

SGT. CLAY MEYERS said he had talked to the City about using the hotel as a holding facility for the "less restrictive" prisoners. The response he received was that there are more requirements bringing the hotel up to code in order to use it as a holding facility and it wouldn't be worth putting the money into it just to use it as a "temporary" fix to the problem. The hotel is no longer an option for housing prisoners.

COMMISSIONER HUSTON said that Sgt. Meyers provided a list of good candidates for moving to another county and contracting out for services. 60% of the budget is in state prisoners.

BILL HOLMES asked that if the County contracts with State Department of Corrections, State Patrol and Fish and Wildlife are there already representatives from the organizations to contact to start negotiating? **COMMISSIONER HUSTON** explained that those contacts have not been made yet. This meeting was to get everyone on board to see what direction the Committee wanted the BOCC to go in.

SGT MEYERS explained that State prisoners cost the county anywhere from \$48,000-\$65,000 a month. Once again these are prisoners brought in from CWU Police, Fish and Wildlife, Department of Corrections or State Patrol.

COMMISSIONER HUSTON said that two years ago the Board tried to discuss the problems with the legislature but they didn't want to hear it. He stressed the importance of trying to get them to listen and the support he needed from the other agencies.

CHIEF RICHEY from the Ellensburg Police expressed concern from the last Law and Justice meeting when the motioned passed to use 10% of the .1% of the sales tax to assist the Sheriff's Department to relieve some of the overcrowding. He feels before the money is spent it should go in front of the public, because they were told that money would be spent in developing a new Law and Justice site.

COMMISSIONER HUSTON agreed and stated that he wanted to get the media involved as much as possible to get the word out to the citizens. On the same note, when it comes down to the bonds, he wants to keep them as low as possible. Commissioner Huston once again stressed the importance of everyone being on the same page and supporting the fight against Olympia.

JOYCE JULSRUD, County Clerk asked if there is more money needed to fund the jail expenses does that mean that other departments have a reduction in staff or hours and the level of service decreases?

COMMISSIONER HUSTON stated that nothing is off the table. He was hoping to get by one more year but it doesn't look like that will be able to

happen. The Board is still looking at departments and where more cuts can be made without jeopardizing the level of service.

COMMISSIONER GOLLADAY directed a question towards the State Patrol. He asked what they would do if the jail was full and they picked someone up for a Drinking Under the Influence?

SGT. MARTIN from the State Patrol said that if the jail were full then they (State Patrol) would take the person home. They couldn't just leave the person on the street because there would be a higher liability that he could hurt himself or other people. Sgt. Martin asked if the problem was with the initial booking of a prisoner or after judication?

SGT MEYERS stated that if someone has to go to jail, then the Sheriff's office has a legal obligation to take that person, it is the method of how they take them that needs to be worked out. Either the agencies pay for the bed space or contract to other facilities for jail space.

GREG ZEMPEL, Prosecutor re-enforced that the Sheriff's Department is legally obligated to take the prisoners and the State is legally responsible to pay for the mandates that they impose. The State doesn't realize there are a lot of mandates that go unfunded.

COMMISSIONER HUSTON stated that there were a lot of things that he was "obligated" to do that don't get done. The choice is the safety of jail staff or if a drunk gets home safely. He wouldn't be surprised if the county would be faced with a lawsuit whether it is by an inmate because of the conditions of the jail, or by a Correction Officer because of the safety risk.

CHIEF BOB RICHEY reiterated that because the intent for the use of funds may change it should involve the public since initially they were told the money would go towards building a new Law and Justice Facility and now a portion of it may be used as a temporary fix to the safety issues.

COMMISSIONER HUSTON agreed that the public needs to know, but during a public hearing they all say, "no we don't want you to use the funds," then what other choice does the Board have.

WILMA DLOUGHY expressed concern that the public perception is different then the reality. The paper has not been doing an adequate job in getting the real story out to citizens about the problems with the jail. Mrs. Dloughy suggested that the misconceptions get cleared up as much as possible.

COMMISSIONER HUSTON appreciated Mrs. Dloughy's comment and encouraged everyone to get the word out if it meant going down to the Daily Record as a group and talking to the editing staff.

GREG ZEMPEL added that if there is a possibility to only target one of the funds, not both, it may go over better with the public when it comes to voter support.

COMMISSIONER GOLLADAY said that there is a level of controversy that should be started to get people involved. Right now the Board is doing what they can to save dollars but it may not be that easy anymore.

SGT. ESSMAN from Fish and Game clarified that the problem is not with administration but with the Washington State legislators.

BILL HOLMES said that the Committee should move forward on the attack on Olympia.

COMMISSIONER GOLLADAY expressed his idea of taking a busload of inmates, Corrections staff, and the news and have lunch on the capitol stairs. Then the State can defend their position of unfunded mandates in front of the cameras.

COMMISSIONER HUSTON stated that there are three things he needed from the Committee:

1. Who is against the Resolution passed by the Board?
2. If the County should use two sales tax lines for a temporary solution?
3. Course of Action from the Law and Justice Committee on what to do.

The committee continued conversation about the course of action and the steps to make the public aware of the issues. **SGT. MARTIN** from the State Patrol voiced his concern that he couldn't say he was in full support of the resolution since he had just received it today, and he hadn't any time to look over it. He said he wasn't completely against, it but couldn't say he was for it, and needed more time to thoroughly read over the resolution. He also requested to see the facts and figures of what money comes back to the county and what goes to Olympia when they bring in prisoners. **SGT. MEYERS** said he is going to put all that information together.

COMMISSIONER HUSTON motioned to hold a Public Meeting on Wednesday April 16, 2003 at 6:30 P.M. at the Home Arts Building to discuss what to do with the jail to reduce the level of safety concerns.


COMMISSIONER COE seconded. Motion carried 3-0. Clerk to publish said notice and notify local news agencies to get the announcement out.

At 10:00 A.M., the Study Session was adjourned.

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD


Shannon L. Carlson

KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON


Max A. Golladay, Chair