

PUBLIC SAFETY COORDINATING COUNCIL

MINUTES

TUESDAY,
January 23, 2018

11:32

JUSTICE BUILDING -
JURY ASSEMBLY ROOM, 2ND FLOOR

MEETING CALLED BY	Bob Kleker
ATTENDEES	Lee Ayers, Dave Carter, Joe Charter, Marie Curren, Doug Engle, Eric Guyer, Beth Heckert, Bob Kleker, Lee Tyler, Jennifer Lind, Lorenzo Mejia, Jennifer Mylenek, Dan Penland, Mark Reagles, Nate Sickler, Randy Sparacino, Aja Stoner, Bob Strosser, Rita Sullivan, Joe Ferguson, Robert Mountain

- Bob Kleker opened the meeting at 11:32
- Opening Remarks: Bob Kleker welcomed everyone to the January PSCC meeting.

Agenda Topics

MINUTE ADOPTION – NOVEMBER

BOB KLEKER, CHAIR

DISCUSSION	
No suggested revisions were identified for the November minutes, Doug Engle provided a motion to adopt, seconded by Beth Heckert. A vote was requested, all were in favor, and none were opposed. The November minutes were officially adopted.	

PRESENTATION- JAIL UPDATE

SHERIFF NATHAN SICKLER & JAIL COMMANDER DAN PENLAND

DISCUSSION	
<p>Sheriff Sickler and Jail Commander Penland presented the first draft of the "Jackson County Capacity Crisis" to the PSCC to use them as a beta test group for a future public education campaign and get feedback from the board members.</p> <p>Jail Commander Penland presented the history of the current jail. It was built in 1981 as the result of a lawsuit and was originally designed to hold 176 inmates. Additional beds were added which brought the population to 190. In 1985 the jail was sued by inmates due to overcrowding because inmates were sleeping on the floor. In 2005 Sheriff Winters wanted to increase the jail capacity so the original consent decree needed to be changed. This led to having to renegotiate with the ACLU and the final agreement was that the jail could house up to 255 which was accomplished by double bunking all of the cells. It was eventually decided that this was too many inmates and they dropped the number to 230 which was more manageable. In 2014 the Sheriff moved out of the basement and 62 beds were added bringing the total population to 292. On November 15, 2015 the basement was closed due to staff shortages but was re-opened on April 17, 2017.</p> <p>Sheriff Sickler and Jail Commander Penland discussed three Oregon Revised Statutes. Oregon Revised Statute 169.042 – Provides the County Commissioners the authority to set a maximum capacity for a jail. This is based on recommendations from the DA, County Counsel, and Sheriff concerning prevailing constitutional standards relating to conditions of incarceration. This also analyzes the design and capacity, the physical condition of the local correctional facility, and the programs provided for inmates of the jail/correctional facility. Thus, imposing a cap of 230. In regards to being about to turn any building into a jail there are more intricacies involved than one might expect and Oregon Revised Statute – 169.030 Construction, Maintenance, Use of local Correctional facilities by county and city explains requirements. Oregon Revised Statute – 169.076 Standards for local correctional facilities are the only statutory requirements that are required to run a jail. However, they also subscribe to the Oregon Jail Standards which were brought in by the Oregon State Sheriff Association which has 303 standards and are best practices that can apply to any jail. All 36 Sheriffs have agreed to comply with the standards. There is an inspection process that happens every two years in which the jail is assessed by a team of jail personnel from other facilities.</p> <p>Sheriff Sickler highlighted the positives of the jail which include but are not limited to: it is kept very clean, is well maintained, ran efficiently, organized, does not generate many serious or any constitutional lawsuits, has staff that care, receives Jail Inspection reports and inmates are housed in a safe and constitutionally sound jail. Additionally, they have various Criminal Justice partnerships that work together for the best interests of the county.</p> <p>Nate provided data regarding the population and jail population history of Jackson County. In 1981 there were approximately 135,000 people residing in Jackson County and it has steadily increased every year where we are currently at roughly 215,000 people. With the rise in population the jail capacity and jail has not developed consistent with this growth. In 2016 Jackson County Jail booked 14,132 individuals, 4,900 were forced releases. Lodgings over time has increased; in 1994: 9,065 and 2017: 14,003. The average daily population has also increased; 2007: 257 and 2017: 316. It should be noted that the daily population has exceeded the jail's capacity for the last ten years. In order to have a healthy correctional facility the NIC recommended that a facility should remain around 20% below their capacity.</p>	

Jail Commander Penland emphasized that when the jail population numbers are as high as they are this affects the jail operations in numerous ways such as: classification issues/housing inmates, inmate property issues, psychological effect on staff, mental health issues are exacerbated, and reduced officer and inmate safety.

Sheriff Sickler explained the impact to Criminal Justice organizations in Jackson County from their perspective.

Operations/support Bureau of the sheriff's office.

- The calls for service have increased by 16,000 in the last four years which leads to less time per call/potential decrease in quality of investigation, less time for discretionary activity, and public perception and trust. Warrant entries have doubled over past 3 years from 3,000 to 6,000. This has caused a need to reallocate more staff to enter warrants but in turn there is then less staff for other tasks.

Ashland Police Department

- Offenders cannot be held accountable, Municipal Court is affected due to lack of jail as a viable option, and perception of offenders is nothing will happen.

Medford Police Department

- Increase in property crimes, increase of warrants to be entered, Pro-Active time has decreased and services are impacted, more cite and release where lodging may be a better solution (merely due to capacity), and officer safety is impacted.

Central Point Police Department, Talent Police Department, and Phoenix Police Department

- Jail as a deterrent has little effect for offenders, drug and property crimes are prevalent, Mental Health/A&D treatment are not as effective, and the perception among officers is that criminal offenders will be out before the paperwork is done.

DA's Office

- Well known among defendants there is little chance they will be held accountable (no deterrent), defendants generate multiple cases before they can come to resolution (diminishing opportunities for programs thus increasing prison as an end result), early intervention is impacted significantly, and work load increased (multiple cases, court appearances, subpoenas, Fail to Appear).

Courts

- Defendants are not making their court appearances (approx. 50% no shows during courts), offenders know they will not be held accountable, increased work load for court, and programs are weakened due to lack of ability to follow through with jail if non-compliant.

Public Defender's Office

- If client is not reliable (homeless, drug-addicted, mental health problems) representation is more efficient if the client is in the jail, ample jail space means fewer failures to appear in court, and cases move through system much faster when unreliable clients are in jail.

Mental Health

- No space in current facility for group or individual treatment, no chance for Step up program due to current capacity and design, not designed for confidential space for mental health counseling (not trauma-informed), lack of jail space results in rapid turnstile for offenders, including mentally ill offenders who could benefit from treatment, and jail is best place to initiate treatment.

Alcohol and Drug Treatment

- Release times are not conducive to staying sober, no consequences to motivate offenders to choose differently, overcrowding causes these individuals to get in and out too fast which is preventing them from getting linked in with resources/programs, and lack of usable space/room may provide environments that foster the criminality mindset.

Sheriff Sickler provided details about the yearly Grand Jury public inspections:

- 2013 Report – Mental health needs and a larger more current facility should be researched.
- 2014 Report - Ultimately a higher capacity, better designed jail facility is needed to serve the County, especially considering current inmate populations and trends.
- 2015 Report – Research the possibility of a new facility.
- 2016 Report – Recommends a larger, better designed facility with increased support for Mental Health.

Both the Sheriff and Jail Commander discussed the misconceptions and frequently mentioned suggestions. Using already existing/retro-fitting another building to be a jail is easier said than done. Some of the factors that have to be taken into consideration are: size of building, size water lines, size of sewers, and building needs to be constructed out of fire proof material. Adding floors onto the existing jail would involve the building to be brought up to seismic requirements, and the current foundation may not even be suitable for the additional floors. Using the Talent facility as jail space again would displace the clients at Work Center. It was also designed as a programs facility and not for secure housing. From a cost perspective at least 21 correction deputies would have to be hired to run that facility, a significant remodel would have to happen, and a new facility would need to be built for the Work Center. Building a tent city and implementing chain gangs raise constitutional issues.

Sheriff Sickler acknowledged that there are social-economic factors along with other factors outside of the criminal justice system that impact crime and not all crime will cease with a new jail. Additionally, regardless how large the jail is they will still need to work effectively with drug addiction, Mental Health, and other programs in order to make a long term impact and reduce recidivism.

In July 2018 there is a tentative plan to move forward with a survey to get the public's opinion about whether or not they believe there is a need for a new jail and if they would invest in it.

Dr. Ayers suggested that instead of saying that Mental Health and A&D treatment are not as effective it needs to be changed to reflect that the limited amount of time that people are spending in the jail due to the lack of bed space is prevent them from accessing enough resources. She also recommended that they go into more detail regarding the jail population; e.g. how many beds are held for I.C.E., Measure 11 offenders, pre-trial, etc. How would it offset with the warrant aspect if you were able to hold people until their court date.

Beth Heckert asked if there was anything that NIC is offering that can be done between now and July? The Jail Commander replied that they have applied for a P.O.N.I. (Planning of a New Institution) and are just waiting for a response from the NIC.

Lorenzo Mejia brought up the fact that the Grand Jury Reports mentioned staffing and he understands that a better jail could be more efficient but isn't staffing going to be an issue since people in general are not applying to criminal justice jobs? Nate explained that they have focused on their recruiting and the ability to move through the process efficiently.

Stacy Brubaker mentioned that as the Sheriff goes around to the public it is important for people to understand that there are more mental health resources right now than there ever have been.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BOB KLEKER, CHAIR

DISCUSSION	There were no announcements
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Next Scheduled PSCC Meeting: February 27, 2018

Meeting Adjourned: 12:53 pm