

AGENDA
JAIL STUDY ADHOC COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, June 9, 2021
TIME: 6:30 PM or immediately following Jail Study Town Hall
LOCATION: American Legion Post 54
2100 S Maple Ave
Marshfield, WI

1. Call to order
2. Public Comments
3. Approve minutes from previous meeting
4. Review community input
5. Next meeting:
 - TBD
6. Adjourn

MINUTES
JAIL STUDY ADHOC COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday May 13, 2021
TIME: 9:00 AM
LOCATION: Courthouse – Room 114

Members Present: Laura Valenstein, Jake Hahn, John Hokamp, Lee Thao, Al Breu, Adam Fischer, and Dave LaFontaine

Others Present: Reuben VanTassel, Ed Newton, William Winch, Shawn Becker, Quentin Ellis, Ted Ashbeck, Dennis Polach, Amy Kaup, Jason DeMarco, Justin Fisher, John Cain, Trent Miner, and Janelle Hafermann.

1. Chair Valenstein called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.
2. There was no public comment.
3. The minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed. Motion by Fischer and seconded by LaFontaine to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carries by voice vote.
4. Chair Valenstein and Reuben VanTassel provide an overview of the meeting that was had with city planning to discuss the process necessary should the board decide to move forward. Overall there is much to be done and the process will be lengthy; however, it is not prohibitive. There is also discussion about the costs coming in lower than anticipated and additional city approval that would be needed for rezoning. Discussion ensues about the messaging and community engagement lending to the groups decision to hold a town hall style information session to be followed by the next meeting of this Adhoc committee. The date will be Wednesday May 26, 2021 with a time and a date yet to be determined.
5. The Adhoc committee walks through the PowerPoint presentation that was created by Chair Valenstein. The group discusses each slide with information provided by each member who will provide the facilitation for said slide. There are pieces of information that are further clarified and the committee discusses possible questions that either the County Board or members of the public may have and how some questions can be answered during the presentation. The committee then discusses the recommendation that they will be providing to the County Board including additional conversation on messaging and holding a town hall event. A motion is made by LaFontaine that our recommendation to the board is to build a new jail with a cost of seventy million dollars, this motion is seconded by Breu. Discussion

ensues and focuses around the dollar amount of the motion. An amendment to the original motion is made by Valenstein and seconded by Hahn to change the dollar amount to fifty eight million dollars. The new amended motion is to recommend that the County Board build a new jail with costs of fifty eight million dollars. Motion carries by a voice vote. Additional conversation is held regarding the need or lack of need for additional tours of facilities including Waupaca County jail. There is discussion on differences between Waupaca and Eau Claire's facilities and John Cain agrees to provide more detail for those who are interested.

6. The next meeting is scheduled for May 26, 2021 immediately following the conclusion of the Town Hall. A location has yet to be determined.
7. Chair Valenstein adjourned the meeting at 10:31 AM.

Minutes taken by Janelle Krueger, Criminal Justice Coordinator, and are in draft form pending approval of the committee.

GRAND RAPIDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

2410 48th Street South
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494-7799
Phone: (715) 424-1821
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Email: m.pedersen@grandrapidswi.org

Melvin K. Pedersen
Chief of Police



May 13, 2021

To: Wood County Board Chairman
Lance Pliml

Wood County Board Supervisor
Laura Valenstein

Ref: Grand Rapids Police Department Letter of Support for New Wood County Jail Facility

The Grand Rapids Police Department recognizes the need and fully supports a new, state of the art, Wood County Jail facility. The new jail facility would serve the criminal justice needs for all Wood County law enforcement agencies for many years to come. The current jail facility does not meet the demand for capacity and is no longer efficient, thus not meeting the needs of Wood County residents. Safety concerns for staff, clients and law enforcement agencies across the county makes it a liability and adversely affects the county as a whole.

Delaying construction of a new jail facility is no longer an option. Construction costs continue to rise and costs associated with housing inmates at other jail facilities are also rising. By building a new facility now, Wood County will be saving money over the long term. The Grand Rapids Police Department respectfully requests that the Wood County Board approve the construction of a new Wood County Jail.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Melvin K. Pedersen", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Melvin K. Pedersen
Chief of Police
Grand Rapids Police Department



NEKOOSA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Shawn K. Woods, Chief of Police

May 14, 2021

Lance Pliml, Wood County Board Chairman

Laura Valenstein, Wood County Board Supervisor

Brad Hamilton, Wood County Board Supervisor

Dear Wood County Board members,

This letter is in support of the vision for a new Wood County jail facility. The need is clearly evident and the merits have been thoroughly researched and established. As you know, the inefficient design and outdated safety systems for inmates and corrections staff present potential risks that can be mitigated with the proposed plan. The financial responsibility of a new jail with updated systems and effective programming is an acceptable commitment compared to the liability of the current facility and cost of remote incarceration.

It is encouraging to see the momentum build. Current and future needs of all Wood County agencies will be better served with an updated and expanded jail facility. The Nekoosa Police Department fully supports an affirmative decision by the County Board for the proposed Wood County Jail project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shawn K. Woods". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Shawn K. Woods, Chief of Police



MARSHFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT

110 W. First Street | Marshfield, WI 54449 | 715.384.0800 | Fax 715.384.0823

Wood County Board Chair Lance Pliml
Wood County Board Supervisor Laura Valenstein

On behalf of the Marshfield Police Department I would like to offer support for the construction of a new Wood County Jail Facility. The current facility is dated and does not meet the needs of the County either in size or financial viability as costs are incurred to house inmates in facilities located out of the county. This is a short-term solution to a long-term problem. Now is the time to address this problem as the costs to do so in the future will undoubtedly go up. The Marshfield Police Department is in full support of addressing this problem now with the construction of a facility designed to meet our current needs and our needs for years to come.

Respectfully Submitted,



Patrick Zepp
Acting Chief of Police.



City of Pittsville

• GEOGRAPHICAL CENTER OF THE STATE •

POLICE DEPARTMENT



Jeremy R. Duerr
Chief of Police

Phone 715-884-2100
Fax 715-884-6100
Email PittsvillePD@tds.net

P.O. Box 261
Pittsville, WI 54466

Lance Pliml
Wood County Board Chairman

Laura Valenstein
Wood County Supervisor

Jake Hahn
Wood County Supervisor

The Pittsville Police Department recognizes the need for a new Wood County Jail and fully supports the project. A new jail is desperately needed for all law enforcement agencies that utilize it and for our county wide community. The current jail facility does not meet demand for capacity and its layout is not safe for staff and clients. A new jail will also provide more space for programs to be instituted to provide services to clients and help reduce recidivism and repeat visitors. A study on the cost of a new jail was done in the years 2000 and 2020. In those twenty years the price has doubled, like everything else in our economy price always goes up and waiting to build will only end up costing the county and taxpayers more. The Pittsville Police Department respectfully requests you to approve the building of a new Wood County Jail.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Jeremy Duerr".

Jeremy Duerr
Pittsville Police Chief



Port Edwards Police Department

Scott Drew, Chief of Police



Lance Pliml
Wood County Board Chairman

Joseph H. Zurfluh
Wood County Board Supervisor

Gentlemen:

The Port Edwards Police Department recognizes the need for a new expanded Wood County Jail facility and is in full support of this project. The current jail is not equipped to properly handle the needs of the county's justice system. The current jail does not provide for adequate space to facilitate all of the inmates, nor does it provide adequate safety measures to ensure the safety and well-being of all who enter its doors.

The citizens of this county, this state and this great nation have demanded fairness, transparency, and equal justice for all. I believe that the citizens of Wood County deserve a new jail facility with today's technology and standards to humanely house those who are incarcerated.

Although the costs are high, they will only continue to rise. In 2000, when the last jail project was approved, but not funded, there was already a need for expanded area and services. I consider the money that has been spent over the last 21 years that Wood County has nothing to show for.

Sheriff Becker and his team are making great strides in Mental Health awareness/treatment as well as providing firm, no nonsense, fair treatment throughout Wood County. I believe that this administration is well equipped to take on a project of this magnitude and will do so with the taxpayer's best interests in mind.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott L. Drew", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Scott L. Drew
Chief of Police

I would be more than happy to share some of my story, I also wanted to mention that I ~~was~~ ~~was~~ would be very interested in maybe continuing my education to be some sort of a counselor or something like that.

I feel like I have to tell a little backstory before jumping right into me sitting 18 months in county. So, eventually every addict hits rock bottom, everyone's rock bottom looks different. Mine looked like, 2 felonies ~~all~~ related to meth (I've never committed a crime outside of doing drugs as an adult), me living under a bridge, on probation in 3 different different counties, and open cases in 4 other counties I had yet to be sentenced for (all meth related as well.) I would get signature bonds or low cash bonds, sit a few months and get out on paper and repeat the cycle until I caught another felony. This was my life for 5+ years, and never once did a pro or anyone offer to help teach me how to be sober. I lived the first 5 years of my adult life learning how to live as an addict instead of as an adult.

Eventually, a good friend of mine heard I was living under a bridge so she had me come stay with her. It was a new town, new area, a new start. I was sober for about 3 weeks into living in my new home when eventually I got comfortable, and the honeymoon phase of being sober was wearing off because then came the intrusive thoughts, the 9 cravings, the urges, and in turn

came the switch in my brain (I call it addict mode) and eventually I "found" people at my job who did meth.

Then, started my cycle again but this time I was getting better/worse at being an addict. Now, I just adapted to being a functional addict. I was holding down a full-time job, paying my bills, my roommates had no clue I was back to using and in my mind I thought I was doing fine because I was maintaining my image. Fast forward about 8 months, my life is still going good. I was still maintaining, still had my job, still nobody had a clue I was using. In that 8 month period I didn't see my p.o because I knew I would get drug tested and I would get locked up for a 60 or 90 day sanction and be in the exact same spot but, I'd have to find a new job and it seemed pointless when I was doing so "well". But, along with absconding I also had felony warrants from missing court dates but outside of all that I thought I was practically living like a normal person.

Eventually, a guy I was using with ended up wearing a wire on me, and I walked into work one day and was met on the floor by about 5 cops. On that day I weirdly had a meth in my pocket along with a pipe and I think it was at that point I realized I wasn't maintaining very well.

I got taken into custody, sat my first 9 months wrapping up my open

cases and sitting revocations and stuff. Then when I went in front of the judge for my new charges, she broke my heart by giving me 2 6 month consecutive sentences and my first 9 months I'd already sat was considered "dead time" which means ~~my~~ ~~my~~ my time I'd already sat only counted towards probation credit in the event I get revoked.

So, I sat my time. Got a job while in jail, got an apartment all set up and paid for while I was in jail (I did all this on my own, getting my own documents and applications, because I got told by my p.o. that it didn't pay to get these things while I was incarcerated). I eventually got out (didn't have to see my p.o. for 2 weeks after getting out) and was just overwhelmed to the brim with being in the real world after being in country for almost 2 years. So, I ~~tried~~ ~~tried~~ tried controlling myself, then the weekend hit, ~~I~~ I didn't have to work and I had no idea what to do with my idle time, because so much of my every waking moment (not in jail) revolved around drugs. ~~Nobody~~ Nobody had really prepared me for the intense emotions I'd have getting out, I mean I was so overwhelmed with anxiety before getting out that a part of me wanted to stay, I expressed my feelings to my probation officer and she chalked it up to just being nerves. So, 3 days after getting out of an almost 2 year sentence that's how after just 3 days I found myself sitting in the same circle, doing drugs, because I didn't know what ~~11~~ else to do.

About a year after getting out I was doing the maintaining thing again until every a drug test called me out and I was let out of my probation officers office with a slap on the wrist and a "Do better next time, champ". Eventually I got tired of all these dead ends, I researched and found my own rehab, I paid for it, and since I did that im almost 3 years clean.

During my whole journey I never once got offered outpatient, programs in jail were almost unheard of (unless you count once a month AA meetings with a 75 year old man telling "war stories") and I felt like all these people, who were so worried about every aspect of my life and were always so quick to just punish me, werent there for actual support because it showed that they really didnt care. Im thankful I had the willpower and the means to get myself clean because if I wouldve depended on the people I was supposed to, I would most definitely (no doubt in my mind) still be in active addiction. I genuinely feel horrible for every addict in jail, because after escaping the worst of my addiction I can see why only 7% of people actually stay clean, not necessarily because of the drug but because of just the lack of support.

I hope this is kind of what you were looking for, my apologies for it being a little long. Let me know if there's anything else I can do



Wisconsin Department of Corrections

Governor Tony Evers | Secretary Kevin A. Carr

Division of Community Corrections | Region 8

05/21/2021

Wood County Board Chairmen
Lance Pliml

Wood County Board Supervisor
Laura Valenstein

Greetings,

The Wisconsin Department of Corrections is focused on the safety of the community as well as the reduction of recidivism in the clients we supervise. We accomplish this through an evidence based approach, tailored to individual's criminogenic needs. The vision and goals of this proposed jail are well in line with the Departments standards. This proposed jail is following the best evidence available and has the potential of substantially reducing the future costs for Wood County. The proposed space and programing that can be safely implemented in this new setting, along with the ability to house our own citizens in our community (versus the current safe keeper program), has the potential of a dramatic ripple effect. This ripple effect will undoubtable result in future cost savings not solely measured in reduced incarcerations costs, but in safety and quality of life for the residents of our community as well. It is for these reasons, I fully support the new proposed jail project.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this vitally important project for the citizens of Wood County.

Sincerely,

Adam Stublaski
Corrections Field Supervisor Unit 804
Wisconsin Rapids/Stevens Point
adam.stublaski@wisconsin.gov



Police Department City of Wisconsin Rapids

444 West Grand Avenue • Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin 54495

ERMAN BLEVINS, CHIEF
(715) 423-4444

Wood County Board Chair
Lance Pliml
Wood County Board Supervisor
Laura Valenstein

Greetings,

The Wisconsin Rapids Police Department recognizes the need for a new expanded Wood County jail facility, and is fully in support of the project. The future needs of the criminal justice system here in Wood County, not just the Sheriff's Department, will be reliant on a facility that can serve all agencies. The current jail facility is not able to meet the demands placed upon it, and it adversely affects the community as a whole when there is not enough capacity to meet demand. The Wisconsin Rapids Police Department respectfully requests that you grant the go ahead for a new Wood County Jail.

Respectfully

Erman Blevins
Chief of Police