

Skagit County Law and Justice Council
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 14th, 2009

Attendance

Ken Bergsma
Tim Holloran
Andrea Vallee
Chuck Benjamin
Charlie Wend
Daniel Dempsey
Mike Mahoney
Alan Erickson
Nancy Scott

Rich Weyrich
Pam Springer
J B Bryson
Keith Tyne
Scott McMullen
Al Jongsma
Mary June Curtis
Dave Yount

John Lum
Linda Eiford
Delilah George
Will Reichardt
Gary Shand
Laurie Jarolimek
Liz Silva
Roxanne Goss

Today's meeting began at 8:20 a.m. with introductions and a welcome from *Gary Shand*, **Skagit County Jail**, Chair of the Law & Justice Council.

September 9th Meeting Minutes

There was a motion and second by the Council that the September 9th, 2009 meeting minutes be approved. The motion carried.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES:

District Court Probations, *Linda Eiford, Director*- Mike Mahoney was introduced as the new DV Probation Officer for District Court.

Youth & Family Services, *John Lum, Director* – Introduced a motion to create a Law & Justice sub-committee to address Juvenile Justice concerns in the community. There were suggestions that a proposed membership list submitted, with a suggestion that representatives from the school system and mental health might be considered for inclusion. This item was tabled until these matters could be looked into.

Mediation Services, *Andrea Vallee, Director* – Announced that a contract has been signed to merge Mediation Services under the larger Volunteers of America organization. Effective November 1, 2009 they will no longer be a Skagit County department but have asked to remain on the Law & Justice Council to represent the Skagit County designated Dispute Resolution Center. One benefit of their joining with Volunteers of America will be their increase in office hours from three days a week to five. The Dispute Resolution Center's new contact information is:

Dispute Resolution Center

1932 E College Way
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
360-542-8487 (main line)
360-542-8488 (Andrea Vallee, Area Manager's direct line)
SkagitDRC@voaww.org

Criminal Justice Center Update, Charlie Wend, DOC- Flood issues are being investigated further in regards to the building of the new criminal justice center. This component is of major importance as it would greatly affect the overall cost. The Law & Justice Executive Board is planning on meeting with the Commissioners in the near future regarding plans to date on the new Criminal Justice Center.

DOC, Gregg Freeman, Director – Due to regional cutbacks and layoffs, DOC is in the process of restructuring and redistributing caseloads. Loss of personnel has forced their department to concentrate on high risk offenders. This will result in a large increase of low risk offenders to the county jails.

This led to questions regarding tracking recidivism for releasing low risk offenders to the community and any available mental health services for these offenders. *Tim Holloran, County Administrator*, asked for suggestions as to what cost effective options might be available to deal with crime in our county, to avoid becoming a dumping ground. *John Lum, Youth & Family Services, Director*, suggested Re-entry courts and “step-down” procedures alternatives. *Charlie Wend, DOC*, mentioned “H” Grants that would release inmates into housing who would otherwise be homeless and thereby creating a more positive transition. Also mentioned was the continuation of working with Skagit Valley College in a wraparound program for support and training of offenders back in the community. Job Corp was also mentioned as a further resource for juvenile offenders.

SPEAKERS: Mary June Curtis & Liz Silva, Senior Probation Counselors, with Youth & Family Services- Gang Intervention Services. During their presentation they focused on their efforts to provide gang members with exit strategies, and increasing public awareness. Their goal is to turn around one kid at a time, with the collaboration of many agencies. (See enclosed handouts)

OTHER BUSINESS: Gary Shand, Jail Chief- Passed on the notice that Talia from the Skagit Valley Herald is looking to write an article on Mental Health issues to increase public awareness. He asked for other department assistance if contacted.

NOTE: Please forward future program questions and suggestions to Laurie Jarolimek for Council consideration.

The next Law and Justice Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 10th, 2009. The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:15 a.m.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:15.