

Minutes of Special Meeting
Sheriff
November 24, 2015
3:00 p.m.

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chairman Dan Green, Commissioner Marc Eberlein, and Commissioner David Stewart met to discuss the following agenda item. Also present were Sheriff Ben Wolfinger, Undersheriff Dan Mattos, Marjor Kim Edmondson, and Deputy Clerk Alicia Lynch. Also present were Integrus Architecture representatives Preston Potratz and Bob Estlund, and citizen Tina Kunishige.

- A. Call to Order:** Chairman Dan Green called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m.
- B. Introductions:** There were no introductions.
- C. Changes to the Agenda:** There were no changes to the agenda.
- D. New Business:**

Meet with Sheriff Ben Wolfinger to discuss the Jail study findings from the National Institute of Corrections (NIC)

Sheriff Ben Wolfinger presented the highlights of the NIC's findings. He stated that the County Jail's current population housed 28.8% female prisoners in contrast with the national average of 14%. He explained that was due to a lack of space at the State Penitentiary and was not something the Jail could control but it was unusual.

Sheriff Wolfinger clarified a statement made by the NIC stating that the Jail was doing a good job of identifying and releasing prisoners who do not represent a safety risk, the Sheriff noted such releases were not under the Jail's authority but rather decisions that were made by the courts. He added that the findings indicated that the County's Jail had an incarceration rate of 240 compared to 234 nationally. Sheriff Wolfinger explained that was largely due to the fact that the County was a destination location and shared a border with Washington State.

Sheriff Wolfinger stated the first recommendation from the NIC was to continue the discussion of Jail expansion or construction to facilitate the future needs of the Jail. He added the second recommendation was to establish a criminal justice coordinating council to address issues impacting the jail. He said he'd discussed the council with Administrative Judge Lansing Haynes but felt that Board direction and support would be needed to form such a board. The NIC findings suggested a pre-release program and the Sheriff stated he was looking into it as the County had phased it out in the past. He added that the proposed docket priority for in-custody cases was innovative and something that hadn't been pursued before by the County.

Chairman Green stated most of what had been proposed was out of the BOCC's authority and asked what assistance the Board could provide the Sheriff.

Sheriff Wolfinger stated that a mixed use building with single cells and cells that house 2 to 8 people was a great need. He said the smaller cells and medical beds were a greater need because the Jail has 26% special management inmates in their population, which was high, compared to the national average. He added that he would like to participate in the Planning of New Institutions (PONI) program the NIC offers that helps inform and guide the building of Jails.

Integrus Architecture representative Preston Potratz gave a rough cost estimate of \$75,000 to \$100,000, based on the information discussed, to get a thorough assessment including staffing models and cost projections.

Commissioner Eberlein reminded the Board the estimated costs of the study were what they approximated in their discussion with Buildings & Grounds Director Shawn Riley. He suggested that the Board make the Jail a high priority but asked that it remain on the list of collective facility projects they were reviewing.

Chairman Green asked if the Sheriff supported converting a pod in the Work Release Center for evidence storage. Sheriff Wolfinger confirmed that he was in favor of the idea.

- E. Public Comment:** This section is reserved for citizens wishing to address the Board regarding a County related issue. Idaho Law prohibits Board action on items brought under this section except in an emergency circumstance. Comments related to future public hearings should be held for that public hearing. There were no public comments.

Chairman Green adjourned the meeting at 3:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

DANIEL H. GREEN, CHAIRMAN

BY: _____
Alicia Lynch, Deputy Clerk
