

JEROME COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Friday, March 12, 2021

Special Meeting

PRESENT: Ben Crouch, Chairman
John Crozier, Vice Chairman
Charles Howell, Commissioner
Jane White, Deputy Clerk

Meeting convened at 9:03 A.M.

COMMISSIONER REINKE AND PAUL SHEPHERD—JUVENILE DETENTION

Present were Juvenile Probation Administrator Mario Umana and Chief Deputy Clerk Tracee McKim. Also present were Twin Falls County Commissioner Brent Reinke and Juvenile Detention Administrator Paul Shepherd.

Commissioner Reinke informed the Commissioners that the Snake River Juvenile Detention Center located in Twin Falls would be moving to the third floor of the County West building, which is currently empty. He then gave the Board a 12-page report of the Center's costs within the previous five years, saying the operation of the Center would be more efficient after its move.

Commissioner Reinke expressed that the Center's intent was that the six counties using it would sign joint powers agreements to contribute to its costs and to be involved in its administration in the next fiscal year. He said the Commissioners would receive a formal letter before the next budget cycle.

In answer to Commissioner Howell's question, Commissioner Reinke said the current joint powers agreement is non-binding.

- The Commissioners agreed to considering a new joint powers agreement.

Commissioner Crozier asked about the cost of housing juveniles, and Paul Shepherd said juvenile detention is more expensive than adult incarceration because of State staffing requirements.

Commissioner Reinke told of a Safe House that would be housed on the second floor of County West that would evaluate and test status offenders for 48-72 hours and would be funded by the Idaho Department of Health & Welfare.

TANYA STITT, MICHELLE EMERSON, AND GEORGE OPPEDYK—ALLOCATION OF CARES ACT FUNDING

Present were Tanya Stitt, emergency management director; Michelle Emerson, clerk/auditor/recorder; George Oppedyk, sheriff; Tracee McKim, chief deputy clerk; and Gerald Brant, coroner.

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Tanya Stitt presented a list of five possible projects for COVID funds of \$603,200 received by Jerome County, to wit, (1) sheriff complex training room upgrades, (2) Jack Nelsen Meeting Room enhancements, (3) sheriff tower needs, (4) constructing a building for the coroner's office, and (5) purchase of a high risk COVID response vehicle. She ranked the tower project of first priority. Stitt also included proposals that Jefferson County had made for the use of its federal funds.

Stitt said the COVID funding was applied for as payroll reimbursement for sheriff's office employees for work substantially dedicated to the response to and mitigation of the COVID-19 virus but that the funds were not designated to any project. She said the proposed projects would not require any additional County personnel.

Stitt sought approval to research the costs of each project, to which the Commissioners agreed.

Gerald Brant was excused to respond to an emergency.

Tracee McKim told the Board the sheriff's office needed upgraded computers and that there were not sufficient funds for them in the data processing budget.

➤ Commissioner Crouch asked Stitt to work with Michelle Emerson and Tracee McKim to determine if the funds in question could be used to transform the former jail into office space or to upgrade a building at the Jerome Airport.

Emerson asked for an update on COVID reimbursement funds expected from FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency); Stitt said she needed additional documentation before submitting the application.

➤ Sheriff Oppedyk said he would consult the coroner about the need for a coroner's office.

Sheriff Oppedyk also apprised the Commissioners that he had been working with the Starr Corporation on changes needed in the construction of the new jail pod, which he said should not be charged to the County. Commissioner Crouch said he would walk through the jail pods with the sheriff and Mike Arrington of the Starr Corporation.

Sheriff Oppedyk and Stitt were excused.

McKim addressed the use of \$4.3 million in federal funds from the American Rescue Plan Act. She said use of the allocation would be limited to specific uses; the Commissioners brainstormed about ideas for the funds.

VETERANS/GUARDIANS POSITION HOURS

The Board continued its discussion from March 8 about increasing the hours of the veterans/community guardians position to 30 hours per week.

➤ The Commissioners determined to wait until budgeting for FY 2021-22 and consider making the position full-time.

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Meeting adjourned at 11:45 A.M.

Respectively submitted:

Jane White, Deputy Clerk

A. Ben Crouch, Chairman

John Crozier, Vice Chairman

Charles M. Howell, Commissioner