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DeKalb County Government  
Sycamore, Illinois

**Law & Justice Committee Minutes  
May 24, 2021**

The Law and Justice Committee of the DeKalb County Board met virtually via Zoom on Monday, May 24, 2021. Madam Chair Dianne Leifheit called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Those members present via Zoom were Ms. Mary Cozad, Mrs. Karen Cribben, Mrs. Kathy Lampkins, Mr. Neill Mohammad, Ms. Linda Slabon, Mr. Larry West, and Chair Dianne Leifheit. A quorum was established with all seven Members present.

Others that were present included Tom McCulloch, Michael Venditti, Dennis Miller, Sheriff Roger Scott, Chief Deputy Andy Sullivan, and Chief Carolyn Parnow.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**It was moved by Ms. Slabon and seconded by Mrs. Lampkins to approve the agenda as presented. Those Members voting yea were Ms. Cozad, Mrs. Cribben, Mrs. Lampkins, Mr. Mohammad, Ms. Slabon, Mr. West, and Chair Leifheit. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Ms. Cozad moved to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2021 Committee Meeting and Mr. West seconded the motion. Those Members voting yea were Ms. Cozad, Mrs. Cribben, Mrs. Lampkins, Mr. Mohammad, Ms. Slabon, Mr. West, and Chair Leifheit. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

**PUBLIC DEFENDER'S REPORT**

Mr. McCulloch placed the April 2021 Public Defender's Report on file with the Committee. According to the report, there were 1091 cases opened and 934 closed. There is currently still only one courtroom that is holding jury trials, which is slowing down the ability to move and close cases, but they are still getting appointed to many cases, he shared. Mr. McCulloch predicted that it would be at least another 2-3 months before the courts opened back up fully.

**COURT SERVICES REPORT**

DeKalb County Court Services Director Michael Venditti placed his monthly Adult, Juvenile, and Pretrial Reports on file with the Committee.

Mr. Venditti reported that the Department is now starting to see an up tick in activity coming from the Courthouse. The number of adult cases that they have seen sentenced to supervision has increased from two clients in January to twenty-two in April. That number is continuing to increase but is nowhere near yet to pre-COVID numbers. They are also seeing a similar increase in the number of cases that are being transferred in from out of County. In January they saw five clients and in April twenty-two new cases transferred in.

Community service case hours are starting to increase as well. In January, 265 hours were ordered and in April there were 4,330 hours ordered. They are still struggling to find worksites for individuals to complete their ordered hours. They were only able to get 621 hours completed in April due to the shortage of sites being offered. The Department is still accepting food donations to local food pantries as their primary way to work off community restitution service hours.

Mr. Venditti also shared that they still had one youth in detention and they are continuing to explore alternative placement options with DCFS. He lastly reviewed Pretrial Services numbers with the group.

### **EMERGENCY SERVICES & DISASTER AGENCY (ESDA) ANNUAL REPORT**

DeKalb County Coroner / ESDA Coordinator Dennis Miller joined the Committee to provide is ESDA Annual Report. In 2021, the DeKalb County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) will be reviewed and updated. It will then be submitted to the Illinois Emergency Management Agency for approval. The plan, with its annexes, defines how DeKalb County analysis, prepares for, and responds to an emergency event, whether natural or man-made. The ongoing mandates that are requested by the National Incident Management System, (NIMS) will continue to be addressed and implemented.

The Local Emergency Planning Committee (L.E.P.C.) continues to meet quarterly. The purpose of the committee is to register and record all the facilities within the County that manufacture, use and/or store hazardous materials.

Mr. Miller expressed that 2020 was an unprecedented year with the magnitude of the global pandemic, COVID-19. Despite the challenges faced, ESDA was able to supply the County with the necessary PPE that Mr. Miller was provided. These supplies consisted of approximately 370,000 surgical masks, 140,000 N95 masks, 27,000 gowns, 142,000 gloves, 1,800 goggles, 23,000 packs of hand sanitizer, 100 no touch thermometers, 50 body bags, 1,000 face shields and 300 Tyvek suits. Mr. Miller distributed the majority of the PPE items to multiple agencies within the County, including, but not limited to, first responders, school districts, long-term housing facilities, nursing homes, fire departments, county agencies, including, The Health Department, Sheriff's Office, FMO, Judicial, Communications, etc. Maintaining, storing and dissemination of all supplies was conducted and overseen by Mr. Miller.

As in previous years, much of the severe storm spotting responsibility was aided by a dedicated group of volunteers, (Sheriff's Auxiliary, and the Amateur Radio Operators) in the DeKalb County area. In all severe weather watches, the communication assets of the ham radio operators enable Mr. Miller and the central warning point dispatchers to keep current of the weather conditions in the area. This capability was demonstrated this year in many of the 53 severe weather watches and warnings. With the aid of support staff, the office was able to arrange and conduct a weather spotter training program within the County. Over 85 people were trained in storm spotting.

The ESDA Office planned and participated in several other exercises that took place throughout the County in 2020. Those consisted of table top exercises, functional exercises, full-scale exercises, and pipeline safety training programs.

ESDA was notified and responded to 25 separate incidents this past year. Most were fuel leaks, while the others involved trains verses pedestrian mishaps, power outages, and high winds.

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Mr. Miller attended and participated in several miscellaneous meetings throughout the area that are mandated for accreditation. He also assisted several Long-Term Health Care Families with the development of their Emergency Operations Plans. The Federal mandates that are required by the National Incident Management System (NIMS) will continue to be addressed and implemented. [Link to Full Annual Report](#)

#### **CORONER'S ANNUAL REPORT – [Link to Full Annual Report](#)**

Mr. Miller additionally provided his 2020 Annual Coroner's Report to the Committee. He shared that last year he performed a total of 714 death investigations as opposed to 614 the two previously years. He also noted that suicidal deaths within the County are down from 15 to 9 in 2020. He also explained that due to a change in the state statute he hasn't had an inquest since 2008.

He also explained that although autopsies are slightly down for 2020, he believes they will increase for 2021 due to drug-related deaths running rampant again throughout the County.

The only sources of revenue that the Coroner's Office has are cremation permits. Those permits are time consuming and have increase significantly. It is currently \$50 per permit. Mr. Miller shared that he has been trying for the last 5 years to get those permits increased to \$100 but has been unsuccessful at the state level. Mr. Miller lastly shared how he works with individuals and families who don't have the means to cremate or bury their loved ones or for those who have no other families, what may be some options for dispositions.

#### **SHERIFF'S UPDATES**

Chief Deputy Sullivan shared he is expecting EF Johnson and K&M Communications to be back on-site next week to work on the VHF communications (the radio frequency used by fire departments). There has been an issue down in Leland with interference. They are hoping to use some older equipment mixed with the new equipment to get rid of the interference. More will be known next week, the Chief reported.

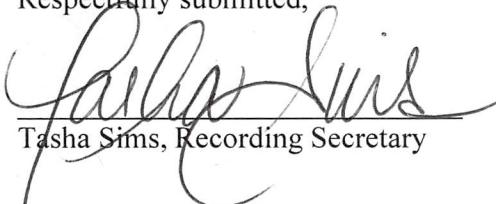
With Chief Joyce Klein's retirement after 40+ years, Sheriff Scott promoted Carolyn Parnow to Chief of Corrections, Erin McRoberts to Lieutenant of Corrections, and Lindsay Smith to Corrections Sergeant. The Committee wished the best of success to all in their new positions of leadership with the Sheriff's Office.

Lastly, Sheriff Scott briefly reviewed his monthly Corrections Overtime Report. There have been five open positions. They are now down to three open positions with two in the pipeline going through their extensive training and testing.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Mrs. Lampkins moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:22 p.m. Mr. West seconded the motion. Those Members voting yea were Ms. Cozad, Mrs. Cribben, Mrs. Lampkins, Mr. Mohammad, Ms. Slabon, Mr. West, and Chair Leifheit. The motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,



Tasha Sims, Recording Secretary

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