

MINUTES

DEKALB COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER BOARD

Monday, August 1, 2022 @ 8:00 A.M.

CONVENED: 8:00 A.M.

ROLL CALL: All Present

Member Present:

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

Telephonically: n/a

By Video: n/a

Members Absent: None

Public in Attendance: None

AGENDA:

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Ron made a motion to approve minutes of May 2, 2022, Kent seconded. Motion passed.

II. QUARTERLY UPDATE

a. Review Reimbursement Report

Mark Reviewed the 2nd Quarter 2022 Request for Reimbursement. Ron asked if the Commissioners and Council are aware of the quarterly reimbursements. Mark confirmed that they are and that they are copied on the Annual Report. He added that at the start of joining the State program that there was concern as to whether the State would be able to keep up with the reimbursements, but we have had no issues to date. The County is happy to receive these reimbursements.

b. Review Title IV-E Fund

Mark stated that the State had contacted him about signing up for this program and that we wouldn't have to do anything in addition to the reimbursement request. The Auditor has set up a separate fund that is just for public defender use. We have received two checks thus far. Ron commented on the low number (21) of CHINS cases this year. Cheryl stated that there aren't even that many because some are counted twice if we are appointed to both the mother and father on the case.

Mark discussed that in addition to CHINS, Stephanie covers Family Recovery Court and Drug Court and that Joe also covers the majority of the Superior II cases.

III. OTHER MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY CHIEF PUBLIC DEFENDER

a. Sign Comprehensive Plan.

A review was done regarding the changes. Everyone is in agreement. All signed.

The changes are as follows:

- Added Deputy Chief benefits
- Changing the hourly rate from \$90/hr to \$100/hr effective January 1, 2023
- Board Members contact information update.

Ron asked if it was hard to find someone to take an appeal at that rate. Kevin stated that it is, but we have a few new attorneys that are willing and gives them experience.

b. Budget Review

Discussion was had over the 2023 proposed budget. County has approved a 4.5% increase. County has already approved for Sarah's position to go from part time to full time and this is our biggest change for the new budget making our overall increase 4.9%. This will be addressed at the budget presentation later this month. Ron made a motion to accept the budget and Joe seconded the motion.

Joe asked how our budget compares to other counties. Mark explained that Noble is about \$200,000 higher, but their chief takes a more aggressive approach and they also have several full time attorneys, which raises their budget. Ron asked if their case load supports the larger budget. It was stated that Noble and DeKalb run about the same and that Noble also has benefits for their attorneys.

It's hard to compare us to Steuben County because they don't have an office and the attorneys have to cover the cases out of their private offices, but then some have benefits as well. Overall we are comparable to other counties.

Discussion was had regarding future benefits on all our attorneys. Mark stated that we have a good staff and wants to be able to keep them. Ron asked if Mark talks with the Commissioners about providing benefits in the future. Mark stated that he does and that he has talked to ClaraMary since our attorneys pay/benefits are based on the prosecutor's office. Her attorneys do not receive benefits at this time, so Mark will work with Neal in the future. Ron suggested to keep the Commissioners in the loop so that there are no surprises.

IV. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

- Joe asked if there had been any resolution on the mentally challenged cases that were discussed at the last meeting. One case had been resolved with the Mother being approved to care for the client and the other case a residential house was found that was able to house and care for the young man.
- Mark stated as part of the Local Advisory Council they will be attending a Mental Health Summit meeting on October 21, 2022 to learn how to better handle these cases.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, November 7, 2022 at 8:00 A.M.

ADJOURNED: Joe made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kent seconded the motion.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cheryl Bradford

