

Angela Hubbard

From: Perry Huston
Sent: Tuesday, July 05, 2016 10:24 AM
To: Angela Hubbard
Subject: FW: Okanogan County Juvenile discussion

[For the website](#)

From: Angela Skirko [<mailto:skirkoa@gmail.com>]
Sent: Friday, June 10, 2016 11:27 AM
To: Lalena Johns; Perry Huston
Subject: Okanogan County Juvenile discussion

Dear County Commissioners,

I am writing in regards to the discussion of the juvenile detention facility being closed and space leased from elsewhere. You have voiced during the meetings your confusion over why we, the public, are upset about even the fact that these meetings are happening.

Of course, I can only speak for myself, but stay with me as I try to explain my reasoning. And maybe, you'll have an answer. Maybe this is a matter of miscommunication, and that would be a relief because I want to believe you have the best intentions, but let me show you why I can't help but worry.

Back in January you issued a notice to the public stating: "The Board of County Commissioners has initiated the discussion of a cost-benefit analysis comparing the continued operation of the county owned facility versus leasing out-of-county detention space." It goes on to state that this is "...primarily in response to concerns about the age and condition of the current juvenile detention facility which impacts level of service to both the juveniles and staff."

In that notice you have told us what you are planning to do and why. But I keep reading that, and something just seems wrong with the scenario. So, when there is a complex problem it helps to simplify wording. In everyday English, it seems to say: There are concerns that the juvenile facility is unacceptable because of its age and condition, so the Okanogan County Commissioners have started comparing the costs and benefits of running our own juvenile detention versus the costs of leasing beds from facilities located outside Okanogan County.

The only reason you are giving for these meetings is that there are concerns about the juvenile hall. What does that mean? This is an awful lot of work to go to for some unfounded concerns. So, I'm going to have to assume you take these concerns extremely seriously, and that you have some reason to believe that the current juvenile hall is completely unacceptable. Otherwise, why wouldn't you be seriously looking at the cost of repairs, or expansion, and including that in your cost-benefit analysis?

So, in light of that, let's boil the public notice down even further:

- Reason for meeting: Current juvenile detention facility is unacceptable.
- Alternatives being discussed: Continue with an unacceptable facility or lease beds from someone located outside the county. Decide this based on costs and benefits.
- Only reasonable outcome: We cannot continue with an unacceptable facility so therefore we must lease, no matter what the cost is.

And that is why I am upset. Before any information even needs to be gathered or presented, it looks like you already have a predetermined outcome, and nothing anyone says will change anything.

If this reasoning is wrong, then please explain that to us. Please let us know that you are only looking to see if leasing is a reasonable thing to do, but you will absolutely not lease from another county until you've also looked at less extreme measures that would keep kids in this county, and let us keep local control over their health and safety while being detained.

Thank you,

Angela Skirko