



WASCO COUNTY COURT
SPECIAL SESSION
NOVEMBER 13, 2009

PRESENT: Dan Ericksen, County Judge
Bill Lennox, County Commissioner
Kathy McBride, Executive Assistant

ABSENT: Sherry Holliday, County Commissioner

At 1:39 p.m. the meeting was called to order by Judge Ericksen

Mike Davidson, Wasco County Emergency Services Manager, presented an informational update on the 911/Emergency Operation Center (EOC) Relocation Project. Davidson is requesting approval of the relocation project and funding as outlined in his handout, (Attached as Exhibit A).

Davidson went over the handout at this time as to available funding. He noted that the \$300,000 grant cannot be used for construction purposes. The \$50,000 grant, which was written for the La Clinica Building, can be used for construction.

Some discussion occurred on what the grant funding can be used for.

Davidson noted that the \$50,000 grant needs to be expended by next year, while the \$300,000 grant needs to be spent by June, 2012. He noted that the 911/EOC Relocation Project was taken out of the discussion on the relocation of The Dalles National Guard from Sixth and Webber to the Columbia Gorge Community College site.

Davidson further noted that the emergency response community has looked at the La Clinica Building. We are here to request permission from the County Court to go forward with the relocation project.

Judge Ericksen stated that Nolan Young, City of The Dalles Manager, asked a question this morning as to the seismic issue. At the last group meeting we agreed to allocate funding for a seismic evaluation.

Davidson responded by stating that he received an email from the Building Inspector. The building is classified as a Category 4; it is not mandatory that the building be upgraded to move these services into the building. The project did not qualify for the seismic upgrade funding from the State of Oregon.

Tyler Stone, Wasco County Employee & Administrative Services Director, stated that the reason we did not qualify was because the benefit cost ratio was low. The County did not have to spend the study funding in the amount of \$20,000.

Judge Ericksen asked if Jay Waterbury, City of The Dalles Police Chief, and Rick Eiesland, Wasco County Sheriff, has seen Davidson's handout.

Nolan Young, City of The Dalles Manager, stated that he sent out the handout to everyone. He did not know however if either of them has reviewed the handout.

Steve Conover, Wasco County Chief Deputy Sheriff, stated that Sheriff Eiesland is on aboard with the project.

Davidson noted he has discussed the project with Young.

Young stated from a technical standpoint the building as to code is not an issue. Moving into the structure is not a threat. He asked if we are making an improvement as to the seismic issue.

Stone stated that is correct as to the seismic construction standpoint.

Judge Ericksen stated that we are upgrading significantly as to the construction durability.

Stone stated that he would not say we are any safer.

Young asked if reasonable people would think we are making an improvement to our current situation. Reasonable people would assume that we are in a better situation than we are now. He would request when we work on the antenna that the City get the antennas that they need. Young requested that the County work with Captain Ed Goodman.

Conover noted that all services at the Emergency Operation Center will be maintained. We will be looking at an increase in services available. No one will get left out of this project; all emergency services will be included.

Young had a question about expansion capabilities.

Davidson stated that the County could expand the center by 3,800 square feet.

Conover stated that we could actually put in five consoles in the space if we needed to.

Davidson stated that we only dispatch for three entities; we will never need five consoles.

Conover stated that we have three consoles currently; they anticipate installing a fourth console for backup purposes.

Bob Palmer, Mid-Columbia Fire and Rescue Fire Chief, stated that we have the ability to expand. As far as the earthquake upgrade, we are not in the position of doing that.

Davidson noted that there is no new construction money available.

Palmer stated that we need to get out of where the 911 Center is currently located. This is a good opportunity; we do not want to give the money back.

Davidson noted that the County could begin the remodel now on the inside of the building and have it ready by spring for the reroofing of the building. We do not want to move the 911/EOC until the roof is done.

Some discussion occurred as to the timeline for the remodeling project.

Davidson is anticipating that the remodeling project could be complete by next spring early summer.

Commissioner Lennox had a question regarding the lease with La Clinica. He noted that La Clinica is waiting to hear whether they will receive a federal grant to build their own building. He wondered if we have thought about this impact to the project.

Stone noted that the only impact is the additional rent that would be received from La Clinica.

Davidson noted that the rental dollars listed in his handout are for this year through June, 2010. The County is pursuing any other opportunity that would reduce our local financial investment.

Stone noted that he had a conversation with the La Clinica Director. They have received no notification as to their grant. They are looking at leasing the facility for at least one more year.

{{{Commissioner Lennox moved that staff be directed to move forward on the 911/Emergency Operation Center (EOC) Relocation Project. Judge Ericksen seconded the motion; it was then passed unanimously.}}}

DISCUSSION on the reorganization of Administrative Offices.

Judge Ericksen stated that the County Court had a good discussion this morning with former Jefferson County Commissioner Bill Bellamy. The discussion pertained to how Jefferson County is structured with an Administrative Officer. Judge Ericksen noted that all Oregon Counties are unique and the one County that we have eyed that we would like to illuminate if Jefferson County.

Judge Ericksen stated that Jefferson County has an Administrative Officer and not an Administrator. That sounds like the direction that we have thrown around in our recent discussions. Commissioner Holliday's concerns are keeping the Board of County Commissioners the controlling body in the operation of the County.

Commissioner Lennox stated that he has been working on a job description which he felt that the Court would feel comfortable with. It is a work in progress. He will continue to work on the job description which will be brought to the Court at a future date.

Judge Ericksen stated he was hopeful that Commissioner Holliday would be able to join us today since the Court recognizes that we need to move quickly with a couple of positions that need to be filled.

Judge Ericksen shared some of the things that we learned this morning from Bellamy regarding the structure of the Jefferson County Board of Commissioners. They are as follows: equalizes the Commissioners; the Administrative Officer has administrative duties with Department Heads and employees, but does not hire or fire; the hire and fire is kept at the Commissioner's level; Department Heads would go to the Administrative Officer with needs and issues and then the Administrative Officer would relay those to the Commissioners noting the pros and cons, without taking a position on the request; and Department Heads and Elected Officials could still come to the Commissioners.

Judge Ericksen stated that the Administrative Officer comes with the request, the options, and the pros and cons. The Officer presents the options and impacts of the request. The Commissioners are still making the political decision. The Commissioners would pick the direction; it may be different than what is brought before them by the Administrative Officer.

Judge Ericksen noted that some Department Heads' job descriptions are written which require them to continue coming to the Board of Commissioners. Jefferson County has their legal counsel at all of their meetings, and their counsel is a part of their staff. Judge Ericksen stated that is something to consider.

Judge Ericksen noted that their Chair makes the final decision on agenda items. If information on the item on the agenda is not gotten ahead of time the Board may not

make a decision on the agenda item. The Administrative Officer takes an active role in preparing the agenda. The Officer is also in charge of coordinating and negotiating with the unions.

Commissioner Lennox stated that Jefferson County set up a system to address their needs. That may not be the way we want to set up our structure. The bottom line is that there is a difference between an Administrator and an Administrative Officer. An Administrator is another government layer, versus the Administrative Officer who works with the Board of County Commissioners. There are some decisions that are made by the Commissioners that are political decisions.

Commissioner Lennox stated that there is a difference between Department Heads and Elected Officials. The Administrative Officer would be more involved in the day to day workings with the Department Heads instead of direct supervision of Elected Officials.

Stone stated that the Jefferson County model stresses that the Administrative Officer be involved in the community. He does not know if that will be our model.

Commissioner Lennox stated that there are many things that go into play; the Court has not decided. The Court has decided to abolish the Position of County Judge and to become a Board of County Commissioners. The County Judge will be the Chair with a full salary until what time the Budget Committee and the Commissioners reassign the salary less than full time. That would also dictate what the Administrative Officer's responsibilities would be. We cannot really nail things down directly. Today we are looking at reorganizing the administrative offices; not only the hiring of an Administrative Officer but looking at Departments that may need some direct action.

Commissioner Lennox stated we have some issues with finance and human resources. That is the only piece that keeps him up at night is not reinstating a Department Head in the Human Resource Department. He is concerned with creating the Administrative Officer and not getting rid of some of the responsibilities.

Commissioner Lennox stated that there is the development of policies and procedures for human resources. If those duties are kept under the Administrative Officer, those may not come to reality. He does not want to saddle the Administrative Officer with more responsibility and not take off some of the work load.

Judge Ericksen stated that we need to start with the concept of an Administrative Officer that would have some oversight. We need a recommendation from the Administrative Officer on how to fill that next level of positions. Two of them are open right now. They need attention right away. Human Resources is definitely one of them. Jefferson County has a full time position there. The other position to be filled immediately is in Finance.

Judge Ericksen stated that he would think that the first decision should be to establish the Administrative Officer and then move forward rapidly with what is the proper structure.

{{{Commissioner Lennox moved to support the County Court moving forward in creating the Administrative Officer Position. Judge Ericksen seconded the motion; it was then passed unanimously.}}}

Stone stated that we need to develop a job description and then go out and price the position. We need to determine how the position will interact within the County. The position should be taken to the Wage and Classification Committee unless the Court reserves the right to keep it at the Court level.

Judge Ericksen felt that the Court would want to reserve that right at this level. He is trying to expedite the process.

Commissioner Lennox stated that we have a third Commissioner. We need to respect Commissioner Holliday's desire to be a part of this discussion. The Court needs to determine what the job description will be; there is a lot based on that description; how we are defining that position.

Judge Ericksen requested that Commissioner Lennox share with the County Court and Stone the draft of the proposed job description for the Administrative Officer.

Judge Ericksen stated that the Court will consider the proposed job description at our Special Session on November 25, 2009. He wanted the County to be prepared to come back with a compensation proposal for discussion as well.

Judge Ericksen also requested that Stone come back with a recommendation as to filling the opening in Human Resources.

Stone requested that we hire a person that can work both in payroll and in human resources to keep things moving with the knowledge that the position may change.

Some discussion occurred.

Monica Morris, Staff Accountant, stated that she thinks that the payroll/human resource position would work for a short term. The County has proper controls in place to protect our accounting and confidentiality. That would allow us to determine what we need in the future. She stated that there is value in cross training.

Stone stated that the immediate need is in payroll and a clerical human resource position. He sees the position being located in the Finance Department. Stone

suggested filling the Administrative Assistant Position and incorporating the payroll responsibility into the position.

Judge Ericksen stated that his only concern is if the position gets filled can it move in and fill one of those positions that are in Option #2.

Stone stated that the position could fill into the model that he put together.

{{{Commissioner Lennox moved to authorize staff to fill the position of Payroll/Human Resources. Judge Ericksen seconded the motion; it was then passed unanimously.}}}

Stone stated the next issue to be tackled is the Accounts Payable Deputy.

Karen LeBreton Coats, Wasco County Clerk, stated that Angela Krause, Recording Deputy, is able to pay bills for Human Resource, Information Services, and Facilities on a temporary basis.

Commissioner Lennox stated that he has seen no information or recommendation on how the Finance Office will look under the reorganization.

Judge Ericksen stated that Option #2 is a picture of what the Department would look like.

Morris stated that her current job as Staff Accountant is gone under Option #2. She feels the Court needs to look at taking her current job and reclassifying it or she will need to reapply for a different job.

Stone stated that we are remaking everything. The County can continue to have a Staff Accountant and have a Finance Manager or a Finance Director.

Commissioner Lennox stated that he is looking for straight feedback of what the levels entail.

Stone stated the reason he is sidestepping is because if you create the Finance Manager Position you are creating Departments like IT and Facilities. You would be making this a lower management level when it has traditionally been at the Department Head Level. You are making an assumption that the Administrator can handle all of those tasks at that level.

Stone stated that we lost our CPA; we lost a level of expertise.

Commissioner Lennox stated that he is trying to understand what the real need is; what can we afford, can we get by and still have good government.

Stone stated that we need to sit down and work on a job description of what we do or don't need.


Judge Ericksen suggested that we make that a part of our discussion at our meeting on November 25, 2009, as well as the potential positions listed under the Finance Office.

Stone suggested that Judge Ericksen and Kathy McBride, Executive Assistant, prepare a listing of duties that could possibly be reassigned to the Administrative Services cluster.

The Court agreed to meet in Special Session on Tuesday, November 24, 2009 at 9 a.m. to continue the discussion on the reorganization of the administrative offices.

The Court adjourned at 2:59 p.m.

WASCO COUNTY COURT



Dan Ericksen, County Judge



Bill Lennox, County Commissioner

PROPOSAL

Re-Location of Wasco County Central Dispatch and
Wasco County Emergency Operations Center



OVERVIEW:

Currently, Wasco County Central Dispatch is located in a leased facility that presents numerous limitations to modernization and expansion of dispatch capabilities. The following list of limitations was developed by County and City officials involved in the assessment of the current facility:

- Current facility does not meet seismic guidelines
- Located in the floodplain
- Does not allow for expansion or the installation of additional dispatch consoles
- Cannot add antennas to existing tower
- Short term lease can be cancelled with 90 days notice
- Cannot connect (because of business competition) to Q-Life or County fiber optics system
- High level of radio interference
- No on-site or secure parking
- Restrooms are outside of the security area
- Maintenance issues (particularly wiring)
- HAZMAT vulnerability due to proximity to I-84 and railroad tracks

The Wasco County Emergency Operations Center is located in a County owned building known as Annex B. The Emergency Operations Center has been so located since the days of the Civil Defense program. The current facility is not well physically organized for managing disaster/emergency responses and is not conducive to renovation that would improve capabilities. There has been minimal investment in the maintenance of the Emergency Operations Center and it is in need of a major update. The Emergency Operations Center is located on the second floor of the building without elevator access limiting access to persons with disabilities.

PROPOSED ACTION:

The County owns the building at 425 E. 7th Street in The Dalles which currently houses the LaClinica Health Clinic and offices for North Central Public Health District. The south wing of that building is currently vacant and has been so for many years. The space, as currently configured, provides 2430 square feet of space. The available space has been evaluated by officials in emergency services, those primarily served by the Dispatch Center and Emergency Operations Center, and found to be a viable facility for re-location of both of the referenced functions. Based on the professional assessments by public safety officials funding to accomplish a renovation of the described space has been pursued.

ADVANTAGES OF THE PROPOSED FACILITY:

County owned eliminating current rent obligation for Central Dispatch (Approximately \$15,000.00 per year)

Provides the ability to expand capabilities and immediately provides the ability to add a fourth dispatch console

Can be purpose designed to house both Central Dispatch and the Emergency Operations Center to increase the functionality for both

Takes advantage of currently non-used (and non-income producing) County owned property

Provides the opportunity to apply appropriate security measures which both facilities currently lack

Vacates space in Annex B that could be converted to income producing rental property

FUNDING:

The following funding has been identified for potential investment in this proposal:

1. \$200,000.00 in 911 reserve account
2. \$187,000.00 in "roofing fund" for the proposed building
3. \$300,000.00 in Congressionally Approved Grant funding through Office of Justice programs
4. \$50,000.00 in Emergency Management Performance Grant funding for OEC renovation (EMPG requires local match funding of \$50,000.00)

Total identified funding: \$737,000.00

Additional potential funding:

1. \$46,800.00 in additional rent monies from LaClinica in July 2010
2. Grant opportunities are being pursued that may reduce the County's investment in this project

Known expenses:

The following items are known expenditures areas that will apply to this project. The dollar amounts attached to those items are, estimates:

1. Roof for entire building \$180,000.00
2. Re-location of 911 equipment \$50,000.00

Total known expenditures \$230,000.00

Balance \$507,000.00