

Agenda Item # 17

Date 5/6/20

Dodge County Board of Supervisors

RE: Agenda Item - Community Youth Coordinator_(aka Juvenile Diversion Director) job position salary increase from \$49,035 to \$50,128

The Board approved the Community-based Aid Grant (CBA grant) application in December 2019, with the salary increase for this position included in the application. The Crime Commission is needing approval for any cost of living above 1.5%. (See attached summary comment sheet under Budget Issues number 3.)

Attached documents include; job description and summary comment sheet from the Crime Commission, reference letter from Deputy Attorney Bri McLarty.

In addition to having the Board specifically approve the 1.5% increase, we are asking to have the county bring the position back under the county's administration as a county employee. The previous Juvenile Diversion Director was county funded until she resigned in July 2018. The Community Youth Coordinator position was hired in 2015 to assist the Director with the Juvenile Diversion program due to its high caseload. However, with her resignation in July 2018, the Coordinator has been running the entire program. Currently, the salary for the Coordinator is fully funded by the CBA grant and to date, the county has accepted the funds from the Crime Commission and paid the Coordinator as a contract employee. The budgetary impact on the County would be nominal, we believe limited to expenses associated with benefits. In the short-term, the current Coordinator intends to waive health insurance.

For Dodge County to invest and take on this position would mean a long-term positive impact including continued decrease in fees for juvenile defense attorneys and guardian ad litem as we are diverting these youth from the juvenile justice system, and essentially saving the county money. The Diversion program brings income to Dodge County as well, see chart below.

Meggie Studt, the current Coordinator/Director, has been employed as the Coordinator through the Dodge County Attorney's office since November 2015. She is committed to continuing to help serve the youth of Dodge County. In July 2018, Meggie took on additional job duties including all of Juvenile Diversion and the CASA program. Since November 2015, the job duties have shifted immensely. Given the uncertainty of how this would pan out, we kept this position as a contract. However, it has been 2 years and we now think it is appropriate to return this to a county employee position. The Adult Diversion program is a county employee as well. This change will help with efficiency for billing, and have a clear chain of command.

From the grant application submitted in December, the Crime Commission fully funded Dodge County's request and the position's salary, as well as program costs including services, mileage, administrative expenses, are all fully funded through the grant. Because of the strong financial position the program is in, we felt this was the appropriate time to bring this request to the Board as you begin crafting the 2020-2021 budget. The Juvenile Diversion program is instrumental to the work of the Dodge County Attorney's Office and the community agencies it collaborates with, it is time to formally designate it as a county program and make the Coordinator/Director an employee of Dodge County.

Below are some of the duties of this position.

Job duties include:

Grant Project Director

- In charge of applying for the \$115,000 Community-based Aid grant awarded to Dodge County
- Managing the claims for the CBA Grant for Dodge County
- In charge of contracts with service providers who will be paid from the grant

Diversion Program

- Supervise youth ages 11-18 participating in Diversion
- Input data into JCMS overseen by the Crime Commission and Juvenile Justice Institute
- Conduct interviews with youth and family to assess needs
- Set up services to prevent youth from entering a higher level of care
- Hold facilitated meetings for youth on Diversion
- Supervise youth who have had involvement in child welfare who commit a law violation

Prevention Services

- Provide financial assistance through the grant to youth in need of services prior to a truancy referral or citation
- Can assist youth prior to reaching 20 days of absence and having a truancy referral made
- Able to make community referrals to set up services

Community Meetings

- Member of the Leadership team through Fremont Family Coalition held monthly at United Way
- Collaborate with multiple community partners to better outcomes for youth and families

Additional duties include:

- Lead the Truancy Task Force meetings held twice per year with schools and other professionals
- Lead the Juvenile Services Meetings required quarterly for the grant with invested stakeholders

Juvenile Diversion Payments

Month	2017	2018	2019	2020
<i>January</i>	\$525.00	\$725.00	\$300.00	\$150.00
<i>February</i>	\$375.00	\$150.00	\$390.00	\$375.00
<i>March</i>	\$225.00	\$150.00	\$275.00	\$350.00
<i>April</i>	\$0.00	\$25.00	\$150.00	
<i>May</i>	\$450.00	\$125.00	\$185.00	
<i>June</i>	\$300.00	\$150.00	\$125.00	
<i>July</i>	\$525.00	\$75.00	\$40.00	
<i>August</i>	\$150.00	\$300.00	\$160.00	
<i>September</i>	\$105.00	\$75.00	\$320.00	
<i>October</i>	\$150.00	\$0.00	\$425.00	
<i>November</i>	\$225.00	\$0.00	\$75.00	
<i>December</i>	\$255.00	\$375.00	\$505.00	
TOTAL	\$3,285.00	\$2,150.00	\$2950.00	



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Dodge County Board of Supervisors

Chairman Missel and Commissioners,

First, thank you for your time and consideration on this matter. In light of everything going on in our community, I appreciate you taking the time to discuss this matter and, hopefully, grant the request. Because I cannot be present at the meeting, I wanted to share my support for the proposal and strongly encourage the Board to formalize the Juvenile Diversion Director position as an employee of Dodge County. I have served as a deputy county attorney since fall of 2017 and for that entire duration have handled exclusively juvenile cases. I work closely with the director, Meggie Studt, in my job to discuss cases and programming, but beyond the cases on my desk, Meggie is instrumental in providing information, connections, and collaboration with community resources. I don't have the time or ability to leave the office and build these relationships, but as Juvenile Diversion Director Meggie has done an incredible job connecting the Dodge County Attorney's office with the community.

For my job, it is imperative that a strong, beneficial, coordinated working relationship exist between the juvenile county attorney and juvenile diversion. For juvenile petitions, in some cases, it is required that the county attorney be able to show all community resources have been exhausted prior to filing. And the Legislature has gone on to say that means diversion services. I cannot fathom how I could prove that if I didn't have a juvenile diversion officer in my office, right down the hall, providing services, keeping files, and transferring it all back when it is time to file a petition. It just makes sense that someone who is so integral in the county attorney's juvenile prosecution be an employee of the county and under the supervision and purview of the county attorney.

If the Board approved this proposal, not much would change in the day-to-day of how Meggie and I work together. But in the long-term, it shows a commitment by the County to invest time and personnel in providing evidence-based programming to decrease juvenile court cases and sustain the Juvenile Diversion Program.

Meggie's position started off as a support for the juvenile diversion program and a contract position, but over the last five years we've received this grant I think it has become clear that this funding and the programming required is vital to decreasing the number of cases crowding our courtroom. Everything I hear from the Crime Commission, the NE County Attorney Association, and the Legislature reinforces that they want counties to have this program and I hope the Board takes the opportunity to formalize this partnership and bring the Juvenile Diversion Director position and program back under the county's jurisdiction as a county employee.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bri McLarty".

Bri McLarty

Deputy County Attorney

**Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal
Justice
Summary Comment Sheet**

Applicant: Dodge County

Grant #: 20-CB-0503

Title: Community Youth Coordinator, Diversion,
Prevention, Mentor, Detention Alternatives

Amount Requested: \$115,371.00

Amount Recommended	Contingencies for Award/Reasons for Denial:
\$115,371.00	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Schedule technical assistance with the Juvenile Justice Institute regarding Effective Measures outcomes. 2. Resubmit budget with corrected budget issues highlighted. 3. Contract fee for services rates for family support, tracker, and electronic monitoring shall not exceed the current contract rate allowable under Probation Administration for the same service. https://supremecourt.nebraska.gov/probation/community-based-programs-field-services-division/rehabilitative-services/juvenile-service-definitions

Program Issues:

1. Program type table does not balance to allocation amount.
2. See drug testing memo.

Budget Issues:

1. Pg. 2- Add personnel names on table.
2. Pg. 2- Community Youth Coordinator; provide explanation why Current Annual Salaries are more than Projected Annual Salaries from 2019 grant application.
3. Pg. 4- Community Youth Coordinator, Need county board approval of any cost of living above 1.5%.
4. Pg. 7- New IRS mileage rate for 2020 is \$0.575/mile.
5. Pg. 8- Additional breakdown for Conference, Incentives, and Food for Youth with details.