

**BERRIEN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE
VIA ZOOM
Minutes of August 27, 2020**

Present: Jim Curran, Chair
Michael Majerek, Vice Chair
Chris Heugel
Don Meeks Sr.

Absent:

Scheduled: Brian Dissette, County Administrator
Annette Christie, County Administration
Paul Jancha, Jr., Public Defender
Jean Lawrence, Trial Court – Family Division
Todd Johnson, Building & Grounds
Carrie Smietanka-Haney, Trial Court

Others:

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 12:07 pm.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Majerek, supported by Meeks, to approve the minutes of the August 20, 2020 meeting. Roll Call Vote as follows: 4 YEAS: Curran, Majerek, Heugel, Meeks. Motion Carried.

Resolutions

Jancha discussed the grant and the increase in parent support. Lawrence stated the reimbursement percentage of the contract attorneys is approximately \$130,000 per year.

The following resolutions were approved:

Resolution #A2009321 Contract with Social Workers – Paul Jancha, Jr. and Jean Lawrence

Resolution #A2009322 Approve Grant Application – Jean Lawrence

Update on the FOC Remodel – Brian Dissette and Todd Johnson

Dissette and Johnson discussed the format of the service desk area, which would be similar to the first floor. Discussions ensued regarding the layout with the lobby and whether the closet is needed. Dissette will present the preferred design to the court team for their concurrence, then implement the construction plan. Curran requested the final plan be forwarded to the Administration Committee.

Court Update – Carrie Smietanka-Haney

Smietanka-Haney thanked the committee for the approval of the remodeling. She stated that when she started looking at locations for jury selections, she was unaware of the remodeling that had been done at the Niles courthouse. The north side of the building is now a large open area and should work for jury selection for both St. Joseph and Niles, but will still need technology upgrades, which she reviewed. Felonies may be able to resume by the end of next month.

Discussions ensued regarding the comparison of restrictions of Phase 2, which we are currently in, and Phase 3, which may be achieved next month.

Delinquency Juveniles and Neglect and Abuse Contract Bid – Paul Jancha, Jr. and Brian Dissette

Jancha reported the contracts have not been up for bid since 2014. The Court is seeking improvements on these contracts and a bid request will be sent out to more than just local attorneys. Dissette stated that Corporate Counsel has been involved in the work group to determine the needs.

Attorney Contracts – Paul Jancha, Jr. and Brian Dissette

Jancha discussed the Panel Agreement, which is typically 14 to 17 attorneys, and the need to have a large pool of attorneys available for conflicts, etc. These attorneys are paid an hourly rate at the conclusion of the case.

Miscellaneous

Dissette received an email during the meeting from Freehling regarding the FOC remodel. She requested the addition of a speaker box and a wheelchair friendly counter. The Committee requested Dissette forward the email to Johnson.

Public Comment

None.

Meeting adjourned at 12:48pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Arent