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New Video Conference System Coming to Clay County Jail ***PDJVS to Replace Old Equipment in Duval; Huge Cost Savings to Taxpayers***

Jacksonville, FL: Communication with clients is a vital function for the attorneys in the Law Offices of Public Defender Matt Shirk. A combination of advanced communication technologies, superior IT staff and a devout insistence to be fiscally responsible by continually improving administrative functionality, Mr. Shirk is introducing the latest method of visitation between Assistant Public Defenders (APD's) and their incarcerated clients. It is called PDJVS or Public Defender Jail Video System.

“For a number of years there has been video conferencing technology between the PD Office and the Duval County jail, but it was proprietary and accompanied by a hefty price tag and various other fees which are passed along to the taxpayer,” said Mr. Shirk. “Our Director of Information Technology Joe Frasier has brilliantly developed a system using a personal computer and some other hardware; once he applies the off-the-shelf software, we have a video conference system that does everything we need only at a fraction of the cost. Taxpayers will get considerable relief as we adopt this technology.”

Over the course of the next several months, eleven new PDJVS Units will be installed in the Clay County jail, which to date has not had this capability. Duval County, which presently uses jail video conferencing, is expanding the number of units and switching to the PDJVS for substantial cost savings. Seventeen units will be installed in various detention facilities, including 13 at the Duval County Jail, three at the Juvenile Detention Center and one at the Montgomery Correctional Center. This will allow APD's who are already equipped with webcams, to access their clients in video conferences.

Analyzing the Savings At \$2703.71 per unit for the PDJVS, versus the proprietary system which costs approximately \$7000 per unit (including an annual maintenance fee of at least \$1200), Clay County taxpayers will realize a savings of \$47,259.19 in the next fiscal year. Duval County taxpayers will save \$73,036.93. These figures do not reflect what is saved in attorney time/travel which is drastically minimized by use of video conferencing with clients.

“It's noteworthy to mention that there are a lot of people in our local government who are helping make this transition from the old system to the PDJVS,” continued Shirk. “Let me recognize Clay County Sheriff Rick Beseler and Clerk of the Courts James Jett who are helping us outfit the jail in Green Cove Springs with this important capability. In Duval County, I thank City Councilman Ronnie Fussell who saw the massive disparity in cost between the old system and the PDJVS and gained us Council support that was necessary for us to move forward.”

“We are excited to bring this advanced technology into the Clay County criminal justice system; it benefits the Public Defender's Office, the Sheriff's Office and others, but most importantly it benefits the

taxpayers,” said Clerk of Clay County Courts James Jett. “It’s critical that we make use of new technologies to improve our efficiencies and the PDJVS helps us do just that.”

“This new system will facilitate inmates meeting with their attorneys without requiring Detention Deputies moving the inmates to visitation rooms and providing security clearance for the attorneys. It will speed up the process making the criminal justice system more efficient and saving money at the same time,” Sheriff Rick Beseler said.

“After seeing a demonstration of the PDJVS, particularly the substantial cost savings that it brings the taxpayer, I was happy to share it with Chief Administrative Officer Kerri Stewart at the City of Jacksonville who manages IT issues,” said City Councilman Ronnie Fussell. “They are presently working with Public Defender Matt Shirk and his staff to transition to the new system in our facilities. I am thrilled to play a role in this cost-effective program.”

Public Defender Matt Shirk has demonstrated a tremendous ability to identify areas of excessive expense and implement a technology-based solution to make more efficient office operations. Over the past 18 months he has saved taxpayer dollars through technological upgrades including the conversion of law books to a web-based system, the launch of a PD Office website with a unique Case Tracking System and the purchase of a different video conferencing system called Vidyo that minimizes staff travel for long-distance educational events, witness deposing and inter-Circuit travel for APD’s.



(Above) Director of Information Technology for the Public Defender’s Office Joe Frasier displays a functioning PDJVS unit he maintains at the Montgomery Correctional Center. (Below) Frasier shows a proprietary video conferencing unit that performs a similar function at more than double the cost.

