

Skagit County Law & Justice Council

Charlie Wend
Jail Commander
Chairman

Lisa Tremblay
Juvenile Court Dir
Vice-Chair

Open
Member-at-Large

Cathy Sisk
Jail/Court Coordinator
Secretary

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2015
8:15 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Attendance:

WILL REICHARDT
KEN DAHLSTEDT
KEITH TYNE
MICHAEL ELLIS
LADESSA CROUCHER

CHARLIE WEND
LISA JANICKI
CATHY SISK
ROXANE GOSS

TIM HOLLORAN
DAVE NEEDY
JENNIFER JOHNSON
SEAN CONNOR

LISA TREMBLAY
DELILAH GEORGE
JOE VALENTINE
MATT MILLER

I. Welcome – Charlie Wend, Chair

Chairman Charlie Wend called the meeting to order at approximately 8:20 a.m. and welcomed the Council and guests.

II. Introductions

All present introduced themselves with the names listed above.

III. Review and approval of January 14, 2015 minutes

The minutes from the January 14, 2015 Law & Justice Council meeting were reviewed. The minutes were approved with corrections.

IV. Jail Update – Charlie Wend

Sheriff Will Reichardt stated that jail design and development continues to move forward. Documents are being signed regarding option to purchase and this must be signed prior to January 20, 2015 or the purchase option will need to be extended. He also explained that the jail budget is in its third round of cutting costs to keep it within budget.

The Sheriff also discussed that meetings regarding jail medical costs are currently ongoing and there is a proposal to split costs between the cities and the county to make monthly medical costs more predictable.

He also discussed several proposed systems of heating the jail with new technology. However, the Jail Finance Committee had concerns about the lengthy payback period weighed against the upfront investment, as well as concerns they expressed about what they felt was untested technology. The decision of the Committee was to move forward with conventional heating and cooling systems in the new jail.

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Chairman Wend stated that changes in the jail budget will not impact the safety and security of the new jail. Also, certain items that were promised to the citizens of Skagit County will not be affected, such as number of beds in the jail.

Tim Holloran, County Administrator, discussed that even working with a tight budget the jail is being built in keeping with energy efficiency and that some of the sustainability efforts will be brought into Phase 2 of the project (Expansion to the build-out capacity of 800.)

Delilah George, Superior Court Administrator, asked if the jail video system, which is planned for the use of inmate court appearances, is within the \$60 million budget, and if the infrastructure will be in place when the jail is being built.

Chairman Wend responded in the affirmative. He also discussed the planned uses of the video system to include not only inmate arraignments, but also services such as telemedicine, which would allow for medical professionals, e.g., psychiatrists, to visit with an inmate via video feed. Chief Wend advised they tested a video system in the jail yesterday to work out any kinks before going live. Superior Court hopes to go live Tuesday, January 20, 2015, though that date may be a bit too ambitious given the technological challenges yet remaining.

Mr. Holloran explained that they are still looking at the parameters of using the video system to include certain types of court hearings, telemedicine, and visitation.

Mike Ellis, the City of Anacortes Citizen Representative to the Council, asked if the budget called for cutting back on treatment and mental health programming for the inmates in the new jail. Chairman Wend responded that there will be no cutting back in this area.

Keith Tyne, Public Defender, asked if any changes were being made to reduce the size of the attorney/conference rooms. Chairman Wend responded there will be no reduction in the size or number of rooms.

Tim Holloran discussed that they are working with the Department of Ecology (DOE) on the clean-up of the truck site. The DOE will be partnering with Skagit County on the eventual cost of the mitigation of contamination on the site.

V. Elections/Voting for the 2015 Executive Board

Chairman Wend has agreed to keep his position of Chairman for the 2015 year. Charlie also advised that Lisa Tremblay has accepted the position of Vice Chair, vacating her position of Member-at-Large. Therefore, we are looking for

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someone to fill the Member-at-Large position and asked the Council to put the word out.

Jennifer Johnson offered to step up to fill that position if no one comes forward.

Cathy Sisk, Jail/Court Coordinator, accepted the position of Secretary, which will be vacated by Delilah George. Ms. George will retire from her position as Superior Court Administrator later this year.

Motion to accept the 2015 Executive Board as stated by Sheriff Reichardt and seconded by Commissioner Dahlstedt.

VI. Announcements

Commissioner Dahlstedt stated there was a joint agreement with the Mayor of Sedro-Woolley and the City Council to sign a 3 year lease to move forward with the re-opening of the North Sound Evaluation and Treatment Center (North Sound E&T), a 16 bed acute care psychiatric facility located on the grounds of the former Northern State Hospital.

He also stated that The Board of County Commissioners created a moratorium on new recreational marijuana production or processing within residential areas. The Board of County Commissioners will hold a public hearing on the moratorium on February 23, 2015, and testimony on the matter will be received until February 5, 2015.

Commissioner Lisa Janicki expressed her excitement at being part of the Jail Finance Committee. She also said she has been out to visit potential marijuana growing sites and that the government has allowed the tribe to come into the marijuana growing process as well.

LaDessa Croucher stated they have started teaching mediation classes at Skagit Valley College as part of the Human Services program. They are hoping students will graduate as mediators and go into non-profit organizations.

She also stated that a couple of police officers who attended the class reported back that they have already applied the training on the job and it works well. They said it was the best training of this type in 30 years.

Sean Conner stated they have been working with schools implementing a program where kids can take a course dealing with such things as conflict resolution, effective communication, problem solving, etc., and by participating then reduce suspension time at school. The hope is to keep kids in school and to have them spend less time in suspension.

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Councilmember Miller, Anacortes City Council, expressed that it is his pleasure to be part of the Law & Justice Council. He also said, as someone who has reviewed many large government projects from the operators view, Chairman Wend is reviewing the right details on the Jail project. Additionally, he wanted to be sure we are planning to be operational when we open the new jail and not have the issue Thurston County is experiencing with its new and empty jail.

Chairman Wend responded that he is friends with Thurston County Jail Commander Todd Thoma and they have discussed Thurston County's operational issues at length. Jail Commander Wend is in regular contact with Chief Thoma in an effort to avoid the operational challenges Thurston County has faced.

Sheriff Reichardt discussed the upcoming Law & Justice Day in Olympia. He and Anacortes Police Chief Bonnie Bowers will be attending. They will be meeting with legislators and the governor regarding issues important to the Law and Justice community that we would like to see pushed for this legislative session. He asked for any issues the others would like to see discussed as well.

Sheriff Reichardt also introduced by name, Rick Balam, the new Swinomish Police Chief. Sheriff Reichardt stated that following a conversation with Chief Balam, there is no interest at this time by Swinomish Tribal Police of taking on the City of La Conner contract currently held by the SCSO.

Commissioner Dahlstedt would like to see the issue addressed by the federal government of taking away Medicaid, or denying applications, of persons otherwise eligible for benefits who are charged with a crime, placed in custody, and who haven't yet been convicted. He believes that this amounts to taking away an individual's civil rights before he/she has been lawfully convicted. He will be working to address this issue through his participation in the National Association of Counties.

Delilah George discussed the challenging issue of having mandated interpreter services for court hearings, mediations, and arbitrations. Superior Court currently contracts with the Language Exchange for interpreter services, and managing the budget related to this service is difficult due to the significant usage and language variability of interpreter services.

Jennifer Johnson spoke to the work her Department of Public Health and Community Services is involved in of improving all aspects of community wide health care and of investigating ways to improve the lives of the citizens of our community through the concept of "Population Health." One goal of this approach is to be able to rely less on law enforcement resources, particularly around the issue of behavioral health.

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Joe Valentine stated that Sedro-Woolley did approve plans to move forward with opening the North Sound E&T. He also stated they would like to expand mobile outreach teams of mental health professionals and chemical dependency professionals to provide assistance to law enforcement in the field.

Roxane Goss discussed the paperless project in the Clerk's Office.

Lisa Tremblay stated that they are seeking to preserve funding this legislative session for the BECCA program to benefit those juveniles who are considered truant and/or At-Risk Youth. She also explained how the funding of programs designed for prevention has a significant impact in the juvenile arena.

Keith Tyne complemented Ms. Tremblay's department for keeping the juvenile detention population at low numbers. He also discussed that going paperless is a goal for the Public Defender's Office in 2015.

Lisa Tremblay thanked Delilah George for her service as Secretary to the Executive Committee for the 2014 year.

- VII. **Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 11, 2015 at 8:15 a.m.**
- VIII. Meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.