



Public Safety Facility Needs and Assessment Committee

60 Central Avenue, Room 304
Cortland, NY 13045

<http://www.cortland-co.org>

Committee

~ Agenda ~

Joseph Steinhoff

Tuesday, April 25, 2017

11:30 AM

Room 304

I. Call to Order

Attendee Name	Present	Absent	Late	Arrived
Legislative District 1 John R Troy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Legislative District 8 Donnell Boyden	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Legislative District 14 Sandra Price	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Assistant Brian Parker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Legislative District 15 George Wagner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Legislative District 6 Mary Ann Discenza	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Legislative District 12 Joseph Steinhoff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Legislative District 17 Charles Sudbrink	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Legislative District 11 Christopher Newell	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sheriff Mark Helms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Undersheriff Budd Rigg	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

II. Minutes Approval

Thursday, March 16, 2017

III. Discussion

1. Discussion Item (ID # 4478)
Size, Scope, and Costs

IV. Adjournment



Public Safety Facility Needs and Assessment Committee

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Committee

~ Minutes ~

Joseph Steinhoff

Thursday, March 16, 2017

12:00 PM

Room 304

I. Call to Order

Mr. Steinhoff called the meeting to order at 12:12 p.m.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
John R Troy	Legislative District 1	Present	
Donnell Boyden	Legislative District 8	Present	
Sandra Price	Legislative District 14	Present	
Brian Parker	Assistant	Present	
George Wagner	Legislative District 15	Present	
Mary Ann Discenza	Legislative District 6	Present	
Joseph Steinhoff	Legislative District 12	Present	
Charles Sudbrink	Legislative District 17	Present	
Christopher Newell	Legislative District 11	Present	
Mark Helms	Sheriff	Present	
Budd Rigg	Undersheriff	Present	
Karen Howe	County Attorney	Present	
Gordon Wheelock	Legislative District 10	Present	
Nick Lynch	Jail Administrator	Present	
Nick Graziano	Cortland Standard	Present	
Ken Costello	SMRT	Present	
David Lay	SMRT	Present	
Arthur Thompson	SMRT	Present	
Randy Sickler	SMRT	Present	
Paul Moyer	Pike Company	Present	
Ron Willey	SMRT	Present	
Marshall Hardy	McFarland Johnson	Present	
Anna Curtis	City of Cortland Resident	Present	
Mechthild Nagel	SUNY Cortland	Present	
Peggy Mousaw	Budget and Finance Director	Present	
Karen Fuller	Deputy Clerk of the Legislature	Present	

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of Mar 16, 2017 12:00 PM (Minutes Approval)

II. Minutes Approval

Thursday, February 16, 2017

III. Discussion

Ms. Price reported Chairman Boyden has requested a group meet with Tompkins County representatives to share information on what they have been doing regarding their potential jail project and Assigned Counsel program. At this time the dates have not yet been determined. Ms. Price will inform the Committee on this topic.

Mr. Steinhoff said he has spoken with SMRT to see about trimming the cost of the project. He noted the contingency seems very high to him as well. He spoke of reaching out to Tompkins County about their jail and various programs they have as preventive measures and believed it would be good to discuss this. He and Ms. Price met with Legislator John of Tompkins County to address this and noted Tompkins County would like to minimize incarceration for drug offenders and put them into a program to assist in prevention/reduction of this type of incarceration. With regard to the County jail project, he believes it has to be just a jail to minimize cost. Mr. Sudbrink noted to remove the other departments it would only decrease cost approximately \$4 million. Mr. Steinhoff believes there are additional items that could be changed to reduce costs.

Mr. Helms asked if there has been a review of all aspects of cost and stated he believes there needs to have such a review to fully determine cost-benefits of various options/recommendations being suggested. Mr. Steinhoff said the County has not yet gone into that type of analysis. SMRT would work with the County and Mr. Steinhoff believes the square footage could be trimmed down unless the State has specifications that must be followed. By reducing the square footage it would reduce heating, air conditioning, etc.

Ms. Howe said our County provides many programs to keep individuals out of jails and recidivism, including two new drug programs that recently opened. She said the County has aggressively developed programs to assist those with drug and mental health issues to keep them out of jail. Mr. Steinhoff said it would be good to talk more to Tompkins County about their program to determine what may make them successful or areas they are pursuing that Cortland County may not at this time. Ms. Howe said one thing Tompkins County has that Cortland does not is having a pool of money for pre-trial bail. Ms. Price asked Mr. Rigg if having this type of program would be beneficial. Mr. Rigg replied that there are similar opportunities from private sectors for individuals in the County and that providing bail requires administration, which the County does not do. Ms. Howe said the Tompkins County bail funds are provided in part by the County and by private donations.

Ms. Discenza said there have been questions raised regarding costs and removing portions of the proposed project. She asked if by doing so the County would end up in the same situation in the future as the County is currently experiencing. Mr. Steinhoff said it is a matter of looking at options and whether it is better to have all in one place or not. She does not believe the Committee is ready to make a decision and that everyone needs to have a clear understanding of what various options would mean. Mr. Helms said rather than waiting a whole month with no questions asked of him of how it may be possible to determine cost benefits; he has had continuing discussions with other counties. Mr. Helms believes it would be good to look completely at the entire picture to determine fully what costs would be rather than to just eliminate portions of the project.

Mr. Steinhoff said he reached out to the Chairman and Senator Seward's office and there is a plan to meet with the Commissioner of Corrections and find out what options there may be regarding what would be required and also if there is any potential funding assistance available. He also spoke of funding available when working with other municipalities, which is why he is speaking to Tompkins County to determine if there may be an opportunity for funding through cooperative efforts. Mr. Sudbrink said he believed the funds to be for consolidation not an inter-municipal agreement. Ms.

Mousaw said representatives from the Department of State will be present to discuss consolidations and mergers and it may be possible to ask for clarification. Mr. Steinhoff spoke of how the project will increase taxes and there is a need to look at different funding streams and that reducing the landfill debt would free up funding for use with the jail project.

Mr. Helms said there are items to be taken into consideration that he is unable to address in open session due to the security and sensitive nature and believes it would be important to know. Mr. Steinhoff said Senator Seward said when the County has decided what it would like to do to let him know so he could then see what help would be available. Mr. Sudbrink said at this time there is no consensus of what can be afforded and how to proceed and believes the steps taken are backwards. Mr. Newell does not believe the County could afford \$48 million.

Mr. Parker shared historical knowledge of the previous jail project, noting he was working for the County at the time it was undertaken. He said at the time it was built there had been a recommendation of having an inmate occupancy of 100, however, due to a desire to keep costs down the Legislature decided to build the jail for 50 inmates. There was a study previously that projected an inmate population of 100, which is what the current levels are. He noted that current projections are for 146 inmates by 2025 and if the jail were built at a lower number of 148 the maximum occupancy of 167 would be reached within five years. Mr. Sudbrink said he understood Mr. Parker's perspective, however, if the Legislature cannot decide on how much could be afforded there is no point to consider building.

Mr. Wagner said he has heard the County is at 89 percent of its legal tax limit. Ms. Mousaw said if everything remained the same and using the reserve to minimize tax increases it would be approximately an 8 percent tax increase. To add the annual payment for the jail project would increase the number by approximately 6 percent. Mr. Steinhoff noted that there would be a savings of approximately \$400,000 for board-out expenses to help offset and it was discussed outside boarders could also reduce the expense as well. Ms. Mousaw said there would be additional expenses during the construction phase as the current jail would still be operational and payments on bonding would begin one year after the start. Once the department is moved to the new location potential savings could occur.

Mr. Steinhoff noted the variance saves \$300,000 per year in board-out costs. If the project is reduced it would save on the \$48.4 million for the full project. By trimming down to just the jail and reduce/remove the contingencies it would also save costs. Mr. Sudbrink noted a ten percent contingency budget is standard.

Ms. Price said the County, City, Town, Village, and School meeting will take place on March 28th to discuss the jail.

Mr. Sudbrink expressed concern that the Committee should be proceeding in a different manner since it is meant to be making decisions on design and that the cost would be less than what was provided.

Mr. Wagner asked how much a 1percent increase in sales tax would provide. Ms. Mousaw noted that sales tax revenue has decreased 2.8 percent annually over the last two years. Mr. Wagner said it would be a better way to fund. Ms. Mousaw said it would be approximately \$300,000 per year and that the County currently shares 48 percent with municipalities. Mr. Wagner thought the additional could be designated solely for the project.

Mr. Boyden suggested the Committee ask SMRT about the possibility of other options such as adding a pod on the existing jail.

At this time SMRT addressed the Committee with responses to proposed options they received as follows:

Review of Costs

- A. A general discussion identified options for a reduced project cost including alternative sentencing, boarding-out of inmates, and construction of an addition to the existing facility instead of a new jail.
- B. The NYS Commission of Correction will need to support any alternative path proposed prior to going forward. The committee chair will discuss options with the commission.
- C. SMRT will consider the potential to expand the existing jail to Port Watson Street. It was noted that expansion of the existing facility has been previously considered. (See prior reports.)
- D. Perhaps funds from another source such as grants could be acquired.

The Committee needs to resolve the limit of what bonds can be purchased is. The legal limit will determine options to a point. With this accomplished, considerations can focus on what can be built.

It was noted that the County will review options with the State Commissioner of Corrections (SCOC). SMRT will review the space capacity near the existing jail. The Committee will also work on reaching consensus to determine the bonding limit and other potential funding available for the project.

The Sheriff reviewed some statistics:

- A. The current jail was designed for 50 and is housing 100.
- B. The county population is 146 today with a number of those inmates boarded out.

The SCOC has allowed the existing gym to house inmates, which if not continued will add 30 additional boarders at other facilities.

SMRT was asked in a memo to identify the cost of a minimum jail. SMRT offered that perhaps 20 - 24,000 sf could be removed from the full jail if beds are reduced. The number of beds now shown is just enough to accommodate the current county population, and so beds should not be reduced.

- A. The cost estimate included costs for several alternates. These provided costs to delete the sheriff's offices, 911, the storage building, and savings realized from having a more compact parking lot. With all alternates deleted, the project construction cost estimate is \$43,726,000.

Up to 4200 more square feet could likely be deleted with some study, resulting in approximately \$1M additional savings.

IV. Adjournment

On motion the meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.