

CITY OF SHORELINE
SHORELINE CITY COUNCIL
SUMMARY MINUTES OF WORKSHOP DINNER MEETING

Monday, June 23, 2008
6:00 p.m.

Shoreline Conference Center
Highlander Room

PRESENT: Mayor Cindy Ryu, Deputy Mayor Terry Scott, and Councilmembers Chris Eggen, Ron Hansen, Doris McConnell, Keith McGlashan, and Janet Way

ABSENT: none

STAFF: Bob Olander, City Manager; Julie Underwood, Assistant City Manager; Dan Pingrey, Police Chief; Debbie Tarry, Finance Director; Ian Sievers, City Attorney; Scott MacColl, Intergovernmental Program Manager; Rob Beem, Community Services Manager; Eric Bratton, Management Analyst; John Norris, Management Analyst; Scott Passey, City Clerk

Mayor Ryu called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. The topic of the meeting was Criminal Justice – King County’s Proposed Budget Cuts.

Julie Underwood, Assistant City Manager, provided a memorandum and gave a brief overview regarding King County’s proposed budget cuts and their impacts on the City of Shoreline. She noted that jail issues will require Council guidance in the future. She emphasized the need for a long-range jail plan, and that the special needs populations are becoming a major challenge.

Bob Olander, City Manager, noted that the long-range jail issue began when King County said they will no longer accept misdemeanor offenders after 2012. He said the primary options include building a jail facility in Shoreline or joining with other jurisdictions in a joint facility outside the City. He added that a two-year extension will allow the City more time to consider options; however, it is not enough time.

Ms. Underwood explained that part of the process involves identifying potential jail sites in all affected jurisdictions. She said this must be done by September 2008. Mr. Olander added that Shoreline must identify sites soon, and this will become public knowledge at some point.

Councilmember Way expressed a desire to know about the proposed sites as soon as possible.

Mr. Olander noted that the site exploration process will depend upon the size of the desired facility. He added that the final outcome might be one facility or a number of facilities.

Ms. Underwood called attention to page 19 of the memo outlining the varying operating costs for the different options.

Councilmember Way asked if the mental health levy, home detention, or collaborating with Snohomish County would have any bearing on the jail issue.

Mr. Olander said that those factors could play a role in the long-term outlook; however, Snohomish County did not have enough bed capacity two years ago. He clarified that the projections did not include the number that could be diverted. He highlighted the fact that 60-70% of the sentences/jail time is mandatory.

Ms. Underwood said that staff is supportive of the mental health court, but it probably won't divert very many.

Deputy Mayor Scott pointed out that the City of Seattle has already started notifying its residents regarding long-term jail needs. He wondered if Shoreline should start its notification process sooner, and perhaps approach Snohomish County again.

Mr. Olander explained that Snohomish County did not have the bed numbers to justify reopening their facility, although there could be some long-term potential there. He said the City has an obligation to participate in the jail siting process, and the City could be overridden because a jail is an essential public facility. It was his opinion that Seattle and Bellevue are the best options for siting a jail facility because Seattle has a lot of prisoners and the two cities are centrally located.

Deputy Mayor Scott reiterated his concern that Shoreline could be at a disadvantage if it waits too long to identify potential sites.

Scott MacColl, Intergovernmental Programs Manager, pointed out that the only reason the Seattle location was publicized is because a Seattle Councilmember leaked confidential information.

Mayor Ryu asked about the likelihood of Seattle building a facility that will only accommodate their needs.

Mr. Olander emphasized that Shoreline will require a joint governing structure to ensure that its needs are met through a binding interlocal agreement. He added that budget cuts to the court or the prosecutor may have indirect budget impacts on Shoreline.

Dan Pingrey, Shoreline Police Chief, said there are tactics and politics involved in this issue. He clarified that the Sheriff's intent is not to impact city budgets. He said the impacts will depend on where the cuts are made.

Debbie Tarry, Finance Director, pointed out that part of Shoreline's costs is allocated to such things as payroll services. So while the number of police officers could decrease, the cost per officer could increase.

Chief Pingrey clarified that the canine attack unit, marine enforcement, and homicide have all been considered regional needs, so the likelihood that these will be affected is remote.

There was brief discussion regarding the types of services that might be cut from the King County Sheriff's Office.

Councilmember McGlashan asked if Shoreline has the capability to administer its own court and jail.

Mr. Olander said the analysis indicates that it is not cost effective for Shoreline to administer its own jail facility. He outlined some of the costs and the liability issues involved.

Ms. Underwood outlined some of the operating and maintenance costs charged by the County. She noted that the more users there are, the more the costs can be spread around. She noted that King County has annual labor increases that cannot be controlled by Shoreline.

Mr. Olander said although having our own court is expensive, he has directed staff to update the projections so everyone can understand the alternatives.

Councilmember Way suggested that detailed demographic data might be able to tell us whether diversion and prevention are viable options.

There was a brief discussion of various demographic information and the types of people committing crimes within the City. Mr. Olander said that having additional School Resource Officers makes sense, but a major problem is the mobility of the population.

Mayor Ryu emphasized the need to look at prevention while also considering the issue of increasing expenses.

Councilmember Way suggested that the number of offenders arrested may be unrelated to the jail population. Eric Bratton, Management Analyst, pointed out that the analysis only considers the misdemeanor population.

Rob Beem, Community Service Manager, said it is difficult to make a connection between prevention efforts in grade school and incarceration rates.

Ms. Underwood suggested that cities be more proactive in the jail programs, such as Alcoholic Anonymous, anger management, and religious affiliations. Mr. Olander

concurred, noting that alternative sentencing can have a positive impact, although there are still a high number of repeat offenders.

Mayor Ryu emphasized that it is not cost effective to keep mental health prisoners incarcerated for an average of 158 days.

Councilmember Eggen asked if the City has a good understanding of its needs and projections. Staff responded that the City may need to adjust its bed needs in the future based on the new budget cuts from the County.

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm.

Scott Passey, City Clerk