

## **DOUGLAS COUNTY JUSTICE CENTER FORUM**

### **DOUGLAS COUNTY, NEBRASKA**

Tuesday, May 7, 2019

The forum convened at 6:00 PM in the Mainelli Center at St. Robert Bellarmine Church, 11802 Pacific St., Omaha, NE 68154. The Open Meetings Act was present in the room. A notice of the meeting was published in the April 29, 2019 edition of *The Daily Record*, as well as in the April 30, 2019 and May 2, 2019 editions of *The Daily Record*, and simultaneously transmitted to all members of the Douglas County Board. Those present at the meeting included Commissioners Mary Ann Borgeson, Clare Duda, P.J. Morgan, and Chris Rodgers. In addition to the citizens in attendance, others present at the meeting included John Christensen, University of Nebraska-Omaha/Omaha-Douglas Public Building Commission; Patrick Bloomingdale and Joe Lorenz, Douglas County Administration; Bruce Carpenter, HDR; Don Mohlman and George Achola, Burlington Capital; and Douglas County Clerk/Comptroller Daniel Esch.

*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 or brackets).

***The attachment referenced in these minutes is on file with the Douglas County Clerk and available at <https://www.douglascountyclerk.org/county-board-records/justice-center>.***

(0:01 – 0:58) Commissioner Rodgers gave an introduction. He relayed that the purpose of the meeting was to present the latest changes for the proposed Justice Center.

(0:59 - 1:51) Commissioner Rodgers went over the guiding principles of the project (see the 2nd page of ***Attachment A – Douglas County Justice Center \_ HDR Architecture \_ 05.19***).

(1:52 - 12:19) Commissioner Rodgers reviewed the programs and policies initiated to transform the juvenile justice system (see the 3rd page of ***Attachment A***).

(12:22 - 30:26) Bruce Carpenter spoke to the audience about the work HDR has done, and reviewed the PowerPoint Presentation (***Attachment A***).

- [12:36 - 14:24] Mentioned comparable communities to Douglas County that have been visited to see what they do for juvenile justice, and many of these communities and other experts identify collocation of services as a priority;
- [14:25 - 18:14] Provided the project scope - see the 4th page of ***Attachment A***;
- [18:15 - 20:16] Reviewed project amenities - see the 5th page of ***Attachment A***;
- [20:17 - 21:10] Reviewed overhead diagram of proposed Justice Center site - see the 6th page of ***Attachment A***;

- [21:11 - 22:04] Reviewed a stacking diagram of the proposed Justice Center site (shows what will be located on each floor) - see the 7th page of **Attachment A**;
- [22:05 - 23:21] Reviewed images of what the Justice Center buildings would look like from different street-level views - see the 8th - 10th pages of **Attachment A**;
- [23:22 - 24:48] Reviewed images of what the Youth Center would look like from the inside and on the outdoor area located on the roof - see the 11th - 13th pages of **Attachment A**;
- [24:48 - 26:11] Discussed Hennepin County, MN and Ramsey County, MN, and what they have done with their juvenile justice system and youth detention centers - see the 14th - 15th pages of **Attachment A**;
- [26:12 - 27:48] Reviewed the Project Control Budget Status - see the 16th page of **Attachment A**;
- [27: 50 - 29:49] Reviewed the total net benefits or savings for a new downtown facility for 20 years (all in 2019 dollars) - see the 17th page of **Attachment A**; and
- [29:50 - 30:22] Relayed there have been meetings with judges, attorneys, and community providers.

(30:27 - 32:10) Commissioner Rodgers addressed the audience again.

- [30:27 - 31:59] Talked about visits and conversations that have been had with Ramsey County, MN, and spoke about Douglas County efforts; and
- [32:00 - 32:10] Opened up the forum for questions.

*Some of the citizens names could be misspelled due to the Clerk being unable to confirm name spellings with all of the speakers.*

(32:21 - 43:11) Tyler Wilson asked questions. Commissioner Rodgers and Mr. Carpenter responded to his questions.

- [32:23 - 34:36] Asked about the Child Savings Institute, and how the involvement of the Child Savings Institute impacts the idea of collocation;
- [34:37 - 37:23] Asked about the different parties who have been a part of the ongoing juvenile justice conversation, and asked about the Omaha Police Officers Association;
- [37:25 - 39:39] Asked about the pro's and con's listed in the Chinn Study;
- [40:00 - 41:41] Relayed that the Chinn Study says many of the goals of JDAI (Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative) have been unmet and asked what has been done to address that; and
- [41:42 - 42:55] Asked about the difference in the PowerPoint Presentations presented at the public forum from the night before and at this meeting.

(43:12 - 50:20) Michaela Jackson asked questions and had a comment. Commissioner Rodgers, Commissioner Borgeson, and Mr. Carpenter responded to her questions.

- [43:16 - 48:51] Asked about why the building has to be built in order to implement changes, and why some children in detention have to wait so long for placement; and
- [49:05 - 50:20] Ms. Jackson spoke about the community's parents needing our help; Commissioner Rodgers spoke about any kid from any background being at risk.

(50:21 - 54:08) Larry Storer spoke about the difficulties of assessing youth. Commissioner Rodgers responded.

(54:11 - 57:20) Doug Kagan asked about the DMC (Disproportionate Minority Contact) Coordinator position. Commissioner Rodgers and Gina Miller responded to his questions.

(57:22 - 1:00:57) Margaret Sechser-Burcaw asked about why this project isn't going to a vote of the people. Commissioner Rodgers responded.

(1:01:00 - 1:11:50) Ms. Miller asked a question and raised a concern. Commissioner Rodgers and Mr. Carpenter responded.

- [1:01:00 - 1:04:25] Asked why is there a need for an additional Juvenile Court judge since the Youth Center population has declined so much since the mid-2000's;
- [1:04:26 - 1:10:49] Mentioned concerns with the potential programming given that some of the involved parties may not have changed their mentality towards juvenile justice issues; and
- [1:10:50 - 1:11:32] Mr. Carpenter spoke about flexibility being built in order to accommodate future changes.

(1:11:53 - 1:13:58) Catherine Cook made comments in opposition to the proposal, and speculated about the Sherwood Foundation's involvement. Commissioner Borgeson and Commissioner Rodgers responded.

(1:14:03 - 1:19:44) Michael O'Hara asked questions. Commissioner Rodgers, Joe Lorenz, and Commissioner Duda responded.

- [1:14:11 - 1:14:32] Asked when Ernie Goss's entire report will be available to the public;
- [1:14:33 - 1:15:39] Talked about the Sherwood Foundation's conditions with their \$5 million contribution, and asked if a contract has been signed;
- [1:15:41 - 1:18:31] Asked about the financing for the project; asked if the County will be paying off all of the bonds; and asked about a mill levy increase;
- [1:18:33 - 1:18:50] Asked about the project not going to a vote of the people; and
- [1:18:50 - 1:19:44] Asked what part of either building will the City of Omaha occupy.

(1:19:50 - 1:21:25) William Harris spoke about detention being meant for youth who are flight risks or a danger to others, but currently there are youth in detention based on not being able to get into services, and spoke about how collocation could streamline services.

(1:21:40 - 1:29:34) Bob Perrin asked a question and made a comment. Commissioner Rodgers and Mr. Carpenter responded, Tyler Wilson also spoke during this time.

- [1:21:40 - 1:22:42] Spoke about the capacity of a detention facility being 75% due to separating genders and, because of that, asked if the 64-bed facility will only be able to hold around 50 youth;

- [1:22:42 - 1:23:50] Spoke about the proposed location of this facility having a significant impact on the surrounding neighborhood, and asked how that's being addressed;
- [1:23:51 - 1:26:40] Asked about parking;
- [1:26:41 - 1:27:43] Asked about how much access the public will have to the lobby and community space; and
- [1:27:43 - 1:29:34] Asked about the differences between the new design and the existing design.

(1:30:08 - 1:34:32) Tyler Wilson spoke again. Commissioner Rodgers and Commissioner Duda responded.

- [1:30:08 - 1:31:18] Spoke about his experience as a State correctional officer and relayed that correctional facilities only utilize about 75% of their total capacity due to PREA (Prison Rape Elimination Act) and classification of offenders; and
- [1:31:19 - 1:34:32] Asked for examples of projects the building commission for Lancaster County/City of Lincoln has done, as well as how will the Omaha-Douglas Public Building Commission be convinced to vote "yes" on the Justice Center project.

(1:34:40 - 1:34:55) Commissioners Rodgers gave closing remarks.

The forum ended at 7:35 PM.