

MONTGOMERY COUNTY JAIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

October 7, 2009

The Montgomery County Jail Committee met Wednesday, October 7, 2009, at 5:30 p.m. in the Basement Meeting Room of the Courthouse. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Donna Robinson. Those present were committee members Brad Wright, Donna Robinson, Drue Powers, Jim Sifford, Ken Rech, Roger Ehmke, Dan Cain, and Sheriff Joe Sampson. Also present were clerk Joni Ernst and visitors Supervisors Karen Blue and Steve Ratcliff, Jerry Dietz of KCSI, Michelle Lingle of the Red Oak Express, Mickey Anderson, Marty Barnett, and one additional citizen. Committee member Margaret Stoldorf and presenters Mike Lewis and Mike Morman of Durrant arrived at 5:40 p.m.

Motion by Wright, second by Sifford to approve the agenda. All in favor. Motion carried.

Minutes of the July 27, 2009 Jail Committee Meeting stand approved as presented.

The Chair called for public comment. No public comment.

As the Committee waited for the arrival of the Durrant team, Rech asked for an update on the Planning of New Institutions (PONI) trip. Sheriff Sampson said he wished they would have separated the larger entities from the smaller ones, because the information would have been more applicable. Blue said it was the nuts and bolts of jail planning and understanding the roles of all of the players, who is responsible for what, and how it should flow. She said it was important to encourage public participation and communicate the liabilities if there is not an adequate jail. Robinson said it was an informative program and they stressed planning for the long-term.

At 5:40 p.m. the Durrant team of Mike Lewis and Mike Morman arrived. Morman gave an overview and introduction. He passed the jail needs assessment report to the members and went through each section of the assessment.

Under the Review of Jail Facility, Morman said the existing structure shows signs of numerous tuck-pointings, and the roof and porch need to be replaced. He stated the house part of the structure seems fine. Overall, he said, the building is in difficult shape. The jail is currently rated at ten beds with a holding of six. The county has been grandfathered into current standards, but has been written up by the jail inspector as time to meet the Code of Iowa. Morman stated it would be difficult to add on to this facility and that the current jail has met its useful life. He estimated the renovation cost would be \$3 million or so, and that would be at the current capacity.

Morman went on to review the activities he had been involved in during research of the needs assessment. He said he had reviewed the Red Oak Police Departments area, and said it was undersized for its current operations. Two existing buildings, the No Frills Building and Red Oak Diecast were visited. He said that the Red Oak Diecast building was larger than necessary, and No Frills would have to be completely torn down. The No Frills property could be purchased for \$150,000 to \$200,000, and demolition would run between \$50,000 to \$150,000. After reviewing the alternatives, he said that the already-owned county land adjacent the courthouse would be ideal.

Morman reviewed the housing needs. Durrant's proposals were constructing a 34-bed facility or building a holding facility and transporting prisoners out-of-county. He said that the Sheriff's office space was adequate, but they needed more space for storage and new restrooms. \$5.1 million would be the median cost for a new facility with a construction cost of \$298 per square foot. This did not include law enforcement offices or demolition of the existing facility. The spreadsheet comparing the two options was

titled "Ringgold County Jail Analysis, August 8, 2006" which caused some confusion. Morman stated he missed changing that on the sheet. Another error he mentioned was Column A stated it was a 25-year projection, but it is a 15-year cost projection.

Rech asked Morman to explain the difference in the cost of a \$500,000 10-bed holding facility and the \$3 million renovation of the existing jail. Morman said the jail would still only be 10-bed, but only excess prisoners would be transported out of county, but if a holding facility was constructed, all prisoners would be transported out of county.

Sifford asked if there could be video arraignment, or if there would be savings. Morman said yes, there could be up to 35% savings.

Rech asked if there would be enough housing in the surrounding areas to keep Montgomery County prisoners. Morman said they had considered ten counties in southwest Iowa, but there was no guarantee that they wouldn't go through the same issues as Montgomery County.

Wright stated that by looking at the spreadsheets, it looked like housing prisoners out-of-county was the cheapest option, but didn't explain that the additional expenditures to transport and house prisoners elsewhere would come out of the county's operating budget, where a bond would be an additional tax for a specific length of time. He said it wasn't realistic if transporting was chosen as the option.

Robinson made the comment that there were things that could be cut out of this plan, and Lewis responded that was an excellent point, and that could occur in the next phase of the study.

Stoldorf asked about existing facilities, and the cost associated with renovations. Morman stated it wasn't shown in detail, but when he looked at the buildings, the cost was going to be greater than the construction of a new facility on a green site. Stoldorf stated that it would be key for voters to have that information. Lewis said they would get the requested information.

Ehmke asked why a joint law enforcement center not included in the proposal. Stoldorf said she didn't believe we were at that point. Wright disagreed. Morman said he wanted the jail information presented first to compare like situations, housing prisoners in a new facility or housing them out-of-county. He said it would be different if a law enforcement center had been added into the equation for a new facility. He said he should have gotten clarification on that point.

Robinson said that other sites could be considered, also, not just the land adjacent to the sheriff's office. Rech asked what size lot would be necessary. Lewis said that maybe 30-35,000 sq feet with a parking lot and green space, perhaps two to three acres.

Robinson pointed out that the RFQ in fact did ask for information on a law enforcement center and jail. Lewis said they could present updated information within a month. A meeting date of Tuesday, October 27th at 6:00 p.m. was suggested.

With no other information from the committee or presenters, Robinson called for public comment. Mickey Anderson asked what would happen to the existing jail. The committee responded it could be torn down if proper documentation was done for the State Historical Society. Rech asked if the current Sheriff's office was valuable enough to keep. Morman said he had tied it into the current proposal.

No additional comments came before the committee. Motion to adjourn by Wright, second by Stoldorf. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

DONNA ROBINSON, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST: JONI K. ERNST, CLERK