

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

Monday, August 25, 2008
6:00 p.m.

Shoreline Conference Center
Highlander Room

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

ABSENT: Councilmember McConnell

STAFF: Bob Olander, City Manager; Julie Underwood, Assistant City Manager; Debbie Tarry, Finance Director; Dan Pingrey, Shoreline Police Chief

GUEST: King County Sheriff Sue Rahr

Mayor Ryu called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m.

Sheriff Rahr started the discussion stating that the biggest issue for the King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) has been the budget. Sheriff Rahr believes the budget deficit is largely due to a "structural gap" -- expenses outpace expenditures. In 2007 and 2008, the KCSO budget has remained status quo and flat. The KCSO implemented changes as a result of the Blue Ribbon Panel recommendation; however, additional funding for these changes has been removed from the budget in order to fill the gap.

In early 2008, the County Executive instructed the KCSO to reduce their 2008 budget by \$2 million. Sheriff Rahr was led to believe this would be the extent of the cuts, and so proposed reducing the services it bought from the County (overhead costs); however, the Budget Office didn't accept many of their proposed changes. These reductions ended up including 21 deputy positions and 13 civilian positions. Then the County Executive instructed the KCSO to reduce its budget for 2009 by \$7.5 million or 8.6%. Actually, all criminal justice agencies were instructed to reduce their budgets by 8.6%. Sheriff Rahr summarized that her budget totals \$130 million with 50% dedicated to contract services or \$56 million; 750 commissioned officers and 400 civilians. In essence this is a 25% service level cut to unincorporated areas of King County. Sheriff Rahr stated that she believes this cut will result in the overhead costs going down slightly for contract cities; however, inflationary costs will be passed on. Sheriff Rahr believes these will have a positive or neutral impact on contracting cities. Likewise, she was able to move officers to Metro and Sound Transit contracts; however, civilian positions were not so fortunate. Sheriff Rahr stated that her number one priority is responding to 911 calls, so reactive patrol will be the last place to realize cuts.

Councilmember Way asked if there was federal funding available as there was in the early 2000s. Sheriff Rahr said that those were COPs (Community Oriented Policing) grants under President Clinton and this funding has gone away; however, she continues to lobby federal lawmakers to fund local enforcement.

Bob Olander asked how much of King County's budget was structural and how much is based on the economy. Sheriff Rahr stated that the departments first heard that the budget deficit was \$45 million, then it increased to \$68 million, and now it's \$86 million. She questions whether these gaps are due only to plummeting sales tax revenue as stated by the Budget Office.

Assistant City Manager Julie Underwood asked how court programs such as the mental and drug court would be supported through the MIDD (Mental Illness, Drug Dependency) levy. Sheriff Rahr is on the MIDD Oversight Committee to oversee the implementation of the levy funds. Since technically the County is already administering mental and drug court, this new funding cannot be used to supplant current programs. Nevertheless, during these tough budget times, these programs are considered discretionary and are usually targeted for reductions. They have considered talking with the legislature about this supplanting language, though this is not very popular. Ultimately the King County Council is the decider on how the funds are used.

Sheriff Rahr shared that the King County Prosecutor, King County Superior Court Presiding Judge, District Court Presiding Judge, and herself will be hosting formal community forums to educate the community on what's really happening in the King County Budget. For example, when the Budget Office states that human services is being cut by 30%, what they really mean is that the General Fund contribution is being cut by 30%; funding from the state and federal government is untouched. Criminal justice makes up 70% of the General Fund, and only 11% is the Sheriff's Office; this is something that she is very proud of. In fact, the KCSO draw down from the General Fund has decreased or remained flat over the years.

Councilmember McGlashan asked if the deficit is still \$86 million. Sheriff Rahr said yes, but she is unsure how the forecast is based.

Mayor Ryu asked if she thought that cities provided an "urban subsidy." Sheriff Rahr said that as for the KCSO she was not aware of this, but this issue was a significant topic a few years ago.

Bob Olander asked how internal investigations were being handled now. Sheriff Rahr stated that an independent party, which will likely be an employee of the King County Council, will have oversight of internal investigations. They will be actively involved in the investigation from the beginning and not just at the end.

Councilmember Hansen said that it's neat to see how well employees at the Police Department do; he's very pleased with the talent that the City has been able to recruit.

Sheriff Rahr thanked him for the compliment and added that it's a delicate balance--a lot of turnover isn't good and yet it's good to get new perspectives.

Chief Pingrey said that Captain Kent Baxter is leaving to go to Internal Investigations and that Cam Webster will be replacing him starting on September 3.

Sheriff Rahr said that her department recently completed their Operational Master Plan and an overarching guiding principle is that the County shouldn't charge cities for regional services.

Debbie Tarry shared that the total cost for a new officer isn't just the officer but it includes the officer, the vehicle, equipment, training, as well as overhead such as insurance, bargaining with unions, etc.

Mayor Ryu asked Sheriff Rahr if she thought that Prosecutor Satterburg's proposal to change his office's filing standards would help urge unincorporated areas to incorporate. Sheriff Rahr said that this has probably been met with different success.

Bob Olander asked about the recent change in the Arson Unit. Sheriff Rahr said that this unit is now under the KCSO as part of the Criminal Investigation Unit, making this more efficient. Mr. Olander said that he understands that the fire chiefs have been very involved.

The Mayor and Councilmembers thanked Sheriff Rahr for visiting with them and Sheriff Rahr thanked the Council for the invitation.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 pm.

Julie Underwood, Assistant City Manager

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