

Administrative Services Committee Meeting

Douglas County, Nebraska

Tuesday, July 24, 2018

The meeting convened at 1:00 P.M. in the Jesse Lowe Conference Room, 1819 Farnam Street, Omaha, NE 68183. A copy of the Open Meetings Act is located on the wall near the entrance of the room. A notice of the meeting was published in the July 18, 2018, issue of *The Daily Record*. County Commissioner Jim Cavanaugh chaired the committee. Others present at the meeting included Brad Alexander, Mark LeFlore, Rondy Woodard, and John Mack, Douglas County Youth Center (DCYC); Patrick Bloomingdale, Joe Lorenz, Diane Carlson, and Catherine Hall, Administration; Janee Pannkuk, Catherine Rivier, and Karla Dush, Operation Youth Success; Amber Redmond and Mark Foxall, Corrections; Jerry Leahy and Dave Petersen, Public Properties; John Friend, Clerk of the District Court; Wade Lux & Alexa Reye, KMTV; Juliet Summers, Voices for Children; Jerry Pascale, Tom Beacher, Ricky Fulton, Maria Fernandez, Sharon Martin, Steve Kaire, Eric Sellers, Allison Wade, Luis Jimenez, David Russo, Alex Lichtas, Will Greene, Larry Storer, John Clay, Chris Chappellear, Paul Bellinger, Johana Miehger, Joe Gross, Bob Perrin, John Leclerc, Joy Suder, Josh Henningsen, Greg Sechser, Jesse Harding, Dan Gilbert, Brian Smith, Cristen Stoelm, Catherine Cook, Jim Sazama, Crystal Sierra, John Pollack, Charles Gifford, Christine Henningsen, Madi Brodsay, Mary Joe Barbush-Weiss, William L Weiss, Joe Myers, Carole M Zacek, Mark Vondrasek, Marty Hosking, Jack Hosking, Terry White, Constance Mierendorf, Michael O'Hara; and Dan Esch, County Clerk/Comptroller. Please note, not everyone in attendance signed in.

A video recording of the meeting is available on the Douglas County Website:

<http://commissioners.douglascounty-ne.gov/board-meetings/videos>.

Time markers for when each topic/item occurs during the video are in parentheses.

Introduction (0:01 – 10:45)

Commissioner Cavanaugh gave an introduction: this is the second hearing for space needs and the proposal regarding a juvenile justice center. The first hearing involved the needs of the County Attorney and Public Defender, today's meeting will involve the needs of the Douglas County Youth Center (DCYC), and the next hearing will involve a discussion of the courts. The next hearing is August 2 at 1:00 p.m.

Commissioner Cavanaugh gave an overview of current proposal for a justice center downtown: \$120 million to build a 10-story tower with an attached juvenile detention center and parking garage. Three parts involved in the proposal: a juvenile justice courthouse, the lawyers from the County Attorney and Public Defender offices, and the kids at DCYC.

Commissioner Cavanaugh explained that the purpose of these hearings are to figure out if this proposal is the best idea, are there reasonable alternatives; a part of the current proposal is to take a privately-owned building by eminent domain.

Commissioner Cavanaugh reviewed a map of the campus near 42nd & Woolworth Ave. (see Attachment 1, first page).

Dan Esch, County Clerk/Comptroller, reminded everyone of the Open Meetings Act on the wall near the entrance of the room.

1. Douglas County Youth Center space needs

DCYC Presentation/DCYC Responding to Questions from Commissioner Cavanaugh (10:46 – 42:36)

Brad Alexander, Director of Douglas County Youth Center (DCYC), gave DCYC history, changes and status; referred to handout (see Attachment 3); addressed different changes in some years' usage/quantity of kids (population numbers); explained bed units' usage.

John Mack, DCYC, and Jerry Leahy, Director of Public Properties, addressed square footage figures. Mr. Leahy and Dave Petersen, Public Properties, presented a spreadsheet on the projector screen regarding square footage figures (see Attachment 2).

Mark LeFlore, DCYC, provided a handout (see Attachment 4); spoke about overview of DCYC programming, mission statement, educational services process for schooling/credit recovery (hold Title 1), online credit recovery offered; UNMC provides pediatric services; Region VI provides mental health services, crisis intervention, health practitioners, psychologists; career center includes guests speakers, community resources; leadership development, yoga, domestic violence help, etc. for variety of needs. Mr. LeFlore expressed there is adequate staff & space; currently two units are closed.

Mr. Alexander addressed staff ratio, approximate mod sizes. Commissioner Cavanaugh conveyed that it appears about 10% of the DCYC space currently isn't being used; relayed current facility is adequate.

Commissioner Cavanaugh referred to the Juvenile Justice System Assessment Needs Study from January, pages 91-93, referring to two alternative models. One alternative is a campus model, in which eight pros and three cons were listed in the study. Another proposal is for a 5-story building; in which there were five pros and nine cons listed in the study.

Mr. Peterson displayed a map of the 18th & Harney St. area (see Attachment 1, second page).

Mr. Alexander relayed that it would be preferable to have all living units one level.

Mr. Alexander relayed he doesn't know what's being proposed, Commissioner Cavanaugh conveyed that if it hasn't been shown to the Director of DCYC then that is a troubling fact. Mr. Alexander added that he has had two meetings with architects, but hasn't seen any drawings.

Commissioner Cavanaugh referenced the \$37,558,080 figure (regarding estimated probable cost for a secure detention center) listed on page 95 of the Juvenile Justice System Assessment Needs Study, and relayed he felt a lot could be done at the current DCYC location with that amount of money.

Mr. Alexander spoke about taking care of the needs of kids with mental health issues.

Mr. Alexander relayed that over the last five years, DCYC averaged 77 kids per day.

Mr. Alexander relayed that the DCYC staff has numerous letters from families thanking them. Commissioner Cavanaugh commented that the DCYC staff does a great job. Mr. Alexander relayed that the County Board has always been supportive of the DCYC.

Others who spoke during this portion of the meeting were Patrick Bloomingdale, Administration.

Citizen Comments/Questions from Citizens (42:37 – 1:08:25)

Below is a summary of comments and questions from citizens in attendance.

Paul Bellinger: price per square foot concerns; how was the 501c3 chosen?

Catherine Cook: who came up with \$120 million proposal?

Brian Smith: concerned about population overflow and DCYC having to utilize other counties if number of youth exceeds capacity; wants to know who is driving proposal if Mr. Alexander has not said he needs more room. Mr. Bloomingdale conveyed the goal is to reduce quantity of kids going into the system.

Larry Storer: concerned about bed spaces, social work programs, and disparity amongst kids; studies conducted & paid by taxpayers; since current programs aren't working, taxpayers will pay more.

Jerry Pascale: talked about potential possibilities on 42nd & Woolworth campus space. Thinks the County needs to look at more alternatives.

Josh Henningsen: Advocated for concept of reducing the capacity at DCYC, but Probation would have to help reduce capacity needs (like was done in Lancaster County); new proposal is making compromises on the juvenile justice system, i.e. squeezing it onto one city block, or less.

Juliet Summers, Voices for Children: previous juvenile public defender for Douglas County; likes that the County wants to invest; when comparing locations, accessibility for families being served by the Juvenile Court needs to be considered; be thoughtful about design & best practices. Less effective to incarcerate kids than to have home-like facilities for rehabilitation.

Jim Sazama: concerned about spending; address offenses of kids at DCYC.

Others speaking during this portion of the meeting included Joe Lorenz, Administration; Commissioner Cavanaugh; Mr. Alexander; and County Clerk/Comptroller Esch.

3. Juvenile Justice Center strategic planning (1:08:26 – 1:20:06)

This item was taken up before Item 2.

Commissioner Cavanaugh indicated to those in attendance that he was interested in hearing their ideas regarding the Juvenile Justice Center. Below is a summary of comments and questions asked:

Steve Cline, represents the owners of the office and commercial space at 1600 Farnam: these owners are willing to work with the County to repurpose their office and commercial space at 1600 Farnam.

Alison Wade: wondered how people can be asked for ideas to solve a problem that is non-existent; Expressed concern about the County wants less capacity, but more spending. Commissioner Cavanaugh expressed concern about other issues that he feels need to be addressed, especially long-term mental

health, capacity of Corrections center; feels current Courthouse and Youth Center are imperfect, but are working.

Sharon Martin: suggested formerly incarcerated youth should be included in future committees.

Rick Fulton: asked if any other County Commissioners were in attendance; there weren't.

Luiz Jimenez: concerned about using eminent domain as opposed to better space/area somewhere; less about incarceration; consider the whole county for space.

Bob Perrin: rethink process, site selection, programs to be offered.

Others speaking during this portion of the meeting were Paul Bellinger and Catherine Cook.

2. Public Property Update (1:20:07 – 1:29:12)

Commissioner Cavanaugh relayed that this update would be about the progress being made on the projects involved with the Public Safety Bond, which was approved by the voters in 2016.

Mr. Leahy gave updates on the West Campus (near 156th & West Maple Rd.) and Corrections: reviewed progress charts (see Attachments 5 & 6); Phase 1 at Corrections is complete, currently in Phase 2; September will start phase 3 (critical because of HVAC).

Mark Foxall, Director of Corrections, relayed improvements made have made facility safer, other improvements being worked on are necessary.

4. Other Business (1:29:13 – 1:30:09)

Commissioner Cavanaugh reminded those in attendance of the Administrative Services Committee meeting on August 2 at 1:00 p.m.

Clerk/Comptroller Esch relayed to those in attendance that copies of handouts provided at today's meeting will be available on www.douglascountyclerk.org.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 P.M.