

**COMMISSIONERS' MINUTES
KITITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON
STUDY SESSION**

TUESDAY

4:00 P.M.

JANUARY 21, 2003

Board members in attendance: Max Golladay, Perry Huston & Bruce Coe

Others: Julie Kjorsvik, Clerk of the Board; Paul Bennett, Public Works Director; Warren Beed, Building Facilities Director; David Bowen, Auditor; Gene Dana, Sheriff; Clay Meyers, Sheriff's Department; William Holmes, Probation Services Director and approximately 10 members of the public.

At approximately 4:00 p.m. **CHAIRMAN GOLLADAY** opened a study session to receive the report and options compiled by the Citizen's Advisory Group relating to a new Law & Justice facility.

COMMISSIONER HUSTON introduced members from the Citizens Advisory Group and thanked them for their countless volunteer hours related to the project. **DAVID BOWEN, AUDITOR** presented a list of Estimated Construction Costs (Sales tax, permitting, fees and furnishings were not included in the estimates). He also reviewed the history and list of options that have been reached by the group. The options included: 1) Do nothing - there could be legal & safety issues for staff and public, probable state regulatory action for overcrowding; 2) Send long-term prisoners to neighboring county - estimated cost of \$1,000,000+ per year; 3) Expand in downtown and remodel existing jail - estimated cost of \$16-28 million dollars; 4) Build a new off-site Jail or Law & Justice Center facility outside of downtown - estimated cost of \$23-40 million. He also submitted results that were received from the public meeting comment worksheets.

DON DAVIS reported on the average daily rates of inmates, and said in 1997, the average rate was 55, and since then the growth has increased approximately 20% each year. **FRITZ GLOVER** felt it would be very difficult to build a new facility at a new site. He said it would cost approximately double the amount to build a new building, rather than expanding the current facility. He was in favor of keeping the facility centralized to the downtown area, which assists in providing easy access. **BERT MARX** felt either option would be beneficial to the needs of the Corrections department. He said as a taxpayer, he would be more in favor of moving the facility to the West side of Ellensburg. There were concerns raised of what would happen to the inmates during the building process. **CLAY MEYERS, SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT** said it was urgent

that something be done to the facility, whether a new facility be built, or re-model the current structure. He mentioned number of beds do not reflect the booking restrictions and there were approximately 108 inmates currently housed at the jail. **CHARLES WEIDENBACH** spoke in favor of expanding the current facility. He said transporting inmates would not be efficient and a new facility would cost too much. **WILMA DLOUHY** reported that building a new facility at the West end of Ellensburg, would be less expensive than to demolish and remodel the current facility. She said it would be a lot easier for transporting inmates etc. if it were located at the West Interchange and mentioned the Grey Hound bus station is also located across from the proposed site. She expressed security concerns of how the current facility does not have a perimeter fence around it. **WARREN BEED** said in his personal opinion, he was in favor of moving the facility out to the West Interchange and felt the current building could be utilized by other departments in the future. **GENE DANA, SHERIFF** felt there is currently a large liability to the County from overcrowding and was pleased with the options presented by the group.

The Board agreed to set a public hearing to consider public testimony on the options (submitted by the Citizens Advisory Group), to be held at the Fairgrounds in the Home Arts building, on Thursday February 6, 2003 at 6:00 p.m. The group would set up information for public viewing from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. (prior to the public hearing). The Board noted the Commissioners office will be submitting a display advertisement in the newspapers noting there could be a decision made that evening by the Board.

The study session was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

APPROVED
2/4/03