

MINUTES

Public Safety Coordinating Council
Police Services Committee
LCOG 4th Floor Large Conference Room
99 East Broadway, Eugene

3:00 P.M. – June 5, 2002

PRESENT: Warren Weathers, Chair; Thad Buchanan, Jan Clements, Jan Gund, Ken Larsen, Tim Laue, Jerry Smith, members; Doug Smith, staff

ABSENT: Russell Burger, Mike Hudson, Brian Leavitt, Anna Morrison, Lynn Reeves

GUESTS: John Clague, Michael Harman, Myra Wall Downing

Mr. Weathers called the meeting of the Public Safety Coordinating Council (PSCC) Police Services Committee to order at 3:10 p.m. He stated that a quorum of members was present.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Laue moved, seconded by Mr. Jerry Smith, that the minutes of the May 1, 2002, meeting of the Committee be accepted. The motion was adopted unanimously, 7:0.

2. SPRINGFIELD MUNICIPAL JAIL

Mr. Harman reported that the Springfield Municipal Jail had been closed many years previously because of its decrepit condition and that there had been reconsideration of constructing a new facility on a number of occasions. He said a current study was being made of a new police headquarters and jail facility.

Mr. Harman explained that Springfield was considering building a new Municipal Jail because it believed that the primary limit on the effectiveness of the Lane County criminal justice system was jail capacity. He said addressing the concerns of Springfield citizens about quality of life criminal behavior by providing a Municipal Jail would also benefit the region because overall incarceration capacity would be increased.

Mr. Harman said forces encouraging the study included Springfield's continued growth and the ineffectiveness of additional police when arrested criminals were matrix released from the County Jail.

Mr. Harman said it appeared most advantageous to approach voters for funding of a new police facility in four years. He said the question of whether to build a Municipal Jail needed to be resolved at the same time.

Mr. Harman reported that the National Institute of Corrections would conduct a Planning Of New Institutions (PONI) analysis for Springfield June 24-28. He said the analysis would include interviews with major criminal justice system stakeholders in the City and County. He said data included in the analysis would include arrests, citations, staffing trends, time spent on arrests, and court case information. He said the local portion of the analysis would conclude with a Community Meeting scheduled for June 27 and encouraged members to participate.

Mr. Harman explained that Springfield Police officials would study the PONI analysis to decide if the approval of elected officials should be sought. He said educating the public, listening to their concerns, and gauging support would be part of a process followed.

Mr. Harman explained that decision points in the project would include whether there was support from the City Council and community, and if funding was available. He said unresolved issues included whether beds would be leased to other jurisdictions; what would be done with female offenders; and operational issues such as medical care, kitchens and food preparation, visitation, and access by prisoners to legal materials.

Mr. Harman said the earliest date a facility could open was July 2006. He said the Springfield Police Department was not committed to building and operation a municipal jail, but was anxious to find a solution to the problems created when offenders were released back into the community because there was no place to hold them.

Mr. Clements said he applauded Springfield for its investigation of the possibility of a Municipal Jail and for encouraging dialogue about the problem. He suggested that options such as having the Sheriff's Office operate the jail and having Springfield build additional beds for the Lane county Jail be considered in the study.

Ms. Gund asked how a Springfield Municipal Jail would be financed. Mr. Jerry Smith replied that it had been estimated that revenue from the jail and savings resulting from the elimination of the frequent re-arresting of the same persons could produce close to the operational cost of a Municipal Jail. He said leasing beds to other jurisdictions could also produce income.

Mr. Clements asked why Circuit Judges were not to be consulted in the PONI study. Mr. Jerry Smith replied that the facility would be planned to deal only with Municipal Court sentences. He said any reduction in the number of municipal offenders housed in the County Jail would be of benefit to the community.

Mr. Clements recommended that the persons conducting the PONI analysis discuss County Jail capacity issues with Judge Mary Ann Bearden. He said a study conducted by Lane Council of Governments was also available which showed that there was a need for 300 additional jail beds in Lane County. He said the latest expansion of the capacity of the Forest Work Camp was an influence in the reduction of matrix release rates from approximate one in three to approximately one in five persons arrested and booked into the jail.

Members discussed various elements of the matrix problem in Lane County.

Mr. Clements said he did not believe prevention programs could be successful without the availability of jail facilities.

Members continued to discuss the value of increasing the capacity of the County Jail and the effect of doing so on matrix releases and Failure to Appear for court appearances problems.

Mr. Weathers observed that the discussion had shown that there are more important issues facing the criminal justice system than what was addressed by the Intergovernmental Agreement for Criminal Justice.

Mr. Clements said he hoped consideration of housing County Jail residents in the Lane County Serbu Juvenile Justice Center would be considered in the PONI study.

The meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

(Recorded by Dan Lindstrom)

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