

**JUSTICE COMMITTEE MEETING  
Macon County Office Building  
Macon County Board Room #514  
141 S. Main Street, Decatur, IL 62523**

**July 22, 2021 @ 3:00 P.M.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Greg Mattingley – Chair  
Debra Kraft – Vice Chair  
Dave Drobisch  
Jim Gresham  
Lloyd Holman  
Bill Oliver  
Verzell Taylor

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

**COUNTY PERSONNEL PRESENT**

Karl Coleman, County Board member  
Mike Baggett, State’s Attorney’s Office  
Scott Rueter, State’s Attorney  
Pat Berter, Probation  
Judge Griffith, Courts  
Jessie Smalley, HR  
Sherry Doty, Circuit Clerk  
Carol Reed, Auditor  
Sheriff Root  
Kris Thompson, Sheriff’s Office  
Mike Day, Coroner  
Jeannie Durham, County Board Office

The meeting was called to order by Chair Mattingley @ 3:00 p.m. at the Macon County Office Building.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING**

Ms. Kraft made a motion to approve the minutes from the last Macon County Board Justice Committee meeting (6/24/2021), seconded by Mr. Drobisch and the motion carried 7-0.

**CLAIMS**

Ms. Kraft made a motion to approve the claims as presented, seconded by Ms. Taylor and the motion carried 7-0.

**REPORTS**

*Circuit Clerk – No report*

*Circuit Courts –*

Judge Griffith reported things are going reasonably well. During the past month’s hearing session, four trials were at least started. Cook County seems to have a backlog of about 9,000 cases. In our county, thanks to the State’s Attorney and the Public Defender, Ms. Sanders, cases are being moving and resolving. There is no backlog and things are going reasonably well.

*Coroner – No Report*

*Court Services / Probation –*

Mr. Berter reported that they have received pretty much all of their money from the AOIC. They only owe for June. That is really good compared to years past. It is unknown what FY22 is going

to look like yet, but the word is that there will not be a cut. Mr. Berter said if they get the same amount of money, that would be great.

When the budget is presented for FY22, the automation line will show an increase of nearly \$20,000. The reason for that is that beginning January 1, 2022, the department will have to push the case management information every night to AOIC. They are going to start looking at all of the Probation Department information in the computer. Currently, the case management system tracker does not have all of the information as requested by AOIC and it is not yet known how much the cost will be, but the thought is that it is going to be quite a bit. With this data push, they should be able to track and provide reports to the departments each month to make sure the benchmarks are being hit as required. Mr. Berter said his department has done a really good job and there shouldn't be more than just a few gaps that might have to be tweaked, but he thought they'd be in pretty good shape.

***Emergency Management Agency – No report***

***Public Building Commission – No Report***

***Public Defender's Office – No Report***

***Sheriff's Department –***

***Macon County Board Resolution Approving an Agreement with the Macon County Mental Health Board for Inmate Mental Health Services at the Macon County Jail for the Term of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022***

Sheriff Root explained that after doing some research, nothing could be found where this money had been accepted from the beginning. So, this is a correction to assure 1) the department is authorized in acceptance. This agreement has been in place for several years. It works on a voucher. We provide the services or have them provided and then submit the voucher to the Macon County Mental Health Board and once they approve it, we are reimbursed up to \$101,401.

Chair Mattingley asked if the Mental Health is still doing like they used to in that they were regularly physically present in the jail. Sheriff Root said they do the same services as well as teleservices for some of the services. They do charge for the services.

Ms. Kraft made a motion to forward the resolution on to the Finance Committee with recommendation to approve, seconded by Mr. Drobisch and the motion carried 7-0.

***Macon County Board Resolution Approving an Agreement between the Public Safety Training Foundation and the County of Macon, Illinois Acting By and Through the Office of the Sheriff, for use of the Grant Farm Law Enforcement Training Center and the Elwin Range***

Sheriff Root explained that this was a previous resolution that was done in 2016 or 2017. The board has changed names and transferred the property, but are still giving us the same access.

They wanted to correct the resolution for the purposes of making sure we have the right name of the Foundation that is allowing us access to the facility.

Mr. Holman made a motion to forward the resolution on to the Finance Committee with recommendation to approve, seconded by Mr. Drobisch and the motion carried 7-0.

Sheriff Root continued with his report saying he would like to start a discussion.

As some research has been done throughout the transition, some things have been discovered that they would like to address before the budget process is started.

First thing, in 1988 the jail was staffed at 70 people. In 1998, there was capacity of 204 inmates and staffing was still at 72 correctional officers. So, in 2008, according to the jail inspection reports, there were 245 inmates with a capacity of 252 and a staffing level of 75. In 2021, the inspections says there is normally about 306 inmates with a capacity of 405. There are still only 74 Correctional Staff. The inmate population is regularly in the 320's and occasionally reaches 340's. The number of inmates is not really the consistent for the increase in the year, but the number of transports, medical appointments, surgeries, hospital in patient stays, court dates in other jurisdictions, federal transports and onward is causing a problem with overtime.

An analysis of overtime was done in 2019 through 2021. The federal transports alone in 2019 was at \$136,475. In 2020, COVID hit and there were not as many transports so it went down to \$63,559. In 2021, a lot of ZOOM court appearances are still being done, but it is still at \$41,000. This is in addition to the number of overtime as a result of inmates in the hospital because of their stay in the Macon County jail. So, in 2019, inmates in the hospital cost us \$14,000 roughly. In 2020, it was \$20,000 in overtime just as a result of inmates having to be watched while in the hospital. In 2021, it is already at \$7,000 as a result of people that have to be watched while in the hospital. The transports and overtime associated with doing these things outside of the County jail are causing a burden on the jail. At some point, Sheriff Root said they are needing to ask for 5 additional officers just for the purposes of transport and making sure that those people make their appointments and court appointments that appear outside of Macon County.

Chair Mattingley suggested that that would be a discussion for budget time. Sheriff Root said he had wanted to have this discussion because at some point, this problem for the overtime and the number mandated over time because of this needs to be addressed.

Mr. Mattingley asked if the five officers would be spread over all 3 shifts or just 2. Sheriff Root explained that it would be specifically for transports, so it would be a day shift only for the purpose, mostly, of taking federal inmates that require two officers to transport. Right now, there is a reimbursement of \$30 for those transports. But, if people on shift are doing it, the \$30 reimbursement would remain the same. There is also a little bit of a cost that has to be paid as a result of the reimbursement of \$30 while we are paying \$36. There is a little bit of a difference between what is paid out and what is recovered from the transports. In order to 1) save money to the County, having people on staff to do the transports would be beneficial.

Mr. Oliver asked what the distance of transports are. Sheriff Root said typically court is in Champaign or Springfield. Mr. Oliver asked if there was any chance for reimbursement from any other government entity. Sheriff Root explained that they only allow the \$30 per officer per hour

as stated in the contract. Mr. Oliver asked if the \$30 figure is signed every year or for multiple years. Sheriff Root said the reimbursement cost went up from 2017 when it was renegotiated in 2018. Mr. Thompson explained that the feds don't normally like to renegotiate their prisoner contracts for 10 year periods. So, in 2017 / 2018, there was just an increase which was quite large compared to the initial federal contract which was not negotiated until 2010. That was our first contract with the federal government. Mr. Oliver said he just wondered if there was any COLA built into it. Sheriff Root said no, there is no COLA built into the contract.

Mr. Gresham asked about justification for picking the number 5 and asked if something would be prepared on that. Sheriff Root said they were looking at the need of a 4 man team and the one extra would allow a little flexibility for vacations and sick time so that if a person is off, there would still be two people and the service could be provided. There could not be more than one person off at a time in order to complete the team. It is built on a team concept of 4 people and one extra person.

Mr. Thompson added that it is important to note that it is not just transports to court. These corrections officers transport inmates on a daily basis sometime going to Springfield, Champaign & Peoria all on the same day at the same time. The burden is that when you have 15 or 16 officers working in the jail in the daytime, that burden of needing 6 plus officers to transport people is assumed in overtime costs. So hiring a body to do the transports Monday through Friday which is when 90% of them take place, would reduce the overtime burden greatly. In addition, to court transports for the federal government, state court transports are done. Prisoners were picked up in Alabama last week. There are inmates at the hospital. Inmates have to be taken to doctor appointments, dialysis, etc. Doctor appointments can be at the Women's Health Center, St. Mary's Hospital, DMH, Springfield, etc. We have to give them the same or better medical care than you would get if you are free. It is not just federal transports that we are talking about. These officers are burdened with driving all over the State of Illinois and outside the state. To condense, what was done in 1988 with 70 corrections officers and 100 inmates, is being done now with 330 to 350 inmates with 74 corrections officers.

Mr. Rueter added that to the jail's credit, they will call the State's Attorney's Office when there is an inmate that is a big drain on the budget and the safety factors are looked at and if there is any way, they are gotten out of the jail with a recog bond. He said they work very well together on that respect.

***State's Attorney's Office –***

Mr. Rueter reported that the State has informed the office of a Cost of Living increase for the both the State's Attorney as well as the Public Defender for this fiscal year. That state statutorily sets the salaries for the State's Attorney as well as the Public Defender. Mr. Baggett informed the committee that the resolution did not make this agenda, but asked permission to take it straight to the Finance Committee. The increase is for all the State's Attorneys in the state.

**CITIZEN REMARKS – PUBLIC COMMENT –**

Mr. Karl Coleman, County Board member asked about the transport from Alabama referred to earlier. Sheriff Root said it was a warrant out of Macon County that required them by the State's Attorney and the Court to go and retrieve that person.

Mr. Rueter added that they are very careful in their office and if someone fails to appear in court or if they have charges against someone and are wanting to arrest them, geographical limitations are put on warrants depending on the seriousness of the charge. If it is a murder case, it doesn't matter where they are, Mr. Rueter said they want them back here. If it is a shoplifting case and they are north of I80 or south of I65, they may say no. They look at the nature of the case and the charges when the Sheriff lets them know and decide if they really want to go through extradition and go get them or are they willing to look at it and say, geographically, just tell them that if they come back to Illinois they're going to get picked up. Sometimes that is a good solution too. Sheriff Root said they had just had one where he had wanted to verify that if they got a warrant and it is questionable as to how far they have to go, they will verify that the State's Attorney's office will prosecute if they bring them back. There have been a few cases where they have brought someone back just because the geographical limits are within bounds. He said they will make sure that the State's Attorney will prosecute before they make that effort. Mr. Rueter says it depends on the case by case basis, but they try to be conservative with the County's money.

Mr. Gresham commented that there are probably other jurisdictions that are leaving people here because they don't want to come and get them.

Chair Mattingley asked if we still have a bunch that are sentenced but not accepted for transport. Sheriff Root said they have 26 waiting custody within the Department of Corrections. It was up to 60 at one point, so it is moving some.

Mr. Oliver asked how much the mental health is costing the county. Sheriff Root said that the entire budget last year was not spent. It was right around \$78,000. The medical and psychological budgets are in the same bucket, so there is no way to differentiate. He said they'd have to go back and look individually, but he thought it was close to \$78,000.

Chair Mattingley asked if those costs are billed to the Mental Health Board and don't affect the general fund. Sheriff Root said they bill them and then reimbursement goes back into the general fund.

**Old Business** None

**New Business** - None

**Closed Session** – None needed

**NEXT MEETING** August 26, 2021

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Mattingley @ 3:20 p.m.

*Minutes submitted by Jeannie Durham, Executive Secretary, Macon County Board Office*