

Skagit County Law & Justice Council

Lisa Tremblay
Sup/Juv Court Admin
Chair

Charlie Wend
Jail Commander
Vice-Chair

Rob Sullivan
Director PHS
Member-at-Large

Cathy Sisk
Jail/Court Coordinator
Secretary

WEDNESDAY, December 14, 2016
8:15 a.m. – 9:04 a.m.

Attendance:

LISA TREMBLAY
BRIDGET CANDLER
CHRISTINA URTASUN
JORGE MANZANERA
MARC ESTVOLD

CHARLIE WEND
ROXANE GOSS
HEIDI KENNEDY
JACQUELYN STYRNA

DALE RAGAN
LADESSA CROUCHER
MAVIS BETZ
MARGARET ROJAS

RON WESEN
FOREST JACOBSON
DAVE NEEDY
MATT MILLER

I. Welcome – Lisa Tremblay, Chair

Chair Lisa Tremblay called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m. and welcomed the Council and guests.

II. Introductions

Attendees, present at the start of the meeting, introduced themselves. The list of names of those attending the meeting is listed above.

III. Review and approval of October 12, 2016 minutes

The minutes from October 12, 2016 Law & Justice Council meeting were reviewed. Dale Ragan motioned to approve the minutes. Charlie Wend seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as presented.

IV. Jail Update

Marc Estvold provided an update on the Skagit County Community Justice Center (Justice Center) project. He indicated that the estimated date for completion of the Justice Center is April 25, 2016. Marc Estvold presented a virtual tour of the facility.

Once completed, the Justice Center will not be operational until staff has been trained on the new technology. The Justice Center will be opened to inmates when it is determined that it safe to house them in the new facility. It is anticipated that some overtime will be needed to keep the current jail open while providing necessary training for the new facility. Due to recruiting and staff

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retention challenges, it is unlikely the Justice Center will be at full staff when it opens. When the Justice center is operational, it is anticipated that jail and court processes, implemented to accommodate capacity issues, will be modified.

V. Fostering Together – a presentation by Christina Urtasun, Liaison, Island, Skagit & Whatcom Counties

Forest Jacobson indicated there is a foster home crisis and introduced Christina Urtasun. Christina Urtasun presented information about the Fostering Together program. She indicated that there are 69 foster homes and all of these homes are currently full. It is the goal of the program to keep children within the community where their families reside. There are 142 kids in foster care. Approximately 49% of the foster kids are placed in relative care or with a suitable family that knows the child. With all homes currently full, there is a need for long-term, short-term and respite care for all populations. The crisis is a result of multiple factors including staffing shortages, the recession, increased visitation requirements, and loss of foster families due to burn out or aging out of the system.

Christina also talked about the Office Moms and Dads program which provides care for kids recently removed from their home. In this program, volunteers provide assistance caring for children in the office while social workers find foster placement. Volunteers commit to whatever time they have available and any time provided is helpful.

Christina handed out flyers for the Fostering Together and Office Moms and Dads programs and gave out additional copies to attendees who had a means to distribute the information.

VI. Elections for the 2017 Executive Board

Mavis Betz nominated Charlie Wend for Chair of the Law and Justice Committee. LaDessa Croucher seconded the nomination. Charlie Wend was elected Chair for the 2017 year.

Margaret Rojas, North Sound Behavioral Health Organization, volunteered for the Vice-Chair position. Mavis Betz nominated Margaret Rojas and Dale Ragan seconded the nomination. Margaret Rojas was elected Vice-Chair for the 2017 year.

Jacquelyn Styrna, Dispute Resolution Center, volunteered to fill the vacant Secretary to the Executive Board position and will begin January 2017.

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VII. Announcements

Mavis Betz, County Clerk, announced the kick off teleconference for the new case management system for Superior Court. The current system is very old and she is looking forward to a more timely system. Chair Lisa Tremblay, Superior and Juvenile Court Director, indicated that this system would create an environment in Superior Court that is mostly paperless.

LaDessa Crocher, Dispute Resolution Center, introduced their new regional director, Jacquelyn Styrna.

Roxane Goss, Information Systems, updated the committee on the request for Proposal (RFP) for the Justice Center's Inmate Communication System. Proposals were received by Information Services in mid-November. These proposals are currently being evaluated. The next phase will be to view demos for the top proposals.

Charlie Wend, Jail Commander, indicated that he is currently working on requests for Proposal (RFP) for Laundry and Food services for the Justice Center. He also updated the committee on current jail operations, specifically an incident with an inmate. Ten windows were broken leaving the cell block unusable, but no one was hurt.

Margaret Rojas, North Sound Behavioral Health Organization, discussed some mental health initiatives, one involving telepsychology which may be a resource for the Justice Center.

Judge Dave Needy announced that Superior Court has a new Judge, David Svaren. Superior Court will have additional changes in 2017 when Judge Rickert retires.

VIII. **Next Meeting: Wednesday, January 11, 2017, 8:15 a.m.**

IX. Meeting adjourned at 9:04 a.m.