

JAIL PLANNING TASK FORCE
June 16, 2011
7:30 – 9:30
County Courthouse Room 513

Task Force Members Present (Roll Call):

Pete Dworkin (chair)	Lisa McShane (co-chair)
Marianne Caldwell	Erik Ramstead
John Wilson	Caleb Erickson
Doralee Booth	Ray Baribeau
Wendy Jones	Anne Deacon
Pete Dawson	Barbara Sternberger

Task Force Member(s) Not Present: David Christensen

Others Present: Pete Kremen, Bill Elfo, Tawni Helms

Meeting Introduction:

Pete Dworkin welcomed the group and thanked everyone for coming. Introductions were made around the room.

The meeting schedule was confirmed. County Executive has agreed to support the role of an administrative assistant and hope to have someone in place by the next meeting.

Snohomish Jail Site Visit Announcement:

Ray Baribeau coordinated a group visit to the Snohomish County jail. Two groups will attend. The tours will take place next Tuesday and Wednesday. Each group will meet 8:20 in the morning at the Fairhaven Park & Ride. Sergeant Stites will conduct the tour. The jail is located at Oaks Street in Everett.

Tuesday participants: Marianne Caldwell, Ray Baribeau, Doralee Booth, Pete Dworkin

Wednesday participants: Caleb Erickson, David Christensen, Pete Dawson, John Wilson, Barbara Brenner

Tanks in their jail have direct supervision. A correction deputy is in the tank 24/7. With our current staffing levels we couldn't afford that. We'll see things we like/don't like.

Review of Agenda:

Discuss dividing the work into committees.
Need volunteers to assist in updating the website.
Discuss Public Involvement
Discuss the Executive/Council presentations.

Pete asked the Executive what the expectations are for the Executive/Council presentations.

Executive Kremen stated the most concise way to accomplish these presentations would be to present at a council meeting where both the Executive and Council are present. He recommended a 10 minute briefing with PowerPoint. The presentation should be an overview of the progress made by the committee. The presentation would be done at the beginning of the council meeting. All committee members would not be expected to be present. A couple lead members would present the briefing and allow for a few questions. Council meetings are televised and that allows for broader viewing by the public.

Chair Dworkin reviewed 4 goals of Task Force and opened it up for discussion:

1. Size of Jail
2. Location of Jail
3. Mental Health Triage
4. Financial

Pete Dworkin suggested setting up a meeting schedule and setting topics for each meeting.

John Wilson inquired as to what the life cycle of the new jail facility should be.

Executive Kremen indicated that this work was to try to achieve a correctional facility that is expandable for the foreseeable future. As Sheriff Elfo has pointed out at previous meetings in the 160 year Whatcom County history we've had 6 different sites for the county jail. We believe we should consider having the same site for the next 50 years.

Sheriff Elfo agreed that we should be considering an expandable site so the infrastructure can be built now for a 50 year building.

Discussion Regarding Budget Amount for Facility:

Barbara Sternberger stated the reason the group was meeting is because HDR didn't do their job. We should start with how much money we have for this project. To build the jail do we have any idea how much money we have to spend?

Wendy Jones suggested that initially we might reverse that method. An effective way to get where you want to go is to determine your objectives, (active brainstorming). Then review the different methods of how you can get there. Look at the resources that are available and begin eliminating methods that are unattainable. It allows us to free our minds and look at other options.

Marianne Caldwell agreed with Barbara Sternberger and said we need to know first how much we can afford. We can spend lots of time and resources researching options that we can't afford. Millionaire mansions aren't worth the time if we only have \$300K to spend.

Anne Deacon said in her role of performing needs assessment for community planning she uses the premise of first being very clear about the objective. She would suggest that the group doesn't stifle objectives. It is very helpful to be unfettered in determining the objectives and finding creative opportunities.

Ray Baribeau stated that Washington State tends to *back into* the future. We need to look at the reality of the future. Financial will get there and it will be appropriate but let's not focus on that in the beginning. The current jail was made on a penny wise pound foolish formula. We continue to pay for that.

Lisa said we can likely split the methodology and find out what a ballpark amount is to keep in mind as we look at options.

Executive Kremen said there does need to be some reality and parameters of the finances available to construct the facility. Finance/Administration has been working on rough plans for available resources without going to the public for funding. We're looking at a range between \$70 - 75M range.

Marianne said we are scraping to try to get \$70M for this project. We're cutting other General Fund recipients to do this.

Executive Kremen said we should use the \$70M ballpark figure to plan for this.

Lisa asked for the budget detail as to the sources of funding for that figure.

Executive Kremen said it is information Deputy Administrator Desler and Finance could discuss with the group..

Pete Dawson said we can start with a laundry list of things we want and business decisions will help to prioritize.

Pete Dworkin stated that we should have some idea of what the budget is and when we drill down to the needs we will keep that amount in mind.

Ray Baribeau said the \$70M looks good compared to what King County is doing with \$50M.

It's actually \$50M for construction only and \$90M for entire project.

Pete Dworkin asked if the \$70M budget was just for the construction cost of the project. Marianne responded that it includes everything - the purchase of the land, permitting (soft costs), architect, engineering, as well as construction.

Caleb expressed that the group should work on articulating the project needs and wants. Needs are defensible. We can articulate both our wants and needs.

Ray Baribeau suggested that Dewey present the PowerPoint that was presented to the public on February 3rd. We should review the criteria used to prepare HDR report. That would be a good summary point so we all have the same base point.

Marianne added that Dewey could also address the \$70M budget describing where the money is coming from. Lisa also suggested we first evaluate whether or not we need a new jail. Wendy will provide to the group credible reports and documentation that indicate the need.

Sheriff Elfo confirmed the number of credible sources that have documented a critical need for a new jail. He also stated that some people believe the current jail could be upgraded to meet the needs.

Marianne said people should be aware that we are still investing in the current jail. \$3M will be spent this year for the jail controls upgrade.

Anne Deacon said we also need to be looking at the operational costs which can cripple a facility. It's important to factor them into the design.

Barbara Sternberger asked if everyone was familiar with the HDR report. She suggested not redoing what's already been done.

Pete Dworkin said we should use what is good in the HDR work and put back to task what wasn't good.

Lisa stated that it was the price tag and the increase in the incarceration rates that was rejected by the public.

Pete Dawson suggested prioritizing how we march through this. The group can develop and agree on the first steps.

Motion made to prioritize work plan - 6 steps outlined by Pete Dawson

Priorities (order changed as follows through friendly amendments):

1. Confirmation that we need a new jail
2. Determine optimum size of a jail
3. What is part of this jail (mental health triage, alternative corrections, diversions)
4. What is the financial aspect/How much do we have to spend?
5. Location
6. Components of jail/expandable/operations

Wendy seconded the motion with a friendly amendment to switch the priority order of #5 and #6. Doralee also requested a friendly amendment to include the summary of the EIS (Pete Dworkin agreed this should be included) Doralee suggested this be accomplished at the next meeting.

John Wilson asked what the county will look like in the next 25 years. It's important to know what the vision of the future might look like so you can plan accordingly. For example, where will the core of the county be located at in the future (downtown Bellingham or further out)? Lisa McShane said that was a good question but no formal planning has been done and it is outside the scope of this project to take it on.

Marianne suggested moving the Finances to the last position. Pete Dawson said Finances could be both places. Wendy Jones said finances will be an overlay to all priorities. A more detailed financial discussion will happen when the recommendations are made but the finances will influence all of the priorities.

Ray suggested holding the motion to the next meeting after the EIS and Budget presentations are made.

Caleb stated we don't want to stymie our creative efforts. Finance doesn't need to gone over by a fine tooth comb but should be considered throughout all priorities.

All agreed to table the motion to adopt priorities until the next meeting.

Development of next meeting agenda:

Draft agenda proposed for next meeting:

1. EIS Summary presentation - Dewey Desler
2. Budget overview - Dewey Desler
3. Confirm need for new jail - Wendy Jones and Dewey Desler
4. Discuss criteria used for size of jail (current population, predictions, etc.)
5. Assign leads for work plan priorities
6. Develop agenda for future meetings
7. Information sharing of Snohomish County Jail site visit

Pete Dworkin reviewed the topics listed in Resolution 2011-014 to ensure all were included and/or addressed in the proposed priority list.

Anne reported that the ordinance establishing the increase of 1/10 of 1% in sales tax for behavioral health services called out diversion from criminal justice as a priority. The advisory committee has also set that as a priority. A new law codified in RCW 10.31 talks about involuntarily detaining non-felony offenders with mental disorders in a crisis stabilization unit. Committee has looked into the design of such a facility. Initially, the Committee has looked at hardening the Division Street facility to be able to function as a crisis stabilization unit as provided by RCW 10.31.

Wendy added that there currently exists a behavioral health triage center. It's underutilized because of the way its operated.

Sheriff Elfo said the sale of the Division Street facility is part of the Executive's plan for revenue dedicated to the construction of the new jail. The facility was built as a temporary jail.

Erik Ramstead said mental health services are a very big deal. Providing quick and appropriate care in a triage center gets the officer back out on the street in short order and the agency (police department) isn't billed like they are when taking people to the hospital.

Marianne asked for clarification about how this impacts the jail numbers when these individuals are taken to the hospital or a triage center.

Wendy said other agencies can refuse to take them. The last place for these people to go is the jail. When patients are taken to jail untreated and un-medicated often the behaviors escalate and then the lengthy system kicks in. Triage centers and diversion programs that engage in serving these clients are the best case, but they have the option to refuse.

Pete Dworkin stated the County Jail never has the option to say no.

The triage center has not been able to hold people involuntarily in the past. Wendy wants to ensure we have entities that will take these people when they are acting out instead of deferring to the jail.

Anne stated the county would contract with the entity that operates the facility and would set the expectation for service.

Committees:

The planning group is a small enough committee for everyone to be involved with all priorities. No subcommittees but rather a lead person for each priority. Those leads can also present to the Executive/Council.

The lead would set up timeframe for accomplishing tasks and take the lead for presentations. Leads will be identified at the next meeting.

Social Media:

County website can include meeting minutes and agenda. Pete Dworkin suggested a lead person to be responsible for ensuring county website is updated. County IT staff will update but someone needs to get them the information. Wendy suggested the appointed staff assistant could likely fill that role. They would be responsible for distributing information to all identified destinations.

Public Participation:

Lisa offered to help set up a facebook page for notifications of meetings and updates. This is also a good time to determine when to set up public meetings or forums to hear from the public.

Anne Deacon expressed some concern about the social media being a good way to foster miscommunication. Non-factual items become part of the dialogue via blogs, comments, etc.

Is there a way to stop the blog option? Lisa suggested only putting up a page that is for viewing without posting comments. This creates a more active way to draw people to the website for more information.

Wendy suggested about a county email account where people can provide comment. Someone would need to be responsible for checking the email. This could possibly be another task for the administrative assistant?

To maintain public flow of information we should publish agendas so the public knows what will be discussed at an upcoming meeting. We want to be able to control the flow of information so we stay on track.

The group agreed that a public comment period of 5 minutes would be allowed at the end of each meeting.

The first Executive-Council presentation will be scheduled for the Council meeting in August. PowerPoint presentation(s) were encouraged for public viewing of progress. Wendy Jones offered assistance in preparing PowerPoint presentations.

Wendy Jones and Erik Ramstead were nominated to represent the Jail Task Force at the Law & Justice meetings. All agreed.

Other Business: N/A
Meeting adjourned at 9:25

Next Meeting: Thursday, July 7th at 7:30 – 9:30 a.m.
Where: 322 N. Commercial Street Civic Center Garden Room