

March 24, 2005

The scheduled meeting of the Board of County Commissioners was called to order this 24th day of March, 2005, in the conference room of the Cleveland County Fairgrounds, 605 E. Robinson, Norman, Oklahoma, by Chairman George Skinner. Roll was called by Dorinda Harvey, County Clerk/Secretary and those present were:

George Skinner, Chairman
Leroy Krohmer, Vice-Chairman
Bill Graves, Member
Dorinda Harvey, Secretary

Others present were: Christine Brannon, David Mobley, David Williams, Rhonda Peterson, Sarita Scott, Tammy Howard, Judge Tom Lucas, Mike McDanel, Randall Turk, and Cheryl Cowen.

Chairman Skinner began the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Skinner called for discussion, consideration, and/or action on the overcrowding of the Cleveland County Detention Center, (Jail).

David Williams, Deputy Sheriff, did a slide presentation for the Board and guests that were in attendance. Mr. Williams gave statistics on the jail as far as the number of inmates that the jail was originally built to hold, the average number of current inmates, the peak number of inmates, and the duties of the Sheriff's Office. He showed some of the conditions of overcrowding and told the Board of measures that the Sheriff's Office was taking to relieve the overcrowding. Short Term and Long Term options were discussed.

Short Term being, leasing jail space from another county or entity and/or holding inmates in tents at the county fairgrounds and Long Term being, expanding the current jail, building a new jail, or purchasing an existing building and do a conversion. There are hazards and risks with severe overcrowding being violence, damage to facility, injury to staff, inmates and visitors, it increases liability exposure to the uncertain cost of civil litigation and sanction for non-compliance with state standards.

Sheriff Beggs stated that they have tried very hard to go by every option that he could find to keep the population under control and he thinks he has exhausted nearly everyone of the options. Sheriff Beggs continued explaining to the Board about the safety factor to his staff. The Sheriff's request today is to find some sort of reasonable solution to the particular problems that he has. He wants from the Board this morning a long term solution, but even looking at a long term solution he needs something short term as a safety valve.

Discussion took place on what it would cost for additional employees for a larger facility, places that could be used for an additional facility and how large of a facility would be needed for future growth.

Chairman Skinner stated it was going to take more than one solution for the short term and different means to take care of the inmates until the long term can be taken care of.

Sheriff Beggs wanted to know when he would know something, as he needs it pretty quick.

Chairman Skinner stated that they could not just go out and build a jail.

Sheriff Beggs is asking for some sort of commitment as to time of when it is going to be started, as he can't wait another six months to a year.

Chairman Skinner stated that the Board could draw up a contract with another county to take the inmates on a short term but there are going to have to be more solutions than that. There is going to have to be an engineer to draw up plans for a building, give estimated cost for the building before a bond election can be held.

Leroy Krohmer stated that the first thing that needed to be done is to get a contract with another county to house prisoners.

Sheriff Beggs asked if he could get an architect to start and Leroy Krohmer stated that a piece of property had to be found first and it would have to be zoned first.

Discussion took place on DOC prisoners.

Bill Graves moved to look into a contract with Pottawatomie County or whatever County might have a jail that could be used for the present time and then during that time look into the possibility of other buildings in the local area, but get the contract started first with Pottawatomie County housing extra prisoners. Leroy Krohmer seconded the motion.

The vote was: George Skinner, yes; Leroy Krohmer, yes; Bill Graves, yes.

Motion carried.

More miscellaneous discussion took place on the jail, location of a jail, reimbursement from DOC, and the number of prisoners that are high risk.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Leroy Krohmer moved that the meeting be adjourned. Bill Graves seconded the motion.

The vote was: George Skinner, yes; Leroy Krohmer, yes; Bill Graves, yes.

Motion carried.