

Final Report

of the

Ad Hoc Jail Planning Committee

January 15, 2014

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I. Background

Beginning in December 2012 the Pierce County Finance and Personnel (F&P) Committee initiated and the Pierce County Board of Supervisors took action to create an Ad Hoc Committee comprised of three citizens to study the issues involving the jail and make a recommendation based on their findings. On June 27, 2013, that Ad Hoc Committee submitted a written report summarizing its findings, providing analysis, and making a recommendation to F&P and the County Board. The Ad Hoc Committee recommended building a stand-alone jail and sheriff's department facility on county owned property and remodeling the existing jail and Sheriff's Department space into a justice center. The committee further recommended the county take action to get more detailed information on costs and possible design options for both a new stand-alone jail and sheriff's department and the remodel of the current facility into a Justice Center.

II. Prior Ad Hoc Committee's Analysis and Recommendation

The prior Ad Hoc Committee recommended building a stand-alone jail and sheriff's department facility on county owned property and remodeling the existing jail and Sheriff's Department space into a justice center. In formulating their recommendation to F&P and the County Board, the Ad Hoc Committee developed evaluation criteria and weighed each criterion against various options. The criteria was based on input received during meetings with stakeholders and reflected the core principles established by the Ad Hoc Committee regarding the jail issues and concerns. These criteria guided their recommendation deliberations. The committee identified the following criteria based on the core principles.

- Space needs – the facility must have enough space for employees to work efficiently and effectively and enough space for inmate needs (programs, meetings with service providers, etc.).
- Security/safety concerns – victims, offenders, staff and the public must be in safe environments. Keeping offenders in a secured area between the courtroom and the jail is critical. Limited access of the public to court staff is highly preferred.
- Limit liability and risk exposure – address as many issues in the jail inspection report and as identified elsewhere as practical. Building a facility consistent with American Correctional Association standards will address many of the concerns in the inspection reports.
- Costs – both construction and ongoing operating costs need to be considered. New staff requirements must be considered in any option that is recommended.
- Sustainability – spending money on a solution that will address the problem for 10 to 20 years is not as sustainable as a solution that can expand as needs change in the future. Preferred recommendations will address current and future needs or be able to adjust to future needs. If a new facility is built that does not address needs for at least the next 40 to 50 years, it should

include plans for expanding the facility at some point in the future. This should be reflected in the building design and available land adjacent to any new facility.

The Ad Hoc Committee considered three possible options in light of the criteria before making their recommendation to build a stand-alone jail and sheriff's department and remodel the annex into a justice center. The Committee believed that new construction of a jail and sheriff's department could be designed to adequately address the space, security/safety and liability/risk criteria in response to concerns that were raised in the meetings with stakeholders and on jail inspection reports. The Committee acknowledged there was one security issue that was not addressed completely in this recommendation regarding prisoner transport. Because the courtrooms would not be in the same structure as the jail, transport of prisoners from one building to another would still be needed. However, transport would go from a secure sally port in the jail to a secure sally port in the justice center and both buildings could be designed so prisoners are in a totally secure area other than when they are in a courtroom. While the committee acknowledged this was not a perfect scenario, they believed it was very much improved over the current transport of prisoners through the Courthouse in an unsecured environment.

In order to meet the sustainability criterion, the new jail/Sheriff's Department building must be designed to enable expansion in the future should additional jail space be needed. Land adjacent to the new facility should be secured and reserved for that purpose. In addressing the cost criterion, an initial calculation of needed space and construction costs was done by the committee using a very basic methodology to calculate square footage and a very preliminary cost for construction only. That estimate included actual building construction costs only and not such things as site preparation, engineering/architect fees, utility and road costs, furnishings, financing charges, legal fees, construction management, etc. The initial construction-only calculations and acknowledgment of additional costs met the committee's cost criterion.

The committee completed its work by recommending the County build a stand-alone jail and sheriff's department on county owned property and remodel the current jail and sheriff's department into a justice center. The Committee further recommended the County take action to get more detailed information on costs and possible design options.

III. Creation of Ad Hoc Jail Planning Committee

On August 27, 2013, the Pierce County Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution 13-14 (Appendix A) creating an Ad Hoc Jail Planning Committee and assigned the committee this charge:

The Pierce County Board of Supervisors has created and the Pierce County Board Chairman has appointed an Ad Hoc Jail Planning Committee of three members of the County Board to retain the services of an engineering/architectural firm to identify more specific parameters associated with the option recommended by the prior Ad Hoc Committee in its Final Report dated June 27, 2013. The Pierce County Board also charges the Ad Hoc Jail Planning Committee with obtaining a more solid estimate of cost for the recommended option, identifying potential site location

alternatives for the Board's consideration, and assisting the County as necessary in its research and analysis of this issue.

Appointees to this committee were Supervisors James Ross, Jerry Kosin and Dale Auckland.

IV. Activities and efforts of Ad Hoc Jail Planning Committee members in response to their charge

At the first Ad Hoc Jail Planning Committee meeting members focused on a process for retaining an engineering/architectural firm to assist with basic design of a building foot print and the associated costs of a stand-alone jail and Sheriff's Department facility. Of the five firms contacted, three submitted a proposal. On September 18 the Committee reviewed the proposals and retained Potter Lawson from Madison, WI to assist with design and cost parameters.

Subsequent meetings were spent identifying potential site alternatives for a stand-alone jail and sheriff's department facility and discussing the advantage and disadvantages of each of the potential sites. These discussions included utility and roadway access as well as the ability to expand to a larger jail facility at some point in the future. The Committee identified the following county owned sites as alternatives:

- A. Properties on West Grove Street generally located across the street from the Pierce County Office Building and east parking lot. The site is bordered on the north by the southern-most edge of the Pierce County fairgrounds property. Demolition is being scheduled for the existing houses on the property. The site includes the parcel on which the county maintenance building (the blue building) is located. The site is divided into five parcels, two of which are zoned commercial (blue building property and parcel immediately to the east) and three are zoned residential. Some of these parcels are currently included in the Pierce County Fairgrounds Master Plan and designated as future phased land acquisition. The site is a total of approximately 3.6 acres.
- B. The parking lot to the east of the Pierce County Office Building. There are several challenges related to this site outlined in the Potter Lawson report. This site is zoned commercial.
- C. Property on the southwest corner of State Highway 65 and Outlook Drive. This property is northeast of the Highway and Solid Waste/Recycling properties and south of Shopko. This site is about 9.2 acres and has a Northern Natural Gas line running east-west through the property just north of half way between the north and south limits identified for a building project. The easement for the gas line is 80 feet wide. This site proposes a building foot print to the south of the easement. The entire site is zoned commercial.
- D. This site is the same as listed in 3 above, except that it places the proposed building to the north of the 80 foot gas line easement. Because the easement is on a bit of an angle, this location is a tighter fit for the building foot print. Both building locations on the site have issues with access that would need to be addressed.

- E. Property located approximately 1,600 feet west of the property listed in 3 and 4 above. There is currently no road to access the specific site. Access would be an issue with this site as a road would need to be constructed. The site is 6.7 acres and is zoned commercial.
- F. Property located on Crosstown Road, west of State Highway 65. The site is wooded and is known as the Demonstration Forest. The site is 22 acres and is zoned agricultural.

Site maps, building footprints, advantages, disadvantages and cost estimates for each site are contained in the final report from Potter Lawson on their contracted work, which is attached as Appendix B. The cost estimates include some of the costs beyond just the construction of the building such as site development costs (preparing the site for a building foundation, extending utilities to the property, roadway construction, etc.), soft costs (engineer/architect fees, construction management fees, financing costs), and a project contingency. The report also details the assumptions made by Potter Lawson when calculating costs. For example, all of the potential sites were assumed to have suitable soils for constructing the proposed facility. Should one of the sites be found to have unsuitable soils that need to be removed and replaced, it could significantly add to the estimated cost for that site. The Ad Hoc Jail Planning Committee believes these estimates are closer to actual project costs than the construction-only estimates of the prior Ad Hoc Committees. However, these figures should still be viewed as estimates and not final total project costs. Once a site is selected and a building is actually in the design phase, the costs for that specific project will need to be refined.

The final piece of the Potter Lawson report is a basic cost estimate on the remodel of the existing sheriff's department and jail into a justice center. There would be several challenges with the design of this space due to the space constraints, the number of functions and spaces (Courtrooms, District Attorney, Clerk of Court, Probate, jury room, etc.) that would be ideal to locate in this area, and the Supreme Court Rules on space requirements for new facilities. The report does not provide any preliminary design options for the space, but does provide a rough cost estimate of \$4.4 million dollars for the interior demolition of the existing facility and remodeling into a Justice Center. The estimate includes costs for site development, hazardous materials abatement, various soft costs, and contingency. This number really represents a placeholder until a more detailed design can be determined. This will require discussions with the Wisconsin District Court Administrator before any plan is approved for construction. The Ad Hoc Jail Planning Committee noted that expanding the stand-alone jail and sheriff's department facility to include the courts as opposed to remodeling the annex into a Justice Center should be considered for reasons including less cost than the estimated \$4.4 million, the Supreme Court Rules requirements may not be met/approved, and reduced transportation costs between the courts and the jail.

This Potter Lawson report was reviewed and accepted by the Ad Hoc Jail Planning Committee at the December 18, 2013, meeting with no changes.

The zoning information on proposed sites A, C, D, E and F and topographical information on proposed sites C, D, E and F are included in Appendix C. Rezoning would be required for sites other than those currently zoned commercial.

Because any new facility which includes the Sheriff's Department must, by Wisconsin Statutes §59.20(3) and 59.54(14), be located within the corporate limits of the county seat (See Appendix D), the Committee opted to hold a meeting with the Village of Ellsworth in order for the Village to provide input on the various sites identified. All of the alternative site locations are within the current Village of Ellsworth corporate limits. That meeting was held January 8, 2014, and the Committee's minutes from that meeting are included as a part of Appendix E. Village of Ellsworth's minutes of the January 8 meeting are attached as Appendix F.

The Ad Hoc Jail Planning Committee met a total of nine times on these dates— September 4, September 18, October 2, October 16, November 6, December 4, December 18, January 8, and January 15. Minutes from all the meetings are attached as Appendix E.

V. Conclusion

The Ad Hoc Jail Planning Committee believes that among the six site location alternatives identified and analyzed, there are good options for an affordable stand-alone jail and Sheriff's Department facility with the potential for future expansion. Building such facility will allow for the remodel of the current jail and Sheriff's Department into a justice center. The Committee strongly encourages the Finance and Personnel Committee, other related committees, and the County Board to invest in a solution to the issues identified by the previous Ad Hoc Committee. That Committee observed that a jail is an important investment in the community and reflects the values of its citizens and the community. Jails are a costly function for any county, but there is a bigger cost for running an inadequate facility. The Ad Hoc Jail Planning Committee concurs with the previous Ad Hoc Committee that not only is there a significant liability on all county taxpayers if the current situation is allowed to continue, but also that Pierce County will be better off once this investment is made.

The Ad Hoc Jail Planning Committee believes that with the submission of this report it has accomplished the directive charged to the Committee and encourages the County Board to narrow the site location alternatives to those they believe to be the strongest options, have further analysis completed on those sites, and begin design development for a new stand-alone jail and Sheriff's Department and Annex remodel.

This report concludes the work of the Ad Hoc Jail Planning Committee.