

**Skagit County Law and Justice Council
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 12th, 2011, 8:15 a.m.**

ATTENDANCE:

Will Reichardt	Richard Weyrich	Dave Needy
Charlie Wend	Gregg Freeman	Jennifer Kingsley
Alan Erickson	Chuck Benjamin	Delilah George
Pam Springer	Linda Eiford	Peter Browning
Phil McLaughlin	Roxane Goss	Lin Tucker
Deannie Nelson	Laurie Jarolimek	

Today's meeting began at 8:20 a.m. with introductions and a welcome from **Gary Shand**, *Chief Corrections Deputy and Law & Justice Council Chairman*.

December 8th, 2010 Meeting Minutes

There was a motion and second by the Council that the December 8th, 2010 meeting minutes be approved. The motion carried.

ELECTIONS: The following slate of candidates for the Law & Justice Executive Board for 2011 was presented to the council. Current Chairman, Gary Shand asked for any other nominations from the floor. No additions were made. Nominations were closed. The proposed candidates were elected by a unanimous vote of all present. The 2011 Law & Justice Executive Board is as follows:

Chairman-Ken Bergsma-*Mount Vernon Chief of Police*

Vice-Chairman: Gregg Freeman, *Dept. of Corrections*

Member Rep: Linda Eiford, *District Court Probations*

DEPARTMENT UPDATES:

County Administration Updates: **Tim Holloran** reported that the Jail Video is nearing completion. They have added an interview from Assigned Counsel and now have been working on scheduling an interview with an inmate to complete the presentation. **Gary Shand** suggested an interview with a patrol deputy as well. Once completed the video will be previewed by the Council and meetings with the city groups will then be scheduled.

County Budgets are still being affected by new State Budget cuts. There will be more changes this quarter. Holloran said the county is working to maintain employee benefits during this difficult time.

Meetings are continuing with Superior Court regarding the re-organization of the Youth & Family Services Department. Nothing has been finalized at this time.

Mental Health Priority Meeting: **Charlie Wend** reported on the recent Regional Support Meeting for Mental Health and Support Services. He stated there was a good turnout from the 5 county area to address serious budget cuts and priorities for the near future. It was a very difficult meeting as all the current programs being looked at.

Chuck Benjamin explained that the current situation of Budget Reductions are so serious that *mandated* services will have to be cut at this point. As an example, he stated that Peer Center funding is not mandated and is therefore being looked into at this time. He stated that 3 such centers receive \$800,000 in funding a year at this time. **Tim Holloran** suggested that discussions with United Way might be appropriate in light of the current situation. They have helped out in the past and may be able to provide assistance.

.1% Funded Mental Health & Substance Abuse Programs: **Jennifer Kingsley** provided a handout that detailed the cost, clients served and outputs for the 2010 programs. Gary Shand asked if the costs for Adult Felony Drug Court include local jail costs. Jennifer responded by explaining that the costs do not include jail costs, and that the costs reported on the handout are specific to treatment and court expenses. She also provided a handout from a 2008 Community Needs Assessment that prioritized mental health and substance abuse needs and gaps for Skagit County. She explained that the Community Needs Assessment is used by the .1% Allocations Committee to identify priorities and make allocation decisions. She also provided a handout that detailed the mental health and substance abuse programs pre- and post booking diversion and with regards to discharge/transition planning, which identified a possible diversion idea that Skagit County could implement. **Gregg Freeman** suggested a work group be formed to explore this idea and create a program model. Chuck Benjamin recommended that mental health services be added to the Discharge/Transition Planning section of the handout. (see enclosed handouts)

A request to include Developmental Disabilities programs was brought up at the .1% meeting. Although it was acknowledged that it is a very important area, and one that needs support programs, this idea was rejected as the current budget is not enough to support the existing Mental Health and Substance programs without additional programs. **Tim Holloran** suggested documentation of their decision and the reason behind it.

Dept of Corrections: **Gregg Freeman** expanded on a suggestion for a possible diversion of some cases from jail. If the inmate has mental health or chemical dependency issues that could be safely treated in the community, rather than in a jail setting, the candidates could be screened and a treatment plan developed to connect them with services. The court would need to approve the diversion, and the person would be closely supervised in the community to insure that they were compliant with the treatment plan. District Court and DOC might be able to assist with the supervision component, and coordinate service delivery. Members felt this would be a very good idea to pursue. It was suggested that **Freeman** head up the group, which he agreed to. **Linda Eiford** from District Court and **Charlie Wend**, from the County Jail volunteered to be a part of the work group.

Jail Update: **Gary Shand** reported that a contract was signed recently which will reduce inmate medical cost. They will be working with the cities in this matter.

Alan Erickson commented that the Jail Substance Abuse Treatment program currently has 11 participants. Since the November start date, 20 inmates have been assessed. Once Deputy Zorn goes full-time, they plan to gear up for an intensive outpatient program for women. He says inmates have been VERY receptive to this program.

Substance Abuse: Alan Erickson mentioned that the \$3655 cost of Drug Court saves the State quite a bit of money in prison expense by having the offender in jail for pre-trial and then lowering the chance of re-offending. It was asked if he could provide a cost per inmate. He said a study had previously been done on this and he would locate a copy for the next meeting.

Health Department: Peter Browning reported a significant surge in younger people (15-17 year of age) using the Needle Exchange program. He reported the count has doubled in the last 2 years with 240,000 needles turned in during 2010. The lower price of heroin and the economic situation were suggested as possible reasons for the increase.

Next Meeting- is scheduled for Wednesday, February 9th, 2011.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:00.

Approved 2/9/11_____