

**Minutes of Meeting
Public Defense Commission
November 5, 2019
10:00 a.m.**

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chairman Chris Fillios, Commissioner Leslie Duncan and Commissioner Bill Brooks met to discuss the following agenda items. Also present were Prosecutor Barry McHugh, Public Defender Anne Taylor, Staff Accountant – Budget Michelle Chiaramonte, and Deputy Clerk Ronnie Davisson. Also present was Public Defense Commission Region 1 Coordinator Aaron Freudenthal.

- A. Call to Order:** Chairman Chris Fillios called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.
- B. Changes to the Agenda (Action):** There were no changes to the agenda.
- C. Business (Discussion Items):**

Discuss FY19 Kootenai County Caseload

PDC Region 1 Coordinator Aaron Freudenthal began by stating the annual report was due November 1 and assured the Board they would receive those numbers when he was finished. He then pointed out that the Public Defender’s Office caseload had increase roughly 10%, but was unsure if it was due to the quick rise in population.

Workload Funding Rules

Mr. Freudenthal explained that the PDC was being very particular with the workload funding and suggested those funds have their own separate line item in the budget. Public Defender Anne Taylor said she had met with the Auditor’s Office and arranged to have the workload funding be separate from the rest of the budget; however, she said that she anticipated returning money to the state because they are having difficulties hiring the amount of people the PDC requested. Mr. Freudenthal specified that the workload funds were only for new hires, not for retention purposes and assured that the County would receive roughly the same amount of funding the following year for all the additional staff requested.

General Update on Public Defender Hiring Through Supplied Workload Funding

Ms. Taylor explained that her office had 8.5 new attorney positions and 4.5 support staff positions funded by the PDC grant. Of the support staff, the half position was used to make the social worker a full time position, had hired two assistants and would be hiring one more full time investigator. On the other hand, she said that hiring the attorneys were not as easy. Ms. Taylor said she had taken two of her current attorneys and moved them underneath the PDC Grant funds, that she hired one new attorney and was not having any luck finding anyone to fill the other vacancies. She said that the applicants she received were fresh out of law school and awaiting BAR results, and she said she could not hold a position for those applicants.

Mr. Freudenthal added to Ms. Taylor’s concern, explaining that, even though the PDC did not add any new positions in Ada County, they were still tough competition and the market was equally as tough. He also pointed out that Bannock County was tough competition because Pocatello had a much lower cost of living than Kootenai County, to which Ms. Taylor agreed, saying that the rising housing market was most likely the biggest concern for out of state applicants.

D. Public Comment (Discussion): This section is reserved for citizens wishing to address the Board regarding a County related issue. Idaho Law prohibits Board action on items brought under this section except in an emergency circumstance. Comments related to future public hearings should be held for that public hearing. There were no public comments.

E. Adjourn: Chairman Fillios adjourned the meeting at 10:42 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

CHRIS FILLIOS, CHAIRMAN

BY: _____
Ronnie Davisson, Deputy Clerk
