

REPORTS

Circuit Clerk

Lois Durbin reported that she had received her intergovernmental agreement from HFS (Healthcare Family Services) and that they were receiving \$36 for each case dealt with. Now, in the agreement, it is down to \$21 per case. That brought the amount of the grant down to about \$30,000. Over the last two years, half has been lost. She said that there would be someone at the conference next week from HFS to speak about this. The actual amount to be lost in the next year is \$9,700. Chair Dunn told Ms. Durbin that she might want to let the Finance Committee know because he was sure it would be discussed during the budget process.

Circuit Court

Macon County Board Resolution Authorizing the Establishment of a Court Appointed Special Advocates Fund

Judge Webber explained that the Board has funded CASA over the last several years and that the State Statute does permit the establishment of a fee to be imposed on various types of cases for the purpose of supporting this program. He announced that he had asked retired Judge Ted Paine to be here to address CASA's proposal, how it came to be, and what it would ask of the board.

Judge Paine explained that CASA has been active in Macon County since about 1998. They have received a degree of funding from the County, first through the State's Attorney's budget a number of years ago and over the last several years through the Court's budget. Approximately a year and a half ago, the General Assembly passed this Statute authorizing a CASA fee and so they are now making the request through the resolution proposed by Judge Webber on CASA's behalf. It is an estimate based on some other fees that have been imposed under the same statute that a \$15 per case fee will generate somewhere in the vicinity of \$24,000 a year to support CASA programs. CASA stands for Court Appointed Special Advocates. The advocates are volunteers who go through a training process and then are supervised by paid supervisors. They advocate for the best interest of these children who have been abused and neglected and are in the court system.

Judge Paine introduced Pam Burkhart, Executive Director to answer questions.

Motion to approve sending the resolution to the Finance Committee for consideration was made by Dave Drobisch, seconded by Merv Jacobs.

Amy Stockwell asked what the total case load is and how that has changed over the last few years.

Ms. Burkhart explained that 196 children are currently being served through the Macon County Court system. There are 450 children who are currently being supervised by the court. The goal is to be able to, at some point, provide each child with an advocate. Advocates are assigned by family so there are about 91 volunteer advocates and there are 4 people in the office. It has gone up. Last year, the court saw 200 new cases and CASA was assigned to 121. It was a 21% increase from the year before.

Bill Oliver asked what the usual time the clients are in CASA jurisdiction. Pam explained that National CASA estimates 18 to 24 months. Here, it runs about 24 to 38 months. Bill asked what the cause of the discrepancy was. Pam said the adoptions in Illinois take from 2 to 4 years, and they stay with the kids until adoptions go through. Bill asked why it is that it takes less time for people to adopt from other countries than it does in Illinois? He asked if there are advocates to speed that up somewhere? Ms. Burkhart said that the Guardian Ad Litem in Macon County is working on keeping track of those kids and being more of an advocate for making those adoptions go faster. DCFS is trying to address the issue at the State level.

Matt Brown asked if the \$15 fee is what is currently being charged. Chairman Dunn said this is a new fee.

Bill Oliver asked who pays the fees. Judge Paine explained that it is the defendants. It is people who have been either convicted or placed under court supervision for a felony, a Class A, B, or C misdemeanor and for a petty or business offense where a court appearance is required. Somebody who gets a speeding ticket that can be paid over the counter does not get charged, but if it a more serious type traffic offense such as driving while suspended or revoked, reckless driving or things of that nature where a court appearance is required, the fee will be applied if they are found guilty or plead guilty.

Bill said he thought it might be that the people dealing with the juveniles would have to pay it. Judge Paine said there are not any provisions in State Law to impose fees on people whose children have been taken into the abuse and neglect system. That is not a possibility, although from things we've seen in the newspaper and other places, a lot of these folks who end up getting charged with felonies or misdemeanors have been abusing their children and that is the reason they are before the criminal court.

The motion carried 6-0

Coroner - No report.

Court Services / Probation –

Lori Long introduced Pat Berter and explained that he would be taking over the Director of Probation at the end of May.

Macon County Board Resolution Approving Increase in Appropriations in the Probation Grant Fund for Illinois Department of Transportation DUI Grant

Lori explained that this is a clean-up resolution due to the difference in fiscal year timing at the local, state and federal levels.

Motion to approve sending the resolution to the Finance Committee for consideration made by Dave Drobisch, seconded by Merv Jacobs and the motion carried 6-0

Lori explained the Detention Average Daily Population chart she distributed. Trends are tracked to show how the numbers are faring in comparison to previous months & years. As of today, there are 11 youth in custody. Six have already have been charged as adults with the potential for one more. These are not inconsequential offenses, but are extremely serious offenses. The contract is for 5 beds, we do pay an overage for any days that we have youth in detention for more than what we have contracted for. We factor in a cushion to do that as best we can, but detention is always a wild card. When kids are charged as adults, they have a tendency to be held for longer periods of time in detention. That causes additional problems over the course of the year. Jay Dunn asked if the contract called for them to do the transportation. Lori confirmed that yes, it does. Peoria County does the transportation. The only time they would not is if they couldn't accept more than 7 Macon County youth. We have not run into that yet. They do what they can to meet our needs. The transportation piece of the contract is significant.

In the specialty courts, which include the Mental Health Court and the Hybrid Court for drug & DUI, the sustainability committee has been meeting on a monthly basis since the beginning of the year and is poised to present a business plan. The Committee is interested in requesting a special hour to hour and a half Justice Committee meeting so that a presentation of the business plan for sustainability of the specialty courts would not have to be fit into a regular committee meeting. The team that has been working on this very diligently includes folks from the Courts, the State's Attorney's Office, the Public Defender's Office, and Heritage. She said she felt it was important to inform the committee of the details that will be helpful to them, especially as the budget planning process is getting ready to start.

Jay Dunn reported that he felt the team was doing a pretty good job. He said the cost for 2015 has been identified and that for right now, they believe there is enough money to sustain the operation through this fiscal year. Next year, additional revenue will need to be looked at. He said he thought it would be a good idea for this committee to understand what actually transpires in the Hybrid Court, understand what they are doing to try to raise money and be aware before the budget process begins. Lori added that they are still waiting on two grant renewals for drug court and DUI court. There are several things up in the air right now.

EMA- No report

Public Building Commission –

Jerry Lord reported that the property on South Franklin St, the Franklin Mall, was closed on yesterday. They are moving forward with the specifications to get bids for demolition on that property.

Public Defender - No Report

Sheriff

Macon County Board Resolution Approving Police Services between the Sheriff's Office and the Village of Argenta

Lt. Butts explained that the current 36 month contract expires at the end of this month. This will be the 3rd contract over 36 months which will give us 9 total years since 2008 that we have been providing police services to the Village. This will be a 3% increase over the existing contract. The existing contract is in the amount of \$204,785.59. The new contract is for \$210,929.16. This raises their quarterly installments from \$17,065.46 to \$17,577.43. I've ordered them a new vehicle per item #22 in the contract where they would purchase a new patrol vehicle for the deputy to use. This is a fair contract for both us and the Village. We usually have a Step 1 or Step 2 Deputy assigned to those newer contracts and this also allows us to have another deputy in that part of the County that we can use in emergency situations or for mutual aid.

Motion to approve sending the resolution to the Finance Committee for consideration was made by Dave Drobisch, seconded by Jon Baxter.

Bill Oliver asked if there was enough money to equip the car. Lt. Butts said the car belongs to the Village and they do all the equipment. The bid that Lt. Butts obtained for the Village was for the vehicle and all the equipment and they pay for it all. This resolution is just for the Officer to be there.

The motion carried 6-0.

State's Attorney

Jay Scott reported that the Child Support Division of his office had a 3% cut in the funding that came through the Attorney General's Office last year. They basically said there will be a 3% cut

that we can take it or leave it and there will be no discussion. Jay said that they had done some figuring and they think they will be able to absorb it for at least another year or so.

CITIZEN REMARKS – PUBLIC COMMENT - None

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS - None

CLOSED SESSION – None needed

NEXT MEETING - Thursday, May 22, 2014. Jay asked if a Thursday during the same timeframe sometime between now and the next meeting would be a good day for everyone for a special meeting. He said he would contact Chair Mattingley and get it set up. He stated that he thought it important for everyone to attend and get a good idea of what the Hybrid Court is. He said that some of the members had attended the recent graduation and it was an emotional experience to listen to the people that graduated from that court. Some of them had been drug and alcohol abusers for a long time. To go through that program and graduate took a lot of dedication on their part, but it took a lot of work from the County people that spend a lot of special time and effort on these Hybrid Courts. Judge Webber added that the Hybrid Court is held every Friday at 1:30 p.m. in Judge Tom Little's courtroom (5A). He encouraged members of the committee and the board to attend to get an idea of what goes on as a part of that program. He said it is not like regular court. It is an entirely different process. Jay asked an email be sent out so everyone could have that information in front of them.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Bill Oliver, seconded by Matt Brown, motion carried 6-0, and meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Jeannie Durham, County Board Office.