

Grand Jury Report

We, the members of the July-August 2007 Grand Jury would like to issue a report on our experience of serving on the Christian County Grand Jury. For most of us, it was an enlightening experience. Our time served on the Grand Jury helped us to better understand how the legal system works and what processes are involved.

A common misconception is that the Grand Jury will indict no matter what the case; however, we have learned that this is not true. Often, we asked questions to inquire further details to better understand each situation before deciding what to do with each case. Each grand juror has learned something from this experience, whether it be something about the law, something about our communities, or about what to look out for around Christian County.

One suggestion this Grand Jury has agreed on, as a whole, is the fact that each grand juror should be paid more than \$12.50 per day for their time served on the Grand Jury. For some of us, that is not even equal to one hour's worth of wages at our jobs.

Another suggestion brought up by the Grand Jury is that the Oak Grove Police Department needs a bigger police station and more staff to help keep Oak Grove a safe place to live and raise a family.

Drug trafficking was a common topic in the cases presented to us in July and August. With that obviously being a concern in Christian County, we, as the

Grand Jury, find it important to add more staff to the Hopkinsville Police Department/Special Investigations Unit (HPD/SIU) to help track down the “big guys” in drug trafficking around Christian and surrounding counties. This would play a vital role in cracking down in the drug problems around here and make Christian County a more desirable place to reside.

One other concern of the Grand Jury was the amount of cases presented to us without having results from the Kentucky State Police (KSP) Lab. We found it difficult, sometimes, to see the probable cause in some of the cases presented to us because the results had not yet come back from the KSP lab with results of fingerprints or whether or not a substance found was actually that which it was suspected to be (such as cocaine, methamphetamine, or marijuana).

As a general rule of thumb, most of the officers that came to Grand Jury to present a case were very well organized and had the facts of each case clearly lined out in their minds; therefore, they were able to communicate with the Grand Jury clearly as to what happened with each case. On some cases, the officer found it necessary to have a file or notes with them to help communicate their case. Those officers, we would like to commend for their efforts in relaying the details to the Grand Jury. However, there were a few cases presented to us that were not detailed because the officer could not remember all the details at the time he/she presented the case to the Grand Jury. In an instance like this, we thought it would have been beneficial for the officer to have had notes or

even the case file with him/her so that the details could have been set forth before the Grand Jury.

We would like to thank the Honorable John L. Atkins and the Commonwealth's Attorney, Lynn Pryor, and her staff for helping us, teaching us, and guiding us along the way to make this a successful term with the Grand Jury.

Foreperson

Secretary
