

**TIPPECANOE COUNTY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
NOVEMBER 14, 2000**

The Tippecanoe County Council held a special meeting on Tuesday, November 14, 2000 at 1:00 P.M. in the Tippecanoe Room in the County Office Building. Council members present were: President Jeffrey Kessler, Vice President David S. Byers, Connie Basham, Margaret K. Bell, and David S. Koltick; Auditor Robert A. Plantenga, Attorney David W. Luhman, and Secretary Pauline E. Rohr. (Councilmembers Jeffrey A. Kemper and Ronald L. Fruitt were absent.)

Superior Court III Judge Loretta Rush was present to discuss various subjects relating to her court.

President Kessler called the meeting to order.

Overview of Juvenile Court

For an average case, the Judge will see a child as many as 5 to 10 per year in court. If charges are filed, Judge Rush wants that child in court within two weeks of the arrest. She thinks it is important to set the consequences of the act quickly so that the child can receive treatment and help for a preventative effort. The extra Juvenile Probation Officer has been a help in accomplishing this.

With a grant beginning April 1, 2001 that will run until the end of 2002, Judge Rush plans to hire a Probation Officer who will work with and keep track of serious habitual children.

SHOWCAP is a program set up to track children with the cooperation of police and schools. Juvenile Probation Officers meet with juveniles in a group at the schools instead of requiring their appearance at the Courthouse.

On Fridays, Judge Rush may hear 20 to 80 Paternity cases so that support can be established to improve the child's quality of life. She works closely with the Prosecutor's 4-D Office to increase the amount of child support collected.

Training began this week on the QUEST Software and she hopes it will be fully implemented by December. The Court's forms have been entered. All juvenile programs plus Cary Home, CASA, police, and schools will have access.

SAFE Schools is a preventative effort to provide services in homes to elementary students with multiple referrals. This program will be coordinated through QUEST.

All probation cases are drug tested with 70% testing positive. Judge Rush secured a grant that pays half the cost of the drug assessment and the parents pay the other half.

Children who are truant and picked up by the police are taken to school. In some cases parents have been incarcerated because they didn't send their children to school.

Community Systemwide Response, in conjunction with Purdue University, is a team headed by the Juvenile Court Judge. Because of the County's participation, grant dollars are available. They are putting together a survey for the high schools to find out juvenile problems in the community.

YOUTH CENTER

Judge Rush said meetings are being held concerning construction of a Youth Center but she is unclear how it will be funded. She said certain criteria have to be met to qualify for Federal reimbursement dollars. She thinks there is a need to hire someone with expertise to tell the County what it needs to do and how that can be accomplished.

Councilmember Koltick said, because the County funded a certain number of beds at Wabash Valley Hospital, some juveniles have been placed there who should not have been. He worries that a similar miscalculation will be made with a Juvenile Detention Center. Judge Rush responded that she is not concerned with placing a child in a residential facility. She needs a secure facility where she can immediately place a child in an emergency situation.

OUT-OF-COUNTY PLACEMENTS

Spending is down substantially but increased case load requires more intensive work.

SECURE DETENTION

In 2001, Johnson County's rate will increase from \$100.00 to \$140.00 per day and Muncie will increase from \$110.00 to \$130.00 per day. These facilities are often full.

Judge Rush is uncomfortable with the County's debt of \$1.2 million to the DOC. She would like to hand the bills over to the County for a decision on what will be paid and what won't. Although \$100,000.00 has been paid to the DOC this year, she would like the Council to tell her how she is to proceed without an appropriation.

REIMBURSEMENTS

Reimbursements are established for the families at the beginning of a case. They seek whatever type of federal funding is available but this is a lot of work for the court and the Clerk's staff. A shortage of Clerk's part-time staff has put a burden on the Judge and her staff.

Superior Court III needs a full time Financial Administrator to avoid problem of posting reimbursements to the wrong account for secure detention. This person could determine the financial situation of the parents and then seek maximum Federal reimbursements.

President Kessler said he thinks the Council would be willing to fund a full time Financial Administrator early in 2001. Auditor Plantenga said Judge Rush needs to ask the Commissioners to create the position after which the job description will be sent to Wagner, Irwin, and Scheele to determine the salary. When these steps are completed, it will be brought to the Council for funding. This process could be started before the end of this year. Judge Rush said this position is not her first priority for juvenile services but it would help the County receive reimbursements. Councilmember Basham observed that a Financial Administrator would help free up some of the Judge's time.

President Kessler asked if it might be possible to negotiate the amount we owe to the DOC. Councilmember Basham said Montgomery County's debt was lowered because they paid in a lump sum. She also asked if we are being charged more when one facility is full and the child has to be sent to another with a higher per diem. Judge Rush said the bills for placement show the per diem rates which vary from \$58.00 up to \$100.00 per day for the DOC which is half the cost.

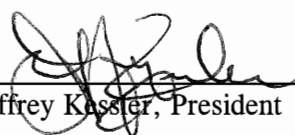
President Kessler asked if the bills Judge Rush has for secure detention will stay with the Court. Auditor Plantenga said they will because he cannot pay the bills without an appropriation which Judge Rush will have to request. This requests was turned by the Council at the November meeting. President Kessler asked if the debt to DOC could be paid with Tax Anticipation Notes (TANS). Auditor Plantenga responded that paying the debt in a lump sum would be within our maximum levy limit so there would be no advantage compared to increasing her appropriation to pay the debt.

RECESS

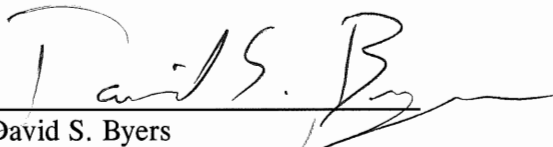
The Council recessed at 1:55 P.M. until 2:00 P.M.

Robert A. Plantenga, Auditor

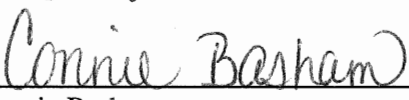
TIPPECANOE COUNTY COUNCIL



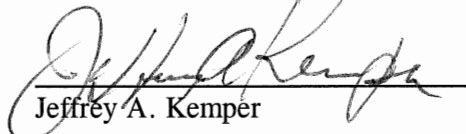
Jeffrey Kessler, President



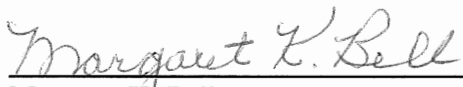
David S. Byers



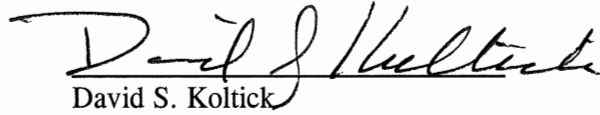
Connie Basham




Jeffrey A. Kemper



Margaret K. Bell



David S. Koltick

Attest: 

Robert A. Plantenga, Auditor



Ronald L. Fruitt