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Whatcom County Council
Special County Council Meeting

February 3, 2004

Council Chair Dan McShane called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 311 Grand Avenue, Bellingham, Washington.

Present:

Barbara Brenner
Laurie Caskey-Schreiber
Sam Crawford
Seth Fleetwood
Sharon Roy
L. Ward Nelson

Absent:

None

1. DISCUSSION REGARDING WHATCOM COUNTY'S MASTER FACILITIES PLAN (AB2003-288)

Nelson stated he had some concerns about going into this process. Deciding on a master facilities plan will not be easy for the councilmembers. He took a course through the Army two years ago that he wants to share. He read from his Power Point presentation (*on file*) regarding the problem solving process. They may not have a lot of experience, but they do have a lot of time to develop a good solution. When putting together a process, they use a decision-making method. Weight each criteria as favored, slightly favored, strongly favored, or not favored to prioritize the courses of action. After the items are weighted, they're given a statistical ratio. One can then tell whether or not the course of action is statistically viable. Courses of action have to be determined based on facts and assumptions. Decide the criteria that are important. They will have to weight the criteria individually and not get hung up on just one criteria.

Caskey-Schreiber stated the university uses this method, especially when hiring faculty. It's very objective.

Brenner stated that in the end the councilmembers will vote. The decision won't be a compilation of what they think. Then it wouldn't show up as what they individually want.

Nelson stated they have to have some basis for their decisions.

McShane stated this is an outline for making decisions. Individually, the councilmembers will have to weight the criteria, then compile the results.

Fleetwood asked the objective of this meeting.

1
2 McShane stated they would go through the options and weight the objectives
3 that are presented according to what is important. The councilmembers would
4 think about it for a couple of weeks.
5

6 Dewey Desler, Deputy Administrator, stated a steering committee has made
7 recommendations. They've included a statement of the problem and rational for
8 their recommendations. They've developed evaluation criteria for review that is
9 objective and direct. After going through the options, make sure these are the
10 evaluation criteria the councilmembers want to use. Once the criteria are
11 identified, weight them, discuss them, and vote on them.
12

13 Brenner stated she would have liked to be contacted by the administration as
14 the other councilmembers were contacted. They should do things more out in the
15 open rather than contacting the councilmembers individually.
16

17 Caskey-Schreiber stated they should consider public input before preparing a
18 draft plan. Also, she would like to look at an option where the courts are separated
19 from the jail to see if that option is viable.
20

21 McShane stated they need to prepare a draft to present to the public. A
22 draft will generate public input.
23

24 Nelson stated the Council is not being forced in any direction. Get an idea of
25 the problem. Don't look at the solutions until they've established the criteria, when
26 ideas for solutions will come up. Then look at the solutions. It's good to include
27 the public when they have something to tell them.
28

29 Brenner asked about option two, which is about keeping the jail and court
30 system downtown, and moving administrative offices to Smith and Northwest.
31

32 Desler stated they would discuss that option.
33

34 Brenner stated include an option four that is a combination of the existing
35 options.
36

37 McShane stated they could do that once they find out what the options are.
38

39 Harris Faulkin, HDR, stated he would discuss the options. The first option is
40 a new law and justice facility away from the downtown complex and within the city
41 limits. The complex would house all current and future growth of the law and
42 justice components. It will be sized to grow into the distant future. The balance of
43 the County's functions would remain in the courthouse complex.
44

45 Option two is the reverse. The courthouse becomes the regional justice
46 center. The other general County functions would be housed remotely. Those are
47 the two options he was charged with studying for the County.

1
2 Crawford asked if option one would have this building house all the functions
3 that are currently out at Smith and Northwest.
4

5 David King, Stewart+King, stated that's correct. For option two, the non-
6 justice services wouldn't necessarily be remote, but at unspecified sites in this
7 urban area.
8

9 Desler stated certain functions would be dispersed to individual and discreet
10 locations, including the Smith and Northwest locations. Option 2b is to locate all in
11 a new building next to the existing Civic Center building.
12

13 King stated options 2a and 2b are being set aside today. Today they will
14 discuss the option one and option two choices. If they choose option two, they can
15 discuss options 2a and 2b later.
16

17 McShane stated option one is to relocate the law and justice services, and
18 option two is to keep the law and justice services here. There was an idea of
19 having the jail in another place, but keeping the courts here. He asked if they
20 should keep that as a third option. Faulkin stated his contract charged him with
21 two options. They have not studied the separation of the pre-adjudication and
22 post-adjudication functions. It could be studied.
23

24 Desler stated they are trying to stay away from having two major jails, which
25 an option three would require. In addition, the issue of the jail being the center of
26 how the justice system operates is something they can't avoid. Judges believe it's
27 very important that the jail be immediately adjacent to the courts. The sheriff
28 would also advocate that there is a huge burden of getting people from the jail to
29 the courts is completed and creates a security problem. In places where that's
30 been done, they've separated the civil courts from the criminal courts.
31

32 Faulkin stated the majority of the inmates are pre-adjudication inmates.
33 That option hasn't been looked at in detail.
34

35 Roy stated they just went through a process and will go through a process by
36 which to measure options. Obviously, the contractor and administration has
37 already decided on its criteria, without including the Council. She's uncomfortable
38 with that.
39

40 McShane stated that ultimately how these options are evaluated is the
41 Council's decision. These have been evaluated by the administration. The Council
42 may need to consider whether it wants to reevaluate the options without a lot of
43 background from the consultant.
44

45 Roy stated this is inconsistent with everything the Council has been asked to
46 do. The Council has been asked to set objective criteria so their opinions don't

1 enter into the process. However, she just listened to a lot of opinion about why
2 they eliminated an entire option.

3
4 McShane stated he's not interested in cutting out any option. The Council
5 will ultimately make this decision.

6
7 Desler stated the administration brought forward lots of options to the
8 Council several months ago, and the Council decided on two for which the
9 contractor would study.

10
11 Caskey-Schreiber stated she doesn't recall the Council eliminating any
12 options. The administration presented several options that the Council approved.
13 She would still like information presented. This study cost \$300,000. Option four
14 should have been considered. The Sheriff provided information on a facility where
15 the jail was separated from the courthouse. It's not unheard of. Look at different
16 communities that do this. There is a significant investment by attorneys who have
17 office spaces in the downtown area. There was significant discussion in the
18 paperwork that annexation is a possibility to make this work.

19
20 McShane asked if it's possible for the contractor to answer questions the
21 Council may have on other options during this meeting. Faulkin stated he wasn't
22 charged with studying other options, but is willing to study it if the administration
23 approves it.

24
25 McShane asked if the councilmembers want to discuss the two options they
26 have today or wait until they have a third option.

27
28 Faulkin stated the proposed criteria should be edited and changed as the
29 Council sees fit.

30
31 *(Clerk's Note: End of tape one, side A.)*

32
33 Faulkin continued to state that if this criteria is prepared and ready to go, it
34 should be applied to a third option.

35
36 Nelson stated it's important to look at the criteria today, not the options. If
37 one of the criteria is that they must have the courts downtown where the lawyers
38 can get to them, some of the options will fall out. They have to determine if it is a
39 must-have criterion. Develop the criteria and stick to them.

40
41 Brenner referenced page one, item 5. Criminals will be released wherever
42 they site this thing. She asked if any site will become a crime zone. Desler stated
43 that item is a statement of the problem today.

44
45 Nelson stated they need to decide the problem. The problem may be that
46 the facility no longer meets the need of the community. If they don't agree on the
47 problem, they can't move forward. State the problem in one sentence.

1
2 Brenner asked about adding to the list of advantages and disadvantages of
3 the different options.
4

5 McShane stated this is just a presentation from the contractors and
6 administration. If there are others to add, they can do that. He suggests that they
7 skip that process. He's getting a sense that the councilmembers don't want to drop
8 the fourth option. It's okay to review the advantages and disadvantages, but the
9 criteria has become important. They will move on to discussing the criteria.

10
11 Brenner asked what is meant by the social cost.
12

13 Nelson stated that is a note he took while listening to discussion from a
14 previous Council meeting. The social cost was about how they've made
15 commitments through their comprehensive planning to maintain growth in the
16 cities. If the County expands beyond the cities, there is a social cost to the public.
17

18 McShane stated that should be a criterion the Council considers.
19

20 Brenner asked about the operational costs of a high-rise jail versus a
21 horizontal jail. She doesn't think item three about increased food costs due to
22 limited storage space is accurate. Desler stated there was a lot of discussion last
23 week about a high-rise versus a horizontal jail facility. He asked Chief of
24 Corrections Wendy Jones to respond to that issue from her perspective. That
25 information is a response to the Council's discussion last week.
26

27 McShane stated the problem of storing foodstuffs could come up in a high-
28 rise facility because the floors have weight limits that a horizontal facility wouldn't
29 have. They may not be able to store heavy amounts of food.
30

31 Roy stated it seems they shouldn't even be looking at advantages and
32 disadvantages and the opinions right now. Start with the criteria. The advantages
33 and disadvantages would then be something the Council evaluates.
34

35 **McShane moved** to accept the criteria listed on page three of the substitute
36 document submitted today (*on file*). McShane stated the first set of criteria is
37 regarding economic objectives.
38

39 Nelson asked about the headers. Faulkin stated change "objectives" to
40 "evaluation criteria."
41

42 Crawford stated he wants to add two economic evaluation criteria:

- 43 1. The option minimizes cost of transportation and material movement
44 between non-located county facilities, and
- 45 2. Financial impact of facilities expansion or new facility construction is
46 absorbed into long-term County financial planning, accompanied by

1 incremental and publicly acceptable revenue generation, such as higher
2 taxes.

3
4 Come up with a plan that doesn't say they are going to spend \$160 million
5 tomorrow. If they are going to generate more revenue, do it incrementally and in a
6 way that is publicly acceptable instead of raising everyone's property taxes next
7 year.

8
9 McShane stated Councilmember Crawford needs to make his second option
10 more succinct.

11
12 Caskey-Schreiber stated she wants to add to the economic evaluation
13 criteria:

14 1. The option doesn't adversely impact those businesses that depend on the
15 functions of the courthouse.

16
17 Take into consideration all those businesses that have located in the
18 downtown area because of the courthouse services that are located here.

19
20 Fleetwood stated he thought of adding the economic evaluation criterion that
21 the option maximizes economic benefit to the surrounding locale, but is
22 reconsidering. Councilmember Caskey-Schreiber's addition forces them to consider
23 the options solely in the context of their effects on downtown Bellingham. He's
24 trying to get an option that responds to having an operationally more expensive
25 high-rise facility than a horizontal facility. His option doesn't quite get to that, and
26 he will come back to it.

27
28 McShane stated that option one, relocating law and justice, doesn't mean
29 they have to locate outside of Bellingham. They could still locate in a tall building in
30 Bellingham.

31
32 Faulkin stated they have to have rational and objective criteria to pick a site
33 before they pick a site. That is State law. A site could be considered, but within a
34 rational and objective process. If options one or two were picked, and a County
35 function would be remotely located, something else would come into this area that
36 would have a positive economic impact to the downtown area.

37
38 Brenner suggested adding the economic evaluation criteria:
39 1. The option to avoid as much as possible paving over land.

40
41 Nelson stated they need to discuss benchmarks with each of these criteria.
42 Otherwise, they will have a difficult time making decisions on these criteria.

43
44 Brenner stated the benchmark for her suggestion is to give more weight to
45 the option that has less pavement.

46
47 Nelson stated the benchmark is to have less impervious surface area.

1
2 Donn Hogan, HDR, stated this touches on a sustainability issue. The
3 footprint or amount of area paved is two of 69 criteria that the U.S. Green Building
4 Council has put out as part of their Leadership and Energy in Environmental
5 Designs (LEED) evaluation. He suggested 'sustainability issues' which are broader
6 based and include environmental impact, energy consumption, and land use. It is a
7 more global idea. It would be better as a strategic objective than an economic
8 objective.

9
10 Brenner agreed.

11
12 Hogan stated communities like Seattle and Portland have required that
13 buildings become LEED-certified.

14
15 Desler stated those buildings are generically called green buildings.

16
17 Hogan stated the certification takes 69 values of sustainability into account,
18 including footprint size.

19
20 Desler stated option 2c was written to get at that value.

21
22 Nelson stated it's too broad-based. It doesn't define what they mean.

23
24 Hogan stated the criteria would be that the option be LEED certified. The
25 certification takes into account all the 69 points of sustainability.

26
27 Brenner amended her suggestion:

- 28 1. minimal footprint and sustainability criteria.

29
30 McShane stated they could have a building that is very tall, with a very small
31 footprint. Criteria 2c addresses Councilmember Brenner's concern. He's concerned
32 with being too specific.

33
34 Desler suggested:

- 35 1. The option maximizes LEED-certification opportunities.

36
37 The Council concurred.

38
39 Nelson stated he's trying to get an idea of where they are going with the
40 economic impacts. There is an option to lower construction costs over the long-
41 term. He doesn't know the facts and assumptions that item was based on. There
42 are some numbers of construction costs. There is a concern about the ability to
43 pay for long-term projects and the County's and citizens' capacity to pay for the
44 project. If that is the case, define a dollar amount the County can work with.

45
46 Desler stated legally the County has the bonding capacity to do these things.
47 It doesn't have the financial capacity to pay for the bonds. The law allows the

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1 County to bond itself. There are a series of revenue options that can be put into
2 effect or are in effect that can generate money to pay for bonds. The
3 administration indicated that every major decision the County needs to take to
4 build a new facility should be approved by the public. Anything they do that is
5 significant ought to be approved by the public.
6

7 Nelson asked what the County realistically could hope for from the public. If
8 they're going to look at economic criteria, have a goal cost in mind. Faulkin stated
9 phase IV of the project includes a cash demand curve over the years as the project
10 comes together. The final construction cost for the year 2022 will happen over
11 many years. If the County believes the jail is the driver, that's the first thing he
12 would try to accomplish for the County.
13

14 Nelson asked if the problem they are defining is the jail. Desler stated it is a
15 major problem. The jail is key to the function of many things in the justice system.
16 It affects location. There are other shortfalls in other operations in the County
17 government.
18

19 Nelson asked how to approach this in a financial manner. He doesn't know
20 how many years in which this could be done. Desler stated that depends on the
21 choices the Council makes. Recognize the size they need. Recognize the locations
22 where the County should move. Recognize what the County should do to phase out
23 certain buildings and phase in new buildings. Phase the process in six year
24 increments.
25

26 McShane stated he doesn't have solid cost estimates at this time, but he can
27 use criterion 1.a to say that this option will do a better job of making the costs
28 lower.
29

30 Nelson stated there needs to be facts or assumptions based on facts.
31

32 McShane stated he has to make assumptions that one option will cost lower
33 than the other. He is capable of making that decision. How he weighs that option
34 is different. All he can do is rely on rough numbers.
35

36 Faulkin stated the cost estimates are based on square feet in 2003 dollars.
37 They compare the cost of the options. He provided information earlier on where
38 these costs come from. A high-rise jail will cost about \$210 per square foot and a
39 low-rise jail will cost about \$200. They don't have geo-technical information right
40 now, and can't exactly ascertain the true cost.
41

42 Nelson stated a criterion could be that the option does not exceed a square
43 footage cost of \$210 in 2003 dollars, but he needs more facts and assumptions to
44 make that criterion.
45

46 Caskey-Schreiber stated that today they are just crafting a vision. If they
47 don't have a funding source or idea, they should address that first.

1
2 Roy stated they need to be more specific, not more general. The square
3 footage cost is something they can actually measure. It's a solid criterion. She
4 asked how the expenditures expand over time, if there are more upfront costs with
5 one option. She asked if those are criteria they care about.

6
7 *(Clerk's Note: End of tape one, side B.)*

8
9 Roy asked if option 1.a means that they want the cheapest project. If that's
10 what they want, that's what they should say. Faulkin suggested amending option
11 1.a, "The option provides the lowest construction cost over the long-term." This
12 cost is just for the detention facility. There are other types of facilities that won't
13 cost \$210 per square feet. The cost for the courthouse might be \$180 per square
14 feet. There are costs they've allocated for each type of building. That information
15 is provided in the material he's provided to the Council previously.

16
17 Nelson referenced option 1.b, and asked the annual increase of operational
18 costs at this time. Desler stated the annual operational cost is about five percent
19 per year. He suggested, "The option provides the lowest annual operating cost
20 over the long term."

21
22 Nelson stated they still need to find a benchmark for that option. Faulkin
23 stated certain methods of providing detention require fewer operational costs than
24 other methods.

25
26 Nelson stated he's trying to find facts, such as current operating costs. He'd
27 like to be able to go to the voters and say that operational costs would be lowered
28 by a certain amount each year. A benchmark could be to get operational costs
29 down.

30
31 Caskey-Schreiber asked why they would risk not getting funding for the jail,
32 which is the biggest problem, by including the big, expensive master plan. Desler
33 stated there are other significant problems, such as the facility at the Smith Road
34 and Northwest Road location. The County occupies buildings that need to be
35 retrofitted to continue using them. The jail shortage is the most significant
36 problem, but there are other problems. A master plan will help them put them into
37 perspective and solved properly.

38
39 Caskey-Schreiber stated there is a risk to trying to solve the jail problem by
40 trying to solve all their problems at once.

41
42 McShane stated they would discuss the strategic evaluation criteria.

43
44 Brenner stated she wants to add:

- 45 1. The option avoids neighborhood objections.
46

1 Consider the fact that if they move the jail to any other location, people will
2 be outraged.

3
4 Nelson stated that when choosing criteria, the criterion has to be unique.
5 This is not unique. If they were to build a 14-story jail at the current location,
6 there will be complaints. Anything they do will draw concerns from the public.

7
8 Brenner stated they don't have to create a 14-story jail downtown. If they
9 kept it downtown, use other parts of the area. There are ways to locate it
10 downtown that wouldn't generate complaints. Take into consideration any uproar,
11 including legal costs, with relocating a jail. They won't have as much legal cost if
12 they add height.

13
14 Caskey-Schreiber stated the language could be that the option has
15 community support or the option has minimal community opposition.

16
17 McShane stated they could reference siting criteria in the Comprehensive
18 Plan about siting jail facilities.

19
20 Caskey-Schreiber suggested that the option be located near mass transit.

21
22 Nelson stated that is a location criterion. It doesn't have anything to do with
23 what they want to build.

24
25 Brenner amended her suggestion:

- 26 1. The option has minimal community opposition.

27
28 Nelson asked if they can base it on community opposition. Faulkin stated
29 base it on site selection criteria. The siting will be an interesting challenge. He
30 wrote a set of criteria for siting. It tries to minimize the amount of impact by
31 including separation distances from certain uses in the county. It's a fair way to
32 minimize the risk of having someone be offended. The process used to find the site
33 must be documented thoroughly to stand a test in court. Have a citizens advisory
34 committee to orchestrate finding a location. When a citizen on the advisory
35 committee who is opposed to a project becomes in favor of the project, there is no
36 better advocate.

37
38 McShane stated the criterion may not be related to choosing the option they
39 want. It may be a criterion once they've decided on the option. Faulkin agreed.

40
41 Brenner stated they should give consideration to the fact that moving a jail
42 will cause more objections.

43
44 Nelson stated they're not at that point yet.

45
46 Brenner withdrew her suggestion.

47

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1 Nelson referenced criterion 2.a. He asked if there is a measure of current
2 services. Desler stated they know what services can be provided. They're talking
3 about the extent to which services would be disrupted as the building is built.
4

5 Nelson asked if disruption of services is unique to only one option or similar
6 to both. Desler stated they'd have to debate that question.
7

8 Nelson asked if option one or option two is the least disruptive. He
9 suggested: "The option minimizes disruption of services." No option avoids
10 disruptions completely.
11

12 Nelson referenced criterion 2.b. He asked if there is a timeframe allowed for
13 each option or if they are equal. Faulkin stated this is tied to the vertical versus
14 horizontal jail issue or the corrections facility. They have projections on anticipated
15 growth. Two things can happen. Growth can happen faster or slower. If they build
16 additions horizontally, they can build as the need arises. If they build vertically,
17 they will have to build the entire structure before it's needed. They can't add
18 stories on to the jail because of disruptions to services and seismic codes.
19

20 Nelson suggested amending 2.b, "The option provides maximum efficiency
21 for additions." Faulkin agreed.
22

23 Brenner stated they can build incrementally vertically. Faulkin stated they
24 can't in this area. The footprints are too small.
25

26 Brenner stated they can if they enlarge the downtown area. She gets the
27 feeling that the contractor is promoting option one. Faulkin stated there are major
28 financial and operational impacts that he has to make the Council aware of. It's the
29 Council's decision. He's trying to be candid with the Council about his experience.
30

31 McShane stated a criterion may favor one option, and another criterion may
32 favor the second option. That's why they have to weight the criteria.
33

34 Nelson referenced criterion 2.c and asked if one of the options provides less
35 or more commitment to maintaining a quality environment. Faulkin stated he
36 hoped these are generic enough criteria for the Council to decide which of the two
37 options serves that criterion best.
38

39 Nelson stated the LEED criterion may be more measurable. He asked if one
40 or the other project would have different certification. Hogan stated there are
41 many criteria. Minimum certification totals 26 points out of 69 points. Both
42 projects could meet certification. How they meet certification could be done
43 differently. Some of the issues have emphasized building in Bellingham versus a
44 more rural area. If they do that, there are certain criteria for site selection that
45 would apply more to a less dense environment. There are a couple of key credits
46 that encourage building in denser areas. Some of the credits would apply equally
47 to both options.

1
2 Nelson referenced criterion 2.d and asked if it references government jobs or
3 community jobs.

4
5 Bill Elfo, Sheriff, stated there have been questions about sending inmates out
6 of the county or keeping Sheriff's Office jobs locally.

7
8 Nelson stated it doesn't fit either option, only one.

9
10 **McShane moved** to eliminate criterion 2.d because it doesn't fit all three
11 options.

12
13 **Motion carried unanimously.**

14
15 Nelson referenced criterion 2.e regarding a safe environment. He asked if
16 one environment is safer than another.

17
18 McShane stated leave criterion 2.e in if they want to consider having the jail
19 and court system separate.

20
21 Faulkin stated the issue is also with the security of the judges and people in
22 the court.

23
24 Nelson stated amend option 2.e, "The option provides the greatest safety to
25 public and employees."

26
27 Roy stated she has trouble with the suggestion. She asked why they would
28 pick the unsafe option. Safety ought to be their first consideration. If they say one
29 option is the same as the other, they can't pick the option that is less safe.

30
31 McShane stated if that's a concern, employ the concept of splitting the vote.
32 He suggested for this criterion to say either option will be safe. However, the no
33 action option is less safe. If a criterion fits two of the three options equally, then
34 split the vote.

35
36 Caskey-Schreiber stated that if they do get the opportunity to consider
37 another option, it's important to acknowledge that there might be some risk if they
38 decide on a court and jail at different locations. They can mitigate for that, but she
39 would still like to explore it to see how it falls out on the matrix system.

40
41 Nelson suggested amending option 2.e to address Councilmember Roy's
42 concern, "The option provides the greatest safety to the public and employees
43 economically." Move the criterion to an economic evaluation criterion.

44
45 Brenner disagreed. That says they'll make it safe to a point, but not beyond
46 that point. Even though that may be what they do, they'll set themselves up for a
47 lawsuit. Take it out or leave it the way it is.

1
2 Roy stated they could make anything safe enough if they pay anything.

3
4 Nelson stated they'll have to look at the safety features of each option and
5 the associated costs.

6
7 Crawford stated option 1.b addresses the issue globally. There is a bunch of
8 these criteria that are subjective. This is not an objective world. This is a political
9 decision, not a practical decision.

10
11 **McShane moved** to eliminate criterion 2.e. They aren't going to consider
12 something that isn't safe. The option for no action may be less safe.

13
14 **Motion carried 6-1 with Crawford opposed.**

15
16 **McShane stated the option would remain**, since one person was opposed
17 to the motion.

18
19 *(Clerk's Note: End of tape two, side A.)*

20
21 Nelson referenced criterion 2.f about maximizing future expansion capacity.
22 It's the same as item 2.b.

23
24 Crawford stated they're different. Item 2.b has to do with the efficiency of
25 the construction. Item 2.f has to do with construction capacity. They're two
26 different matters. Add the word "capacity" to the end. The question is if one
27 option over the other allows for more growth in the long term.

28
29 Nelson stated that criterion becomes a site criterion.

30
31 Crawford stated there are physical space limitations on downtown facilities.
32 Not everyone agrees about that. There is a proposal that shows improvements to
33 this facility over some unknown facility that is all new. It's a site criterion, but if
34 they throw it out now, he doesn't know why they have a proposal in the first place.

35
36 McShane stated there are two options. One is to keep everything here. The
37 question is if that maximizes future expansion ability. He agrees with
38 Councilmember Crawford.

39
40 Nelson suggested they amend criterion 2.f, "The option maximizes greater
41 flexibility for future expansion."

42
43 Caskey-Schreiber stated she is frustrated with option one because they know
44 they can't expand the existing jail. They can't expand up because of the
45 foundation. However, they have not studied whether or not they can find other
46 space downtown or use space they already have. It's a valid criterion, but not a
47 lead to the other option.

1
2 *(Clerk's Note: The Council took a 15-minute break at 3:30. Councilmember*
3 *Crawford left the meeting.)*
4

5 Nelson stated that when they look at weighing the criteria, look for the
6 groups of issues, such as economic, strategic, physical, functional, and community
7 objectives or evaluation criteria. Then they can weight the larger criteria categories
8 first.
9

10 Nelson referenced criterion 3.a. He asked if one option or the other does not
11 provide necessary parking. Faulkin stated parking is driven heavily by law and
12 justice services. Option one has site parking for law and justice services. Option
13 two would require a garage.
14

15 Nelson stated they both provide sufficient parking. One will be more costly,
16 which shows up in the economic objective. It is not a physical objective. It's an
17 economic criterion.
18

19 Brenner stated have one criterion about cost in general, not specific to
20 parking costs or other costs.
21

22 McShane stated the physical criteria have to do with physical issues, such as
23 parking.
24

25 Nelson referenced criterion 3.a and asked if one option does not provide
26 necessary parking. Faulkin stated parking needs are heavily driven by the law and
27 justice services. Option one includes parking on site at a cost of \$5,000 to \$6,000
28 per stall. Option two would require a parking garage.
29

30 Nelson suggested they amend criterion 3.a, "The option provides the greatest
31 flexibility for parking."
32

33 Brenner stated they should include a separate item about parking costs listed
34 under the economic objectives.
35

36 Caskey-Schreiber stated they have to consider alternative transportation
37 plans. If they move the facility out of the area, all the attorneys will be driving to
38 the law and justice facility.
39

40 Roy suggested amending criterion 3.b to add "The option provides traffic
41 volume solutions, including efficient mass transit capability."
42

43 Brenner stated there is only efficient mass transit in Bellingham.
44

45 Faulkin stated traffic access by law enforcement is also a consideration of
46 traffic volume solutions.
47

DISCLAIMER: This document contains the Whatcom County Council or Committee minutes, as approved. However, unless an attested signature page is attached, they are not the final approved minutes.

1 McShane stated this recommendation is site-specific. The traffic debate is
2 subjective.

3
4 Roy stated they're struggling with the issue of criteria being site-specific or
5 not site-specific. However, one of the options is site-specific. One of the options is
6 downtown. They have to have some criteria related to the site. Option two is
7 directly tied to a specific site.

8
9 McShane stated other uses could be moved to a remote location, which
10 would offset traffic volume.

11
12 Nelson referenced criterion 2.e. He asked if the City of Bellingham knows
13 what its vision for the Civic Center area is. Desler stated there is a plan. The City
14 of Bellingham participates in the steering committee discussions. The City
15 administration recommends option one.

16
17 Caskey-Schreiber stated the Mayor is adamant that the County stay located
18 where it is because of the existing businesses that are here.

19
20 McShane stated they need to find out specifically what the City's vision is.

21
22 McShane stated they would schedule another meeting to take this up again.

23
24
25 **ADJOURN**

26
27 The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

28
29
30
31 _____
32 Jill Nixon, Minutes Transcription

33 The Council approved these minutes on March 9, 2004.

34
35 ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

36
37
38
39
40
41 _____
Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Dan McShane, Council Chair