

Skagit County Law & Justice Council

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2014

8:15 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Attendance:

CHARLIE WEND	WILL REICHARDT	BONNIE BOWERS	JUDGE DAVE NEEDY
DELILAH GEORGE	SHARON WHITTAKER	TIM HOLLORAN	LaDESSA CROUCHER
GREGG FREEMAN	DEANNIE NELSON	MARC ESTVOLD	COMMISSIONER KEN DAHLSTEDT
JERRY DODD	HEIDI KENNEDY	BILL HENKEL	AARON KIRK
SINEAD FITZPATRICK PLAGGE			

I. Welcome - Chairman Charlie Wend

Chairman Reichardt called the meeting to order at 8:18 A.M. and welcomed the Committee and guests.

II. Introductions

All present introduced him or herself. Their names are listed above.

III. Review and approval of November 13, 2013 minutes

The minutes from the last Law & Justice Council meeting were reviewed. Gregg Freeman moved to approve; 2nd by Bonnie Bowers. Motion passed.

IV. Update on Jail Project - Marc Estvold

Marc Estvold reported on the jail project. He said that we are just about to the end of the EIS process. The public hearing was last week. At that hearing, mostly people shared their preference of one of the two sites. Tomorrow, January 16, 2014, the public comment period ends. Mid February the final document will be submitted with the EIS looking at both sites for the jail. This document will be on both the City of Mount Vernon and the Skagit County websites.

The next major piece of the process is the cost matrix. It will have all the information summarized for both sites. It will then be presented to the Planning Commission on March 18th to get their thoughts. We will not be soliciting their recommendations. Next it goes to the City Council with our recommendation. There will be rezoning and conditional use permits.

The Hearing Examiner will then look at everything and provide their ruling in August or September, 2014.

Completion of the project is targeted for June 9, 2017.

Tim Holloran stated that both sites are acceptable. At the public hearing they heard about economic impacts on surrounding properties to both sites. It was suggested that the Alf Christiansen site could generate \$86 million ideally with a nice hotel and shops.

**Sheriff's Office Training Room, Public Safety Building
600 South Third Street, Mount Vernon**

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No revenue would be received on either site for taxes for the city. The Planning Commission will determine the requirements for both sites. Next, we will be looking at operational costs.

Tim continued with information about the Finance Committee. See draft handout, “*Overview of Committee Chair Qualifications*”. The Committee was encouraged to submit names of qualified candidates.

V. Community Integration Program (CIP) – Charlie Wend

CIP - A collaborative project between Skagit Valley College, the Sheriff's Office (Jail), DOC, Community Action Agency, and Department of Community Services.

Charlie introduced information about the Community Integration Program and said that he would be asking for a letter of support from this Committee. A group will be traveling to Olympia to speak about the funding (1/1 match) and will be taking it with them.

Greg Freeman discussed the benefits of education and how it impacts recidivism. See handout “*Education Makes a Difference*”. Gregg then reviewed the statistics of the 2006 and 2013 studies with the Committee.

Charlie explained that this conversation has been going on with the College for a number of years. They utilized a VISTA volunteer performing outreach for the first year as the program got underway.

Aaron Kirk, SVC, stated that students come him and he visits the Jail monthly. He said the primary problem is housing. It is extremely difficult to be a student when you are homeless. They will be asking Olympia to support housing.

Sinead Fitzpatrick Plagge, SVC, stated that they have received multiple grants for tuition, supplies and emergency services but the number one issue is unstable housing. Then they have problems getting employment. The hope is to work with the community asking employers to take a chance and allow job shadowing and internships.

Bill Henkel, Community Action, stated that the project has been on-going for five years; three of the years with VISTA. They did have state funding for housing but those funds went away. SVC is the lead and Community Action is a partner. Representatives Pearson and Litton are both working with them to secure funding.

Charlie stated that we'll match their money 1/1. He said that we want to do what the public wants; we want to help people make changes.

Gregg stated that this is a great program link in the new jail.

Charlie requested a motion on this issue. Bonnie moved to provide a letter of support from the Law & Justice Council for the Community Integration Program. Tim seconded. Tim also suggested that it be a joint letter including the Board of County Commissioners, Sheriff, and drug court/presiding judge.

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VI. Input from the floor re programs to schedule

- Law & Justice departments should use this Committee to provide information and updates about their projects and gain support of prior to the budget process. This should be beneficial to the Commissioners when allocating 2015 funds.
- Jail programs- what they are doing currently
- How are work crews being used
- Home monitoring – probation
- L&J campus what are the long range plans
- Medical/mental health care for incarcerated
- Lilah Lane – is it meeting the needs of the community? Is it working for LEA?
- Employment opportunities within the county (WorkSource)

VII. Announcements/updates from floor

LaDessa – Dispute Resolution Center was doing conflict resolution training at DOC; nice to have it local. Help inmates identify triggers, etc.

Judge Needy-suggested that the Law & Justice Council move forward with the Jail project with a united front. He stated it is now a large group and this is a strong advisory group. He asked what is more important to Skagit County than the jail project? The public looks to us for our recommendation and we should give it. We should be a strong advocate for what works best for us.

Marc – timing is important to be effective. We should have the matrix by March. This needs to be on the agenda in both February and March and so that Committee has enough notice and time to take action in March. There are 36 voting members.

Charlie – U.S. Marshalls will be at Skagit County tomorrow. They will be conducting a security assessment of the Courthouse and surrounding area.

Heidi – DSHS in Mount Vernon got a new phone system. Now prefix is 429. This was effective January 13, 2014.

VIII. Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 12, 2014 at 8:15

IX. Adjourn 9:18 a.m.