

Minutes of Citizens Advisory Committee on Jury Selection
Friday, August 20, 2010
Jennifer Putman Meeting Room, Brookens Administrative Center
1776 E. Washington Street Urbana, IL 61802

Call to Order: Chair Aaron Ammons called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

Roll Call: Five members appointed from the General Public were present: Aaron Ammons, Barbara Kessel, Joan Miller, Jennifer Putman, Patrick Thompson (arrived after Call to Order). Five members appointed from the General Public were excused: Patricia Avery, William Brown, Lorraine Cowart, Brian Dolinar, Kenneth Turner. One Elected Official was present: County Board Chair C. Pius Weibel. One Elected Official was excused: Justice & Social Services Committee Chair Matt Gladney. Three Court Officials were present: Judge Thomas Difanis, Court Administrator Roger Holland, Public Defender Randy Rosenbaum.

Approval of Agenda and Minutes: The agenda was approved as circulated. Minutes of the July 16 meeting were approved as amended.

Announcements/Communications: Ammons announced that he and Judge Difanis had accepted an invitation to appear on the “Penny for Your Thoughts” show to be broadcast by radio station WDWS at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, September 22. Putman reported a communication from Professor Steve Beckett confirming that the UIUC Survey Research Lab is committed to performing statistical analysis for the 2009–2010 report of the Courtwatching Project report. Ammons reported that Independent Media Center staffer Dave Powers has agreed to videotape a CACJS meeting (for inclusion in the educational videotape the committee hopes to produce).

New Business—Outreach: Thompson reported that he and Judge Difanis have discussed the CACJS mission with groups of ministers in the African American community. Thompson stated that pastors have audiences of close to 300 parishioners every Sunday, and can be powerful communicators to youth regarding their future responsibilities of service in the courts. Ammons proposed we aim for Friday, September 24 as a date to invite ministers to a CACJS meeting. A partial list of pastoral invitees includes Dr. Evelyn Burnett-Underwood (whom Putman will personally contact); Troy Burks (whom Kessel will personally contact); and Dr. B.J. Tatum, Bishop Lloyd Gwin, Lundy Savage, and Claude Shelby (whom Ammons will personally contact).

Another means of outreach is community distribution of the revised Juror Qualification Questionnaire (clearly marked “S-A-M-P-L-E”). In addition to asking ministers to distribute sample Questionnaires among their congregations, Ammons will encourage participation in this effort by various community leaders, including Andre Arrington (Don Moyers Boys & Girls Club), Dr. Adcock (Adult Education), Dr. Will Patterson (Hip Hop Wagon), and Janice Mitchell (Counseling Center).

Report to August 10 County Board Meeting: Members (Avery, Cowart, Gladney, Difanis, Holland, Thompson, Putman) who participated during the Justice & Social

Services portion of the County Board's August 10 Committee of the Whole commented on the CACJS presentation.

Distribution of S-A-M-P-L-E Questionnaires at Champaign-Urbana Days

(Discussion): Judge Difanis reported that he provided a sample Juror Qualification Questionnaire to Tricia Avery for delivery to Lorraine Cowart for copying and distribution in Douglass Park during this year's August 14 and 15 Champaign-Urbana Days. Putman will learn from Avery and Cowart how the sample was received by those who attended the event.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be Friday, September 24.

Adjournment: Chair Ammons adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Putman,
Recording Secretary