

**Clatsop County Board of Commissioners**  
**Work Session**  
**March 24, 2010**

Chair Hazen called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. at the Judge Guy Boyington Building, 857 Commercial Street, Astoria, Oregon. Present were Vice-Chair Raichl, Commissioners Robert Mushen, Patricia Roberts and Dirk Rohne, Judges Paula Brownhill, Phil Nelson and Cindee Matyas, Sheriff Tom Bergin, and District Attorney Josh Marquis.

Staff Present:

Duane Cole	County Manager
Paul Tesi	Jail Commander
Nicole Williams	Assistant County Manager

**Discussion with County Elected Officials.**

Parking. Cole introduced the session by talking about parking. An aerial photo of the 12-block area surrounding the courthouse identified current parking areas and their respective time limits. The parking committee is currently addressing key issues around the County Courthouse area. The next parking meeting is scheduled for April.

Marquis said he thought the greatest parking challenge would be during the summer months when Goonies attractions and juror parking compete for spaces. Raichl also brought up jury orientation days as problematic. Raichl asked if there were concerns about spillover from businesses if the county was to acquire more parking, and Bergin said they mainly see that problem when there is an influx of visitors to the Flavel House. Roberts suggested providing jurors with a map of possible parking areas. Bergin says there is not a reason why the county cannot work with the city to designate certain spaces as courthouse parking. Rohne suggested implementing diagonal parking on Duane between 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, but Raichl said the city has been historically opposed. Raichl asked how people were expected to arrive for the Goonies' attractions, i.e. by car or bus. Bergin said they generally arrive by van in groups of 10-12 or more. Cole said the parking committee would pursue some of the ideas mentioned.

Jail. Cole gave a Powerpoint presentation, a hard copy of which is on file at the County Manager's office. The presentation reviewed past and present facility information, and the Voorhis and Cascade Study completed in 2008. The presentation suggested appointment of a Core Team, or at least a reaffirmation of Core Team, to evaluate each site and option against criteria in order to recommend a site and option to present to the Board for recommendation and approval. He said the next steps would be development of a schematic drawing by revisiting construction cost estimates and development of final costs for potential bond issue, with a possible date of May 2012, which provides time to gather information and economic recovery.

Rohne asked about returning the current jail property. Bergin says the main issue that needs to be agreed upon is that the jail is broken and outsourcing is not an option, because it is expensive and fraught with liability. Also the County will need to figure out what to do with the old jail. It is most important to get the user groups (law enforcement agencies) behind the effort. Because the pricetag for a new jail is so steep, Bergin talked about a county who did a modular building at a greatly reduced price, however, some expressed concerns about the lifespan of that type of building. He said his personal favorite option at one time was to add on the existing jail, which he no longer believes is a good idea because of staffing challenges. Now he thinks the best idea is to put it out in the North Coast Business Park (NCBP). He stressed the importance of marketing both capital costs, as well as staffing costs, to the public. He said there is currently strong support for a new jail from many people. To overcome all challenges, he believes they must first establish the best process, location and core team.

Marquis said credibility is an issue because in past efforts, they have not had support of the commissioners. Also, the criminal community knows that their sentences will be reduced because of limited jail space. He talked about all the crimes that don't get time automatically because of limited jail space, and said that keep a couple empty beds at all times is essential. Bergin said that Tillamook's warrants and recidivism rates dropped with a new jail, because potential criminals knew they were assured time. Hazen said he learned during a jail tour how many repeat offenders there are, and said he shares the figures with people regularly. Bergin said the county jail is a worse place in many respects than the state penitentiary because inmates come in under the influence, and he said that a new facility would mean putting in programs in addition to having enough room, thus providing a better chance of lowering recidivism.

Bergin said it is important to establish who the core team is going to be, because they will be key in marketing to the community. Bergin said the core group is imperative and should be comprised of representatives from the judicial bar, the county manager's office, retired law enforcement, user groups, and citizens. He acknowledged that there will be opponents, but having a well-defined plan will mitigate that to some degree.

Rohne reminded that some of the infrastructure can be paid for out of NCBP funds if built in the NCBP. Hazen said he anticipates full support of the commission, but he is concerned with operational costs, and says it is important to figure those costs out, especially in light of the empty facility sitting in Multnomah County due to unanticipated operational costs. Bergin says that what happened in Multnomah will not happen in Clatsop, and that his staff is actually looking at Lane County (and other much bigger counties) that have the same staff size.

Roberts said it was important to address the core problem (drugs) so they can tell the public how they will combat it. Bergin said that the juvenile and female populations have increased, and that there are a whole host of programs they could implement, but Marquis pointed out that most of the people in jail are pre-adjudicated, meaning they have not yet been convicted so they cannot be forced to participate in any programs.

Roberts said she thought the message to the public should be up front, and that they should look into adding a 1% tax to restaurants, while reinforcing how the jail is for everyone's safety. Bergin agreed that people visiting the county should also help with the cost by paying via restaurant tax.

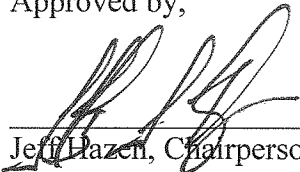
Nelson said the one problem he sees on the horizon is that current revenues for the courthouse security fund that do not cover a court security program. Marquis said we have a non-secure courthouse, which has upsides and downsides. We've been lucky and not have had a violent incident recently. Nelson said the county is paying \$50,000 toward security and the fund is paying the remainder. Bergin said part of the issue is that because of how the statute reads, once the Sheriff's Department begins a court security program, continuance of the program is required. To simplify things, he is in favor of having one entrance in and one out, but acknowledged that is a whole other battle. He agreed with Nelson that they need a solution because state courthouse funds are waning. Hazen asked if other counties are struggling with the same thing, and Nelson said that primarily smaller counties are struggling similarly, but bigger counties tend to be more secure. Bergin said that Tillamook has one deputy like we do. Matyas said Yamhill has a deputy station in the courthouse, and Bergin says Deschutes has a similar system. Bergin is on the state court security committee where they have been discussing the issue for at least 1.5 years. The committee has provided funding to courts during high profile cases, and he cited one court case that cost his department lots of overtime because the situation required approximately 21 deputies. Nelson and Matyas agreed a problem is as likely to break out in a small claims or family law court as criminal court. Tesi said the 2010-11 county proposed budget includes 50% for courthouse security.

Raichl said his concern with a modular unit is that it might not have an optimal life expectancy, so it needs to be explored. He said another thing to think about carefully is a timeline, keeping in mind the economic recovery for our area. He said if we get out in front of the construction rush that occurs during an economic upturn, we could add 20-30% to cost if we wait until that time. He said that each time the jail issue is revisited, there is a new philosophy, new technology, so any studies we do should be very specific and not duplicate past efforts.

Bergin said he thought the meeting was constructive for an hour meeting, and that it would be great to do it again in a month, bringing in a user group. Matyas asked what the next step was for putting together a team, and Bergin said he would get together with Cole to build one before the next meeting.

Adjournment: 5:59

Approved by,



Jeff Hazen, Chairperson