

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD
COMMITTEE MINUTES

JUSTICE & SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Monday, October 3, 2005

Meeting Rm. 1, Brookens Administrative Center

1776 E. Washington St., Urbana

7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Anderson, Carter, Greenwalt, Hogue, James, Putman, Tapley

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sapp, Schroeder

OTHERS PRESENT: Deb Busey (County Administrator), Andrew Buffenbarger (Nursing Home Administrator), Joel Fletcher (State's Attorney's Office), Kathleen Liffick (Head Start Director), Susan McGrath (State's Attorney's Office), Nancy Richardson (Nursing Home), Julia Rietz (State's Attorney), Marilyn Garmon

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. The Recording Secretary called the roll. Declaring a quorum present, the Chair proceeded with the meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDENDUM

The Chair stated agenda item XIII A would be dealt with directly after public participation.

MOTION by Hogue to approve the agenda; seconded by James. Motion carried.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no one for public participation.

MONTHLY REPORTS

MOTION by Hogue to receive and place on file the Circuit Clerk report for August 2005, Grand Jury report for July 2005, Court Services report for August 2005, Developmental Disabilities Board minutes for June 2005, Emergency Management Agency report for September 2005, Mental Health Board minutes for July 2005, Mental Health Board and Developmental Disabilities Board Committee-of-the-Whole Study Session minutes for August 17, 2005, and the Public Defender report for August 2005; seconded by Carter. Motion carried.

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY GRANT MONTHLY REPORTS

MOTION by Putman to receive and place on file the Best Interest of the Children August 2005 report; CASA August 2005 report; Don Moyer Boys & Girls Club July 2005 report; Mental Health Center August 2005 report; Regional Planning Commission August 2005 report; Restoration Urban Ministries July 2005 and August 2005 reports; Talks Mentoring August 2005 report; seconded by James.

Hogue was glad to see Restoration Urban Ministries sent a report.

Motion carried.

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY GRANTS

Request from CASA to Reapportion Grant Funds Due to a Staff Change

MOTION by Greenwalt to approve the request from CASA to reapportion grant funds to accommodate a change in staffing; seconded by Hogue.

Busey viewed the request as a courtesy from CASA. CASA will continue to do the same work as set forth in their grant application; they will simply be doing the work with different positions. CASA was keeping the committee informed of a change that was not in the original grant request.

Motion carried.

CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER

Request Approval of Application for and, if awarded Acceptance of Renewal of National Children's Alliance Program Support Grant

MOTION by Greenwalt to approve the application for and, if awarded acceptance of renewal of National Children's Alliance Program Support Grant; seconded by James.

Anderson noted the grant requires no matching funds or any other financial contribution from the County.

Motion carried.

HEAD START

Monthly Report

MOTION by Putman to accept and place on file the Head Start monthly report; seconded by Greenwalt.

Putman asked if the interns mentioned in Liffick's report were the first interns at Head Start. Liffick replied they were not the first interns, but Head Start does not have interns every semester. Putman asked if more interns were needed. Liffick stated interns could be used at the Savoy site. The Champaign site is much more convenient for University of Illinois students; therefore, interns prefer to work at the Champaign site. The classrooms cannot be overloaded with adults because it would disrupt the classroom dynamic. Putman noted some families who were enrolled have withdrawn from classes. Liffick explained this happens every year, but their enrollment to start the year has climbed. She does not want to take the risk of over-enrollment to compensate for possible dropouts. Putman asked if there has been any change with Head Start enrollees who are refugees from hurricane-damaged areas. Liffick said Champaign County Head Start has enrolled eight children whose families relocated from the Gulf area.

Motion carried.

NURSING HOME

Monthly Report

MOTION by Hogue to accept and place on file the Nursing Home monthly report; seconded by Tapley.

Putman was very happy to read that a bus was received through a grant. Buffenbarger stated the grant was written a couple of years ago and has only now come through.

Tapley asked for an explanation of the Nursing Home budget amendment for almost \$1 million that will be considered at this month's Finance Committee meeting. Buffenbarger said the Nursing Home is doing a number of things to address the financial shortfall that came primarily as a result of agency staffing, the use of overtime, and an inventory system that does not account properly for billable items. The Nursing Home is in the process of revamping its scheduling system to try and capture all of the staff's available work hours, rewriting its attendance policy to guarantee a consistent number of employees will come to work to eliminate the use of agency staff, and redoing the inventory system by the end of this month to capture more billable items. Tapley noticed one of the line items in the budget amendment is IMRF. This line went from a \$24,494 budget to a \$199,054 requested budget change. Tapley acknowledged that Buffenbarger did not write this year's budget and asked if it was a complete oversight by prior management. Buffenbarger understood there was an increase in IMRF by 3% or 4% that was not planned when the original budget was written. Busey said it was likely an oversight. Tapley was concerned because he has brought up the issue of IMRF at past meetings. He wanted to know why this happened. He asked who in the Nursing Home was responsible for putting together the budget. Busey said the Nursing Home has a Comptroller who assembles the budget. The Nursing Home Administrator is ultimately responsible, but the Administrator has historically relied on the Comptroller to prepare the budget. Tapley was shocked the line items in the budget amendment had to be revised by such an amount, adding up to over 20% for the cumulative line items. Buffenbarger said a number of new financial controls have been put in place to try to prevent this situation from happening again. Tapley was pleased to hear it. He asked about the Nursing Home fund balance. He recalled the fund balance was roughly \$1 million at the start of the year and with nearly \$1 million in negative budget amendments, the fund balance must be close to zero. Tapley asked how close the Nursing Home is to needing to borrow money in order to continue operations. Busey said Buffenbarger, Mandy Knight, Dan Welch, and she are working on a recommendation about that issue that will be presented at the Finance Committee meeting on Thursday. Tapley stated someone must be held accountable for this situation. He understood it was not Buffenbarger's doing because he was only recently hired as the Nursing Home Administrator.

Anderson asked about the changes in the food service. Buffenbarger said the restaurant-style dining will offer meals more targeted to the preferences of residents. The change will also create a more social experience in dining for residents. The resident council voted in favor of the change and is excited about it.

Motion carried.

COURT SERVICES

Position Openings in Court Services and the Juvenile Detention Center

Busey stated there was no action required from the committee on this item; Joseph Gordon provided this information for the committee's benefit.

MENTAL HEALTH BOARD

Report and Recommendation of Job Content Evaluation Committee Regarding Position of Business Unit Controller

Busey said she is still waiting to hear back from AFSCME about classification and salary. The committee deferred this item to a later date when the information is available.

ANIMAL CONTROL

Report and Recommendation of Job Content Evaluation Committee Regarding Position of Clerk

Busey stated the Job Content Evaluation Committee reviewed the Animal Control Clerk's position and noted slight changes in the job description, but not enough to validate a change in classification or salary. The committee recommended the clerk job description be updated and no re-classification take place.

MOTION by Putman to accept the Job Content Evaluation Committee's report and recommendation; seconded by Greenwalt.

Putman said the employee has the satisfaction of knowing the work was reviewed and there is value in that.

Motion carried.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Presentation and Discussion Regarding Proposed Youth Court Project

Anderson stated legislation passed in January 2005 that allows counties to pass a fee to provide for youth court programs. Rietz, McGrath, Anderson, and Avery had a meeting several months ago to discuss the concept of youth courts.

Garmon was in attendance to give a Power Point presentation on the subject. Garmon wanted to give the committee a framework for youth courts. Youth courts are a practice of balanced and restorative justice. Balanced and restorative justice functions as an alternative to traditional discipline. The focus is repairing harm that has been done to the victim and improving the strengths and competencies of the offender to keep the juvenile from re-offending. In youth courts, victims are provided the opportunity to discuss how the crime affected them and to ask their offenders why they were victimized. This can provide a sense of closure. Youth courts are also known as peer juries or teen courts. Forty-eight states currently make use of some form of youth courts. The common elements of youth courts include: a function as diversion programs, focus on first-time offenders, also see multiple offenders, have youth and adult volunteers, require the offenders to admit to the charges and accept accountability for their actions, and many require parental consent. Garmon reviewed several models of youth courts that have been utilized in other states: a youth tribunal model, a youth judge model, an adult judge model, and a peer jury model. A variety of agencies administer youth courts. Garmon listed the types of offenses youth court deal with: curfew violations, alcohol and tobacco offenses, etc. Garmon focused on describing peer juries because that is the model she would like to see used in the school system within Champaign County. The peer jury model includes an adult coordinator overseeing the process, written oaths of confidentiality, the offenders are required to admit to and discuss their crimes, the jury deliberates as to what happened and who was affected, and an agreement is constructed. The offender can agree or not agree to the agreement. Common sentencing options include community service, restitution, oral or written apologies to victims, tutoring, and anger management classes. The agreements relate specifically to the individual offense committed. The peer jury is encouraged to be creative in their sentencing. Any offender who accepts an agreement and fails to fulfill its requirements will receive the traditional sanction, such as suspension from school. Garmon showed information from a case study of a peer jury in the Chicago school system. Garmon listed the benefits of a youth court for the victims are an increased involvement and an increased sense of satisfaction with the justice system. Benefits for youth volunteers include empowerment, engagement in local issues, a good item for their college applications, and having a stake in the justice system. Offenders report feeling more satisfied with peer juries. Fifty-five percent (55%) of youth courts close their hearings to the general public. Seventy-three percent (73%) of peer jury programs require offenders to serve on a peer jury. Garmon covered some frequently asked questions about peer juries. Jurors are required to receive an average ten hours of training before serving on a peer jury. Garmon stated youth courts are not an alternative to the legal system, but are an alternative to school suspension. The peer jury program would be operated by the school system. The schools would only need the County Board's approval to receive additional funding for a peer jury program.

Putman asked if offender who took part in the peer jury program be at risk of double jeopardy if the offense went before both a peer jury and the traditional court system. Garmon explained the peer jury is an alternative to school suspension. Youth courts function as a preventive device to keep youth from continuing to offend rather than used for youth who repeatedly commit offenses. Garmon stated the peer juries would deal

with truancy, disorderly conduct with teachers, fighting in school, and similar issues. Youth courts could not have jurisdiction over criminal offenses handled by the Office of the State's Attorney. Julia Rietz expounded that the State's Attorney's Office is not bound by the decisions made by a school-based youth court. If a school-based youth court chose to review a case involving fighting and the State's Attorney felt the case was worthy of prosecution, the State's Attorney would prosecute. Rietz thinks fighting in schools and violence against teachers are serious issues and can be criminal, depending on the circumstances. She does not think those types of offenses would be appropriate for a school-based youth court. Double jeopardy would not apply to a youth court decision because it is not a judicial decision. Garmon reiterated that a criminal offense that would go to the State's Attorney's Office could not be the type of offense referred to a peer jury.

Tapley asked what the County Board's involvement would be in the program. Garmon stated there are no plans at this time to ask the County Board for any funding for the peer jury program because the County Board already provides funding for juvenile delinquency prevention grants.

Greenwalt said she understood tonight's presentation was for informational purposes, but she was under the impression the County might be asked to pass additional fees and fines to provide a funding base for a youth courts program in addition to funding the juvenile delinquency prevention grants. Busey said a fee is a funding source that has been legislatively approved for this type of project and could be considered. Putman asked how the peer jury program would be funded. Garmon explained the schools would have to pay for the program. The legislation does give the County Board the option of enacting a fee for peer juries, but she is not asking for that at this time. There are additional funding sources available; such as the American Bar Association, Illinois Youth Court Association, or grants. James stated instituting a fee for peer juries would cause those who least can afford it to pay for it. He suggested letting the schools and parents handle it. Tapley noted one of the letters of support from a school administrator mentioned the school system loses thousands of dollars a year in daily attendance money because of school suspensions. If this program caused suspensions to decrease significantly, it could pay for itself.

Putman asked Garmon what reasons were given by offenders who declined to participate in youth courts programs instead of traditional sanction. Garmon said the option of youth courts programs is usually taken when it is offered as an alternative. In 95% of youth courts cases, an agreement is reached. Only 75% of the offenders who make the agreements actually complete all the requirements of the agreement.

Anderson thanked Garmon for her presentation.

Report on Juvenile Delinquency Grant Reporting Process

Anderson reviewed the history of the grant reporting process. Anderson and Busey met with Peter Tracy, Marilyn Garmon (who has been doing the grant monitoring), and Patricia Avery (Director of Champaign-Urbana Area Project, the organization contracted to handle the grant monitoring) to review the current process and possible options for improvement. Busey described how the County Board has been awarding juvenile delinquency grants for the past five years. It is felt that the process for grant recipients to report on their programs should require greater accountability. The Mental Health Board has an extremely well documented process for awarding grants. Dealing with delinquency prevention is something that falls under the purview of the Mental Health Board. Busey spoke with Tracy about the Mental Health Board's process. Next month a recommendation will be brought to the Justice & Social Services Committee for one of two approaches. One approach would be to rely on Tracy and his staff to provide technical assistance to help develop a more comprehensive process for the award of the delinquency prevention grants. The other alternative is for this committee to recommend to the County Board that the Public Safety Sales Tax Grant Funds go to the Mental Health Board and allow them to administer the grants and process on behalf of the County Board. The benefit to the latter option is both the Mental Health Board and the County Board each award about \$200,000 a year for the same initiatives. Combining the funds could mean applications from more comprehensive programs or at least one body looking at all of the opportunities to award grants. There would also be some benefit of

consistency for the organizations applying for these funds. They would not have to apply to the County Board for funds at the same time as they are applying separately to the Mental Health Board. The Mental Board staff are experts at this process, have contracts with entities who are awarded funds, and work with the entities on a regular basis. The Mental Health Board has a more concise, documented, and comprehensive reporting process than the County Board can realize as a government body whose membership changes every two years. The makeup of the Justice & Social Services Committee potentially changes every two years. It is difficult to expect County Board members, working with a County Administrator who is not an expert in the grant reporting field, to make these kinds of funding decisions.

A formal recommendation will be brought to the committee for consideration in November. Tapley said he foresees some County Board members having objections to turning over funding and control to the Mental Health Board. Busey said a better understanding of the Mental Health Board's processes will enable the County Board to make a decision. The Mental Health Board establishes funding priorities and types of programs to focus on before the start of a funding cycle. Anderson said Tracy would be present at next month's meeting and he showed willingness to assist the County Board in their process.

Carter exited the meeting prior to 8:08 p.m.

OTHER BUSINESS

Closed Session Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) 1 to Consider the Employment, Compensation, Discipline, Performance, or Dismissal of an Employee

MOTION by Tapley to enter into executive session pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) 1 to consider the employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of an employee. He further moved that the following individual remain present: the Recording Secretary. Motion seconded by James. Motion carried.

Recording Secretary called the roll. Anderson, Greenwalt, Hogue, James, Putman, and Tapley were present. The Chair declared closed session at 8:10 p.m.

The committee resumed open session at 8:20 p.m.

Putman would like the committee to discuss the County's emergency preparedness. She would like Bill Keller to brief the committee at the November meeting. The committee agreed to request Keller attend the next possible meeting. Anderson said Keller left recently for eighteen days to help in the South. Putman said December would be fine if Keller's schedule does not allow him to attend the November meeting.

DETERMINATION OF ITEMS TO BE PLACED ON COUNTY BOARD CONSENT AGENDA

The Chair designated the National Children's Alliance Program Support Grant application from the Children's Advocacy Center to be placed on the County Board Consent Agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kat Bork
Administrative Secretary

Secy's note: The minutes reflect the order of the agenda and may not necessarily reflect the order of business conducted at the meeting.