

COMMISSIONERS RECORD 51  
FRANKLIN COUNTY  
Commissioners' Proceedings for March 21, 2011

The Honorable Boards of Franklin County and Benton County Commissioners met on the above date. Present for the meeting representing Franklin County were Robert E. Koch, Chairman; Rick Miller, Chair Pro Tem; and Brad Peck, Member. Present for the meeting representing Benton County were Leo M. Bowman, Chairman; Shon Small, Chair Pro Tem; and James Beaver, Member.

There were at least 34 people present in the audience, including people on the sign-in sheet (Exhibit 1). Some of the people present were: Dr. Larry Jecha, Ed Thornbrugh, Fred Bowen, Dave Sparks, Loretta Smith Kelty, Mary Withers, Charlie McCary, Carol Moser, Pat Underwood, Ryan Brown, Gordon and Anna Bopp, two television reporters, and Tri-City Herald Reporter Kristi Pihl.

Meeting convened at 1:02 pm.

**CONSOLIDATED CRISIS RESPONSE CENTER (CCRC)**

Final Report: presented by Ron Wright of Ron Wright & Associates/Architects

Mr. Thornbrugh briefly described the process leading to preparation of a report about the feasibility and costs of siting and construction of a CCRC.

Ron Wright gave an overview of his final report, using slides and answering questions.

**HUMAN SERVICES (HS) (1:32 pm)**

Operations and Funding Concerns

Mr. Thornbrugh gave a report using slides about operations and funding concerns for a CCRC. He said there is not currently enough funding available to build and operate a CCRC. The counties can impose a .1% sales tax.

Mr. Koch said he anticipates there also will be future funding cuts imposed from Federal and state budgets.

Mr. Bowman said in addition to mental health concerns and costs, there are increasing concerns about gangs. He wants to discuss the issue further with the Benton County Commissioners.

Mr. Beaver said he had expected more out of the process. He is concerned about numbers based on state or Federal funding for any project. Mr. Thornbrugh answered Mr. Beaver's questions about current lease costs.

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Mr. Peck would be in favor of having ballot proposals for a 1/10th of 1% sales tax increase and a 1/10<sup>th</sup> of 1% reduction in sales taxes for Transit so there would be no actual tax increase.

Mr. Miller said he thinks a sales tax increase should be voter-approved. He wants to discuss the issue further with the board.

**Recessed** at 2:02 pm

**Reconvened** at 2:15 pm.

**JUVENILE JUSTICE CENTER (JJC)**

There were at least 21 people present in the audience including: Sharon Paradis, Dave Sparks, Loretta Smith Kelty, Ryan Brown, Superior Court Judge Cameron Mitchell, Eric Hsu, Fred Bowen, Jennifer Bowe, Sheriff Richard Lathim, Kevin Carle, Shawn Sant, two television reporters, Kristi Pihl and Mary Withers.

Mr. Small said citizens in Benton County are concerned about juvenile delinquents. The number of Detention beds has been reduced over the years so now there are 30 to 35 beds. Some juveniles are being released early. He also mentioned gang-related homicide rates in Yakima County and concerns about increasing gang activity in the local area. He asked JJC Director Sharon Paradis to speak.

Ms. Paradis said Detention is a critical component of the work we do. When kids are released early, it sends the wrong message to kids. Because of a reduction of three detention officers, relief costs and overtime costs, we now have a 35 bed capacity, a reduction from a 42 bed capacity. The operations cost reduction was \$187,000, resulting in reductions across the board for detention, court support, eliminated receptionist position, probation work, managers having to take on additional work, and the loss of one state-funded position (probation supervisor).

Ms. Paradis said we have an issue in Detention and also a serious issue in Probation Services. Research about recidivism shows that the cost benefit from Probation Services in terms of the future cost of crime is greater than from Detention. Both are needed. There is an increasing gang problem, with an increase in crime occurring primarily in Franklin County. Even if the counties decided to provide the \$187,000 of funding, state money supports Detention,

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Probation and other programs, so future state funding reductions may mean the \$187,000 would not fund as much as hoped. She explained briefly how a committee considers which offenders might be released first.

There was a discussion about efforts to save incarceration costs for some crimes and redirect the money.

Franklin County Prosecutor Shawn Sant explained a program being used in Franklin County to try to save incarceration and trial costs for people who are charged for driving while their license is suspended.

The Boards asked the two county administrators to meet and return to the Boards with some ideas.

**Adjourned** at 2:41 pm.

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There being no further business, the Franklin County Board of Commissioners meeting was adjourned until March 23, 2011.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FRANKLIN COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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Robert E. Koch, Chairman

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Rick Miller, Chairman Pro Tem

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Brad Peck, Member

Attest:

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Clerk to the Board

Approved and signed March 30, 2011.