

# Jefferson County Public Defender Board Meeting

## Meeting Minutes

Thursday November 18, 2020 – meeting held via Zoom

Present: Board members; Jason Pattison, Robert Little, Heather Foy  
Also in attendance; Judge Mote, Magistrate Jacobs, Diane Barton, Judge Hensley  
joined mid-meeting

- Board member Jason Pattison reviewed some suggested changes to the existing PD contract. A small concern was noted when a firm is listed on the contract v. an individual attorney. We want to make sure caseloads can be appropriately tracked. Could we ask the firm to state who will be representing them? We also have to make sure attorneys are qualified for specific type of cases. The general agreement is to require a firm that has a contract to state who will be handling the case load.
- Much discussion focused on if a 30-day notice is appropriate to keep in the contracts. Diane reviewed how cases are counted depending on timing of the quarter. Pros and cons were discussed. Also discussed pro-rating pay if someone works less than a month. In addition, discussion took place about what language is required by the commission to be in the contracts.
- Jason discussed predicted numbers for 2022 and what we would need to spend to hire a chief public defender. Nancy expressed moving forward thoughtfully but with urgency, noting it might be difficult to begin this process in January. Is it a reasonable goal to have a chief public defender ready to begin in March? A contact Jason has at the state could help us to advertise the position to begin the hiring process. Heather will check with Sherry Eblen and Joe Colussi about the need to advertise the position since it would be contracted v. a benefit-eligible county employee. If the board is choosing to hire the chief deputy position as a contract position, we should be able to move forward now with advertising the position.
- Judge Hensley asked Diane about current case load/counts. How many vacancies do we currently have for public defenders? It is accurate to state we are down a 2 total contracts (one full and two halves). Jason suggested that a Mr. Adams be hired to fill an opening. Judge Mote will email him to inform him that the board is interested in his services. He comes highly qualified. It was noted since this is a work session, not a formal business meeting, we will wait to formally vote to hire new public defenders until the next specially called meeting.
- Heather will notify the council of the plan to hire a chief public defender and will invite Jason to attend the December meeting in case the council has any questions.
- February 3<sup>rd</sup> is the next scheduled quarterly meeting so a special meeting was scheduled for Monday November 30<sup>th</sup> at 4pm. Judge Mote will set up the Zoom meeting. Judge Mote will also give newly elected Judge Goode a heads up about the boards' recent discussions. Jason will work on the 2021 contracts that we can hopefully approve at the next meeting.
- Heather will send minutes to the board and to Sarah for the website. Bobby will have Sarah post the next meeting date/agenda.

*Minutes submitted by Heather Foy.*