



WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

WORKING SESSION

June 2, 2005

The meeting was called to order by Chair Solowczuk at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room, Administration Building, 220 North Main Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Comms. Bergman, Brackenbury, Gunn, Irwin, Kern, Ouimet, Peterson, Prater, Sizemore, Smith, Solowczuk.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT: Bob Guenzel, County Administrator; Frank Cambria, Deputy County Administrator; Curtis Hedger, Corporation Counsel; Dan Minzey, Sheriff; David Behen, Ken Schrader, ITS; Verna McDaniel, Diane Heidt, Mary O'Hare, Human Resources; Pete Ballios, Finance; Kerry Sheldon, Administration; Greg Dill, Andrew Smith, Ed Holley, Facilities; Ellen Clement, Public Health; Mary Udoji, Library; Gordon Burger, Bob Hubbard, Jennifer Watson, Maiyuwai Reeves, Budget; Herb Mahony, Gary Greenfield, Kirk Filsinger, Tim Morales, Sheriff's Office; Alan Israel, Prosecutor's Office; Fred Veigel, Road Commission; Debbie Shaw, Trial Court; Jason Kaplan, Planning & Environment; James D. Higginbottom, Derrick Jackson, Clerk's Office; various citizens; and members of the press.

Roll Call

Citizen Participation

Roberta Aspen of Ann Arbor congratulated the board on passing the non-smoking resolution.

Fred Veigel, representing the labor council said that a modular jail would take many jobs away from the local trades.

John Boyle of Ann Arbor said that pensions and medical costs should not be impacted due to the actuating of funds.

Commissioner Follow-Up to Citizen Participation

Comm. Irwin responded to Mr. Boyle's comments saying that the costs for the Juvenile Detention Center include the expansion and reorganizing over the past two years. He explained that the concerns about pensions are actually due to downturns in the market and early retirements.

Comm. Smith noted that healthcare costs will be a long term concern. He added that the only way for a county to increase revenue is for the citizens to approve a millage.

Comm. Ouimet said it is important to increase productivity to ensure that tax dollars are used efficiently.

Comm. Bergman said that it is important to remember that government is not a business responsible to provide profit for shareholders. She said that government is responsible to provide services to the public.

Discussion Items

Public Safety & Justice

Sheriff Dan Minzey, Undersheriff Herb Mahony, Commander Kirk Filsinger, and Mr. Jim Stone presented the preliminary proposal to the board.

Preliminary Proposal Jail Space Expansion

- Current Situation
- County Administrator's Proposal
- Sheriff's Preliminary Plan.
- Proposed Construction
- Methodology
- Input from the Community

- Cost Effective Jail Space Construction
- Key Operational Concerns
- Current Jail Utilization
- Projected Utilization
- Proposed Construction
- Recommendation

Comm. Irwin asked about the modular units and how it would affect the use of local trades. Mr. Stone responded that all construction is done by union trades and that 90% of the work would be done in site with local labor. He said the benefit to using the modular system is that it insures the use of high quality materials. Comm. Irwin asked what percentage of the construction costs covers materials. Mr. Stone responded that the cost of the construction of a single cell is about \$14,000. Comm. Irwin asked if this design was a move away from a direct supervision model to a pod system. He said he hoped to keep operating costs low. Undersheriff Mahony said that the construction maintained the direct supervision model. Kirk Filsinger said that it is important to have a facility that is flexible depending on the inmates. Comm. Irwin asked about the technology for visitation. All responded that it would be a video system. He then said that the voters in Washenaw County decided against a large jail and was concerned about the new plan. Undersheriff responded that capacity does not increase until there is a staffing model to accompany the jail. He said this would be a more cost effective option.

Comm. Smith said he appreciated the enthusiasm brought to the project, but funding options are not yet reached. Undersheriff Mahony responded that the plan meets mid to long term needs, but the cost will be an issue no matter the number of beds. He said the proposal is designed to cut out what is wanted to what is needed. The Sheriff said that they need to look at the issue differently. Comm. Smith asked for an estimate of the operations costs. The Sheriff said that a feasibility study is necessary to gain accurate information on costs. The Undersheriff said that this model would require less staff. Comm. Smith asked if an independent feasibility study could be done. Comm. Smith said that many of his constituents are more interested in programs that prevent reciprocity as opposed to increase beds. The Sheriff said the current situation prevents such programs since the facilities are used for spare beds. Comm. Smith said he was committed to staffing programs that would prevent additional incarcerations.

Comm. Bergman said she does not see enough rooms in the plan for programs attorney rooms, etc. She said that it would prohibit counseling and she does not think any of those concerns are alleviated by the plan. The Undersheriff said that the sketches are only rough drawings and the classrooms are twice the size of the current location and allows space for attorney visits.

Comm. Kern asked if the modular concept complies with local codes. The Undersheriff said they exceed the standards. Comm. Kern asked if the units would use less water and sewer. Mt. Stone stated that Michigan has some of the most difficult standards and they are all addressed and exceeded during construction. He said that they also address the need for conservation. Both electrical and water uses a minimum amount to conserve. Comm. Kern asked if the current security system would be updated throughout the rest of the jail. The Undersheriff said that they would maintain the current system unless more funds were available. Comm. Kern asked about limitations on combining different classifications in the facility during overcrowding situations. The Undersheriff said that most could be adjusted as needed.

Comm. Prater asked about the figures and how they will be impacted by a feasibility study. The Undersheriff said that the numbers given are based on a worst case scenario. Mr. Stone said that his company has always succeeded in coming in under budget and before schedule.

Comm. Sizemore asked when the current jail was built. The Sheriff said it was built in 1976. Comm. Sizemore asked if there were any height limitations. Bob Guenzel responded that there was a lawsuit when the original jail was built, but there may be some flexibility. Comm. Sizemore asked what would be more expensive, a new unit or modifying a current facility. Mr. Stone said that it is significantly cheaper to use a current facility. Comm. Sizemore asked for the cost per square foot, but the figures were not broken down in a way to provide cost based on square footage. Comm. Sizemore asked how many acres are at the Service Center and said the sale of some property could assist in the upgrade costs.

Comm. Ouimet thanked the Sheriff and his team for bringing their proposal and ideas to the board. He asked how the particular company was chosen and said that the cost per square foot is very important and requested that it be provided as soon as possible. He also said costs, and funding are still high and unknown. He expressed continued concern over productivity and where the requirements would be in the years to come. He also expressed concern

over jobs and how much work they would actually provide. He also requested that costs for other similar projects be provided.

Comm. Gunn said that she was concerned about costs. She does not believe operating costs are addressed. She also said that it was inferred that local work is inferior. Mr. Stone said that modular units ensure the use of better building materials and the design build structure would encourage local labor.

Comm. Brackenbury said he wants local tax dollars to stay within the community. He added that they are concerned over the aggregate cost of units and hoped that the quality would be comparable. The Undersheriff responded that the cells meet and exceed the requirements of the state. Mr. Stone added that it was prudent for the federal government to set standards for construction requirements. He said that the cells are about \$14,000 - \$16,000 per cell and are calculated by the number of beds. Comm. Brackenbury said the location of the jail in his district makes security very important for him. The Undersheriff said the security remains separate and whatever jail is built, security would be a top priority. Comm. Brackenbury asked about the space to be used in the proposed plan. The Undersheriff said that the courtyards where the facilities will be located are not used. Mr. Filsinger said the courtyards are seasonal and therefore get very little use.

Comm. Peterson said that he appreciated the input from the sheriff and though the information was very useful. He was concerned over the labor and square footage costs. He asked for accurate cost for labor. He said the Sheriff would advocate what is needed and the Commissioners would figure out the costs. Mr. Stone said the figure is arrived at due to a comparison to other facilities. He said that it is difficult to reach a standard due to all of the variables.

Comm. Bergman said she had little confidence in the figures unless it was used locally. She also did not believe it is as humane of a facility as it could be.

Comm. Irwin asked if a picture of the cells could be provided. He said the current jail is in poor shape and he does not believe the issue. He also expressed his belief that capacity is taking priority over security. The Undersheriff said that they welcomed money to update all of the systems, but this plan only addressed what is needed. He said the new modular units would be more secure than the current facility. Comm. Irwin said that the county previously followed piecemeal solutions and he sees this as another piecemeal solution. He asked if the key system would increase the operational costs. Kirk Filsinger said they still would need to check each door and would not decrease the time needed. Comm. Irwin asked about the annual cost of manning the jail and expressed concern over what the costs would be.

Bob Guenzel asked if a feasibility study could be completed within 30 days. Undersheriff Mahony said it is possible. Mr. Guenzel then asked Mr. Stone what his relationship with the firm RQAW. Mr. Stone said there is no relationship. Mr. Guenzel asked about the feasibility study and who would be the architect for the project. Mr. Stone said that he would be willing to recommend a builder.

Commissioner Items

None.

County Administrator Report

None.

Items for Current/Future Discussion

Pending

Status of Annual Activities/Goals

No report.

Citizen Participation

None.

Commissioners Follow-up to Citizen Participation

None.

Adjournment

Comm. Peterson seconded by Comm. Irwin moved that the meeting be adjourned until July 7, 2005, at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room, Washtenaw County Administration Building. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:24 p.m.

Stephen Solowczuk, Chair

Lawrence Kestenbaum, Clerk/Register
By: James D. Higginbottom, Deputy Clerk

APPROVED: 07/06/2005