



## **PUBLIC MEETING**

May 5, 2015

MINUTES

The Lewis and Clark County Commissioners Public Meeting was held on May 5, 2015, at 9:00 AM in Commission Chambers Room 330.

### **Roll Call**

Chairman Andy Hunthausen called the meeting to order at 9 a.m.

Commissioner Susan Good Geise was present. Commissioner Mike Murray was excused on personal business. Others attending all or a portion of the meeting included Eric Bryson, Michele Peterson-Cook, Al Knauber, and Nichole Nisbet, Recording Secretary.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

Everyone recited the pledge.

### **Consent Action Items**

### **Update on Public Safety Initiative. (Eric Bryson)**

Eric Bryson, Chief Administrative Officer, provided an update on the public safety initiative to the Commission. The current public safety facility has a functional capacity of 54 beds. Modifications over the last few years have increased the bed capacity to 80. The detention population in Lewis & Clark County is mainly pretrial detainees who are awaiting disposition of a criminal case. There is very little space left to accommodate sentenced offenders. The daily average population that Lewis & Clark County is responsible for is just above 100 people. Currently, the County pays \$65 per day for those inmates to be held in out of County facilities. The current facility does not provide space for classification which is important for inmate segregation. There is no ability to segregate inmates for behavior or criminal history reasons that provide a safer space for the inmates themselves or the general population. The new facility design allows for segregation and classification of inmates which in turn allows for the safety of inmates and our employees. Our current inmate population includes 19 percent of people who have been found guilty, have not been sentenced and are waiting for placement by the Department of Corrections. They are still under the jurisdiction of the County. On average 81 percent are awaiting trial or pleading procedures and are the pretrial population. This is an area where we can make improvements to the system. The cost of the facility per inmate per day is \$92.18, which is what the Department of Corrections pays the County when we hold their offenders in our facility. However, we are paying \$65 a day for other facilities to hold our inmates. The Sheriff's Office currently budgets \$200,000 for out of County facility holds. If the population continues at 15 to 20 inmates in out of County holds, that is not enough to keep this trend going and additional funding will need to be looked at if the situation is not addressed. Lewis & Clark has been looking at addressing the overcrowding of our current facility for the last five years. An analysis has been completed that addressed the facility, the structure, the building, operating practices, the growth of our population, the functional capacity of the current facility and our needs for the future. The conclusion was that we have very well trained and professional staff in managing that facility however the facility itself is deficient. It is not cost effective to add onto the building and the cost to remodel the facility to make it more functional far exceeds the cost to build a new facility. Another concern is the response time for the Sheriff's department to respond to calls for service as they are

responding outside of the city limits. Having the facility at it's current location is not ideal for the response time of the Sheriff's department or for remodeling because of the long term life cycle costs of the facility. The County contracted with Slate Architecture and GGA, a national firm that specializes in detention center and analysis for the public safety facility. The scope of work included determining site, size and cost. Some parameters for the site selection included an evaluation for potential sites with an emphasis on lot size, expansion possibilities and suiting our needs for the next 30 years and having an appropriate response time for the Sheriff's department. They have narrowed it down to two sites east of the interstate and north of Custer Ave. One parcel is owned by the City of Helena and the adjacent parcel is owned by the Greyn family. The overall building plans have been reviewed by multiple groups including law enforcement, the Citizens Advisory Council, the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, employees of the criminal justice system and the public. The plans include recommendations from these groups such as additional programming space, a library, an outdoor recreation area and attorney visitation rooms. The issue of segregation has been addressed through the design of the pods including direct and indirect supervision, the different sizes of the pods and flexibility of moving inmates. The possibility of future expansion is also built into the design. The Criminal Justice Coordinating Council is a group of elected and professional criminal justice administrators in the County that have been meeting on a monthly basis to discuss system improvements and address the overcrowding of the current facility. A subcommittee of the CJCC that was created is the Citizens Advisory Council which is made up of non criminal justice professionals to look at system efficiencies and to come up with recommendations to address the needs from a system analysis perspective. Within the CAC they had subcommittees that made recommendations to the CJCC. The Pretrial Services Subcommittee recommendations included the need for better data in regards to the inmate population that would allow for the continual analysis of those held in the public safety facility and to develop a risk assessment tool in order to provide neutral third party verifiable information to assist the parties in advocating for and issuing appropriate conditions of release. Specialty Courts Subcommittee recommendation was to continue to operate and fund the drug court specialty court programs and to evaluate the feasibility of implementing a new specialty court to address a broad spectrum of offenders with a mental health focus. Mental Health Subcommittee recommendations included Crisis Intervention Training, ensure continued funding for the Crisis Response Team Therapists. Ensure continued funding for a mental health therapist is the public safety facility and create a case manager position within the facility to collaborate with the therapist and develop transition planning. Develop relationships with community partners to establish a volunteer base for service delivery in the public safety facility and to partner with the Department of Corrections on re entry planning. Jail Standards Subcommittee recommendations included that the County adopt standards and best practices for the facility. Establish a proactive jail standards monitoring program. Develop an on-going public safety facility staff training program and that MACo Detention center standards be considered as the bare minimum starting point for the development of the County jail standards and operational best practices. Early Intervention/Prevention Subcommittee recommendations included that the CJCC and Lewis & Clark County invest in early risk identification and intervention by providing community resource coordination and referral system management. As a significant part of the public safety planning process, the CJCC and Lewis & Clark County should evaluate an investment in support for the Journey Home Crisis Facility, Mental Health Crisis Response Team, Our Place Drop-In Center, and Crisis Intervention Training. The Commission wanted a long term solution that would address our needs for a 30 year planning horizon with means to expand, to look at system improvements as the County will not build its way out of current overcrowding situation, to become more efficient as a criminal justice system and to be cost effective with recommended changes to policy, site, size and location of the facility.

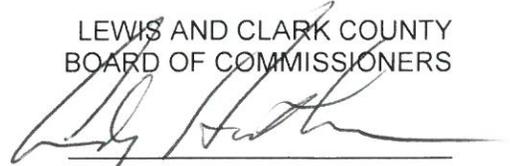
No public comment was received.

**Public comment on any public matter within the jurisdiction of the Commission that is not on the agenda above.**

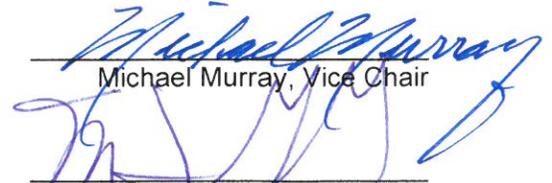
**Adjourn**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:10 am.

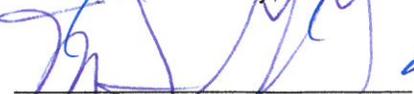
LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Andy Hunthausen, Chairman

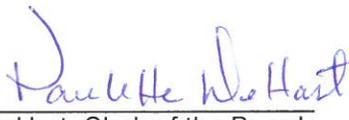


Michael Murray, Vice Chair



Susan Good Geise, Member

ATTEST:



Paulette DeHart, Clerk of the Board