



Citizen's Jail Committee

Tuesday, December 16, 2008 – 5:30 p.m.
800 Livingston Blvd, Multi-Purpose Room
Gaylord, MI 49735

MINUTES

Don Koeppen called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

Members Present: Don Koeppen, Mike McCarthy, Diane Franckowiak, Bob Mammel, Brian Morgan, Diane Fisher, Gary Waldo, Daphne Cousineau,

Members Excused: Chuck Berlin, Mary Sanders, Norm Brecheisen, Vern Kassuba, Bill Giles, Pastor Jim Mathis, Todd Sharrard, Ron Skoglund, Tom Wagar, Elizabeth Haus, Don Tober, Jack Thompson, Alma Harrison, Nancy Morgridge,

Others Present: Ken Glasser, Erma Backenstose, Sheriff McBride, Undersheriff Nowicki, Randy Stults, Judge Pat Morse

Note: There was not a quorum for this meeting.

Old Business

A. Criminal Justice Master Plan

1. Section 8 (DATA) Review

The Committee discussed the draft for Section 8 of the Master Plan, including the need to develop the capacity to track recidivism in the future.

Two facts that are apparent in the data are that criminal bookings have been stagnant for the last three of years, and the average jail population is decreasing. Part of that is cyclical, but it is also due to the establishment of the Otsego County Work Camp, the Drug Court and the Sobriety Court.

The Work Camp currently has twelve people in it in-lieu of jail. The Drug Court also has twenty active participants. Even using these programs, the jail has occasionally reached capacity. Without these programs, the jail would certainly be in a continual state of overcrowding.

Rudi Edel updated the Committee on the new Mental Health Court. Otsego County will be one of 8 pilot programs in Michigan to divert people with diagnosed mental health issues. The program will last between 18 and 24 months. The State has provided \$169,000 in funding for the first year of the program. The Drug Court, the Sobriety Court, and the Mental Health Court will be rolled into one program called the Recovery Court.

2. Jail Cost Study

Burt distributed copies of the Jail Cost Study completed by Schenkel-Shultz. The options included:

Option 1: Add a housing pod for additional beds on to the current jail. This would cost approximately \$2.5 million plus the additional cost of purchasing the Chamber of Commerce Information Center. This option would not alleviate any of the limitations of the current jail except for adding bed space. This option would also reduce the amount of parking available at the courthouse and would not leave room for future expansion.

Option 2: Full renovation of the current jail. This would include renovating the current jail and adding additional space to the facility. As much of the existing facility would remain as possible, to reduce expenses. The approximate cost for this option is \$6.5 million. You would also have additional costs for dealing with asbestos issues and it requires the purchase of the Chamber of Commerce Information Center. While almost all issues with the current jail could be resolved with this option, it reduces the amount of available parking spaces which would potentially create increased parking congestion for downtown businesses. Also, the option does not leave room for future expansion without closing First Street.

Option 3: Construct a new facility at the County's property (former DNR property) along South Otsego Avenue. This option would cost approximately \$7.8 million. It would alleviate all needs for the jail and allow sufficient space for parking and future expansion.

Option 4: Construct a new facility at the Industrial Park. This option would cost approximately \$7.8 million. It would alleviate all needs for the jail and allow sufficient space for parking and future expansion. The County would have some additional costs in purchasing lots at the Park.

The Committee discussed the merits of the various options. Morgan motioned, seconded by McCarthy, to "recommend to the Otsego County Board of Commissioners to construct a new 68-bed jail facility". The members in attendance unanimously approved the motion. The Committee asked for the motion to be emailed to other Committee members to vote on the proposal.

The Committee discussed the various location options for a new jail including revisiting the idea of building at the Alpine Center. While some members agreed that the Alpine Center would be the most ideal spot, the majority felt a millage would not be passed for the Alpine Center. Edel informed the group that location is not as big an issue now since they can use video arraignment in many instances, which reduces the need for transporting prisoners to court. Morgan motioned, seconded by Fisher to "recommend to the Otsego County Board of Commissioners to build the new jail facility at the former DNR property owned by Otsego County". The members in attendance unanimously approved the motion. The Committee asked for the motion to be emailed to other Committee members to vote on the proposal.

The Committee also discussed the timing on any millage attempt for a new jail. The Committee discussed the positive effect of Otsego County's jail alternative programs has had by allowing the County additional time to do detailed planning. Morgan motioned, seconded by Cousineau, to "recommend to the Otsego County Board of Commissioners to continue to have the Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee review the effectiveness of jail alternative programs and to pursue a jail millage when the Committee finds it necessary to do so". The members in attendance unanimously approved the motion. The Committee asked for the motion to be emailed to other Committee members to vote on the proposal.

3. Chapter Conclusions

The Committee discussed the conclusions for each chapter in the draft Master Plan and made several changes/corrections. Burt will incorporate these changes into the Plan.

New Business

None

Next Meeting

The Committee has fulfilled its established goal and no further meetings are planned.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 PM.