

DEKALB COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER

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MINUTES

DEKALB COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER BOARD

Monday, August 2, 2021 @ 8:00 A.M.

CONVENED: 8:00 A.M.

ROLL CALL:

Member Present:

In Person: Mark Olivero, Ron Dicke, Joe Dunn, Kent Likes

Telephonically:

By Video:

Members Absent: Kevin Likes – attending a seminar

Public in Attendance: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Ron Dicke made a motion to approve minutes of May 3, 2021. Joe Dunn seconded. Motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

- It was determined by the Commissioners minutes that Kent Likes was appointed December 21st of 2020.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Mark explained we have been with the State Reimbursement program since 2016 and since that time we have received over 1 Million dollars.
- Mark explained to new board member Kent Likes the State Reimbursement Program is designed to have qualified attorneys as Public Defenders and to make sure our Public Defenders are not over worked.
- Mark stated our case load since the pandemic has been significantly less and he is seeing an increase in cases at this time.
- Joe asked are all CHINS cases given a Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) and how are we involved with the GAL. Mark stated the parents in the Child In Need of Services (CHINS) cases are represented by an attorney, a Public Defender if they qualify. The children in CHINS cases are represented by a GAL. Joe asked if they are always given a GAL. Mark answered that in almost all cases, a child is appointed a GAL but the Judge will make that determination.
- Ron asked as we start seeing a rise in our case load how are we going to find qualified attorneys in our rural area. Mark explained that the State is willing to help us convert unqualified attorneys into qualified attorneys by providing access to training and seminars. Mark indicated

that he does the hiring and up to this point Mark has not had a problem finding qualified attorneys.

- Ron asked how the County finds out if we need more attorneys. Mark explained our projected budget is turned into the County Counsel every year for approval. Mark stated we also do a Budget Presentation to let them know our current and projected situation.
- A copy of the 2022 Projected Budget was handed to all board members. Mark explained Chief Public Defender and Chief Deputy Public Defender salary must be compensated at the same rate as the elected Prosecutor and Chief Prosecutor per the States Commission's Standards.
- Ron asked what the columns in the attorney case load represent within the Quarterly Report. Mark explained the Level 1-6 Felony, JD is Juvenile Delinquent cases, CHINS is Child in Need of Service cases.
- Mark asked all board members if they would be okay with listing their name and term length on the County's Website. All approved.
- A vote was taken on the 2022 Budget Projection. Ron moves to accept budget Kent seconded.
- Joe stated Attorneys bill by the hour. If we were to look at the Public Defenders attorneys do we think their hourly rate is equal to non-Public Defenders hourly rate? Mark explained no, the hourly rate for Public Defender work is much lower. Mark suggested the Public Defender hourly rate would be between 75-100 dollars an hour. Hourly rate for Appeals, determined by State is 90 dollars an hour.
- Mark stated Jake who is fresh out of law school and currently working for Kevin Likes has now been qualified for Appeals and currently handling one of our Public Defender appeals is now on the list with the Judge to be able to handle appeals in the future.
- Mark asked if there were any further questions. Ron stated I believe that covers everything on the agenda.
- Joe moved to adjourn the meeting. Mark seconded.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, November 1, 2021 at 8:00 A.M.

ADJOURNED: 9:00 AM

Respectfully Submitted,

Megan Sexton