

**Skagit County Law and Justice Council
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 14th, 2011, 8:15 a.m.**

ATTENDANCE:

Will Reichardt	Ken Bergsma	Dave Needy
Deannie Nelson	Charlie Wend	Nancy Scott
Gregg Freeman	Tim Holloran	Jennifer Kingsley
Letty Alvarez	Alan Erickson	Delilah George
Pam Springer	Mike Mahoney	Andrea Vallee
Phil McLaughlin	Roxane Goss	Laurie Jarolimek

Today's meeting began at 8:15 a.m. with introductions and a welcome from **Ken Bergsma**, *Mount Vernon Police Chief and Law & Justice Council Chairman*.

July 13th, 2011 Meeting Minutes

There was no meeting in August. There was a motion and second by the Council that the July 13th, 2011 meeting minutes be approved. The motion carried.

MEETING TOPIC: JAIL UPDATE

Charlie Wend presented the final version of the Skagit County Jail Video. Emma Whitfield and Brian Young did a very professional job in editing the video. It now better portrays the critical status of the current jail and the effect this has on public safety. He is using this as part of his presentations to local civic groups. A recent report from the National Institute of Corrections compared jail crowding in 7 counties. The study rated Whatcom County's jail at 46% overcrowded or "severely" crowded. They show Skagit in the extreme at 193%. (See enclosed handout.)

In part due to an assault on a corrections deputy due to overcrowding, the Sheriff suggested the number of inmates in the North End be held to a maximum of 115, and overflow sent to Snohomish County Jail. This and other actions are being looked at to deal with the overcrowding right now and in the interim before a new jail can be built.

Project Manager for New Jail - Tim Holloran announced that the Commissioners have made the commitment to hire a Project Manager to take on the new Jail project from initial stage all the way through construction. This position will also be reviewing all aspects of the jail while working with the city police chiefs and the sheriff.

Charlie Wend reported that after the DLR presentation on the SCORE facility in South King County, the group came away with new proposals for changes to lower building cost without sacrificing services. The new project manager and the Facilities Task Force will be looking at these proposals and prepare for a campaign aimed at the newly elected mayors and council members after the first of the year.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES:

COMMUNITY ACTION-PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT-2nd Annual event held at Skagit Valley College on September 8th. A variety of agencies volunteered their services to the homeless for the day.

JAIL FACILITIES TASK FORCE UPDATE- Charlie Wend reported that he hopes to reconvene the Task Force meetings in October or November to gear up for public meetings after the first of the year. If anyone is interested in serving on this committee contact Charlie at cwend@co.skagit.wa.us.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION CENTER - Andrea Vallee announced an upcoming training session for anyone who would like to be a Professional Mediator. (See enclosed flyer.) There was also a request for letters of recommendation from the Law & Justice Council to the Dispute Resolution Center to be used for grants for Victim-Offender programs. The Council was in favor of these letters.

Members were asked to consider serving as a Law & Justice delegate on the 0.1% committee, as there is a vacancy. Contact Laurie at lauriej@co.skagit.wa.us if you are interested.

Nominations for L&J Officers for 2012 will be accepted at our meeting in October. Please contact lauriej@co.skagit.wa.us to nominate yourself or someone else who would be a good candidate.

NEXT MEETING- The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 12th, 2011. There will be a panel on the Homeless Housing situation in Skagit County.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:00.

Approved _____