

**MINUTES
CITIZENS BOND ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 2005
JOE C. THOMPSON CENTER, RM. 2.110
6:00 PM**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

**Diane Akers
Dr. Charles Akins
Glenn Coleman
Jim Davis
David Hartman
Leonard Huber**

**Perry Lorenz
Steve Martin
Richard Moya
Nell Penridge
Leslie Pool**

TRAVIS COUNTY STAFF AND GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE:

**Major David Balagia
Charles Bergh
Jo Carol Bradshaw
Neil Cable
Bill Campbell
Greg Chico
Glen Coleman
Ken Gaede
Joe Gieselman
Carol B. Joseph
Kelly Page
Belinda Powell**

**Elaine Schele
Stacey Scheffel
Wendy Scaperotta
Beth Ann Sprengel
Kenny Thompson
Mike Trimble
Roy Turley
Bob Turner
Gretchen Vaden
Charlie Watts
Martin Zamzow**

1. Citizens Communication

Chairman Richard Moya called the meeting to order at 6:04pm. The first subject discussed were issues dealing with the meeting schedule, and Mr. Moya asked Ms. Penridge to address the subject. Ms. Penridge stated that she had a conflict with meeting on the 2nd & 4th Tuesdays and that she would not be able to attend those meetings. Mr. Gieselman addressed the issue and also informed the committee that staff would like to begin meeting every week, due to a logjam of information, and not enough time to digest it. He stated that we were already behind by at least one session, and suggested that we hold weekly meetings throughout the month of May until we catch up, and then return to the alternate Tuesdays. Mr. Moya agreed.

Mr. Moya also stated that there had not been a lot of public feedback and attendance because the committee had not put any information on the table yet. He suggested that the committee have rules in place prior to interacting with the public, and recommended that we limit each speaker to three minutes. Chairman Moya asked if there were other items that needed to be discussed. Ms. Elaine Schele then informed the committee that there was a sign-up sheet circulating for the jail tour, and asked if they were interested in a tour of projects that were not jail related.

Mr. Gieselmann suggested that we wait awhile until more information was presented, for the committee to make a decision on tours for the candidate projects that will be presented today. Mr. Moya then introduced Mr. Mike Trimble to present the next item on the agenda.

2. Receive Staff Report on Potential Jail Facilities/Projects

Mr. Trimble recapped some of the items he had presented in the previous meeting and informed the committee that his presentation today would contain some of the same information, but more in more detail. Mr. Trimble then gave a brief overview of the items he would be presenting which were the following: Jail operations, the physical plant, some of the assessments that were done and some of the concepts that were developed to make improvements. He also stated that we would discuss, and build more into the proposed C-2 Concept.

Mr. Trimble started by addressing a question that was asked on last meeting concerning the projected population contained in the master plan and how those projections compared to the actual population. He referred to a graph that was distributed and stated that the population projection closely matched the actual average daily population with the exception of the last two years.

Mr. Trimble stated that the total existing jail capacity number is 2,275, which includes 19 beds in the central booking facility. These 19 are temporary beds that can only be used for up to 72 hours. He mentioned that we would not be discussing the temporary beds, so 2,177 is the population number of beds to remember, which is the existing design capacity for the jail.

Mr. Trimble reintroduced the C-1, C-2, and C-3 concepts, and presented site plans that displayed these three concepts overlaid upon the existing site at Del Valle Correctional Facility. Mr. Trimble also presented the site plan with an example of the C-1 alternative and pointed to the buildings in “black” that would be replaced. He said that there are still a lot of inefficiency’s with this concept, such as a lot of transporting inmates and staff from site to site. He referred to the C-3 concept as the “Pie in the sky”, with the idea that we would build one consolidated building complex and find another uses for the other existing outlying buildings, a solution that is not very cost effective.

Mr. Trimble stated that the C-2 concept is the most cost effective, and yet it still serves the needs at the Del Valle Complex. He said it provides for the operational cost savings for expenditures on staff and utilities but with less capital outlay than C-3. Mr. Trimble stated that in November of 2004, the Commissioner’s court selected the C-2 concept for further pre-design planning, an activity which is now in progress. This entails doing some of the initial programming of the work such as determining the actual jail space needed, its conceptual design and operation and other planning activities before work begins on the design phase.

Mr. Trimble stated that some of the assumptions that led to the C-2 concept were things such as the need to address the initial design capacity as well as the design to meet the needs of the projected population and to possibly remove variance bed space. He said the assumptions also included the need to consolidate buildings to make facilities more efficient, and to address buildings that are past their useful life cycle.

Mr. Trimble addressed the different types of beds. He explained that “existing” beds are beds in existing facilities that we seek to maintain and that “variance” beds are currently spread out into buildings that were not originally designed to accommodate them, “Replacement” beds are beds in existing facilities that are in poor condition, and “flex” beds are beds meant to accommodate the fluctuation of the jail population.

Mr. Trimble expounded a little bit on variance beds, and stated that in 1993, ten counties were granted emergency variance beds by the Texas Commission on Jail Standards, due to a backlog of inmates awaiting transfer to state prisons. The ten counties were granted the variance beds under the assumption that these beds would only be necessary for a couple of years because the counties would build the needed capacity to take care of them. Since then, all but two counties have dealt with their variance bed issues in some way or another, but Travis County is one of two counties that have not added the needed capacity.

He stated that in 2001, Travis County received a letter granting an extension of the variance beds, based on the condition that the County would develop and implement plans that would in affect, remove the need for the variance beds. Our response was the to develop the Jail Operations Study, the Jail Operations Review Report and the Courts approval of funds to alleviate the variance beds.

Mr. Trimble stated that it is not cost effective for the County to continue to maintain buildings in poor condition and that it would be necessary to replace them in the near future either one building at a time or several at a time. Mr. Trimble then referred to his site plans where the buildings were coded as “excellent”, “good”, “fair” and “poor” and “replace”.

Steve Martin asked Mr. Trimble for examples of the factors were considered in designating a bed as “poor”. Major Balagia stated that he did not have the criterion that the consulting firm used in the building evaluation, but he stated that “poor” meant that the buildings had system failures such as the broken mechanical systems, bad roofs, the broken down boilers, etc. They were basically worn out because of over use. He also offered to bring back detailed information to the committee that would describe the criterion used to assess building condition.

Mr. Trimble stated that the consultant used a color-coded scoring scale representing a composite of a lot of different factors from the findings of surveys done on the condition of the mechanical and electrical systems, as well as the building architectural condition.

Mr. Martin asked if the “poor” rating relates, among other things to marginal safety or unsafe conditions? Mr. Balagia replied “no” that the rating was more concerned with the mechanical systems because a lot of capital is spent in the upkeep of the safety systems.

Ms. Belinda Powell, PBO, referred to the rating chart and gave examples of how each building has to be assessed system by system.

Mr. Trimble then discussed “flex beds”, saying that the reason for this type bed is to allow for the overall fluctuation of the jail population. Flex beds do not include the different bed needs in custody levels and custody types. He said that we have to have

enough capacity to allow for jail population fluctuation, if we're going to see a population of 2,740. He noted that if we achieve a population of 2,740 in year 2014, it would put us back into over crowding with the need for more beds, sending inmates outside the county or causing Travis County to apply for variance beds again.

Mr. Trimble recapped the C-2 concept scenario and stated that 1,189 beds would be reused beds, 1,688 beds would be newly built, 188 would be replacement beds, 572 would be variance beds, and 228 would be flex beds, totaling to 2,977. Mr. Trimble stated that the capacity added to the system would be 220 beds.

Ms. Pool asked, which beds have the commissioner's courts already approved. Mr. Trimble replied, the variance beds. Mr. Lorenz commented that the variance beds are being paid for with different dollars under which the Citizens Bond Committee has no control.

Mr. Trimble replied "yes". He said that based on directives from the Court, the variance beds have been identified as an obligation and the money has been held back to finance them.

Mr. Martin made the comment that the cost projection for the variance beds is really high. Mr. Trimble responded that Mr. Martin was correct and that there was an artificial distinction made after the fact. He stated that both new beds and variance beds are linked and stated that if we move any of the pieces it changes the assumptions.

Ms. Penridge asked if Mr. Martin's question was addressing the cost of 572 beds and not the actual count of 572. Mr. Martin said that she was correct, but at some point he would raise some issues regarding the 572 count. He said that there are other ways to stay in compliance with the Jail Commission's standards other than building brand new beds.

Ms. Pool made the comment that we need to look at a variety of ways to look at what the expressed need is. Mr. Trimble stated that we are here to provide you with all the information necessary to make sound decisions.

Mr. Davis asked what is the difference between a variance bed and a flex bed. Mr. Trimble replied that a variance bed basically means that we are out of compliance with jail standards. Mr. Balagia explained that if we only build to the projected population, by the time we open the doors, the beds would already be filled. A flex bed means that we need extra beds for special population.

Mr. Davis asked what is in a typical jail cell? Mr. Balagia replied, one toilet, one sink, and one bunk. In a variance cell, an extra bunk is installed and both inmates share the same sink and toilet.

Mr. Trimble continued his presentation, presenting a slide that contains the cost of the entire C-2 concept, which is \$120.7 million dollars. He said that he deducted \$40 million for the cost of variance beds because the funds have been held back already, so the amount to consider is \$80.7 million dollars.

Mr. Gaede, R.A., Senior Project Manager for Travis County, stated that our cost estimates are based on the last beds built in 2001, calculated with an annual escalation cost of 3 % through 2007, the year that we anticipate that beds will be added.

Mr. Trimble continued discussing the cost savings achieved with the C-2 plan. He stated that if implemented, the County would save a total of \$86 million over 25 years in overall operating cost. He stated that if the C-2 plan were already in place, the county would have realized a cost savings this year. He stated that we would save about \$1.2 to \$1.3 million in personnel, about \$180 thousand in utilities, and about \$230 thousand in building maintenance, so the overall savings would be about \$1.7 million.

Mr. Trimble discussed, what would happen if we did not do this jail project. He stated that we would continue using the existing buildings, which would have to then be replaced where they stand in the next few years, and we would not see as much savings in operational cost. He also stated, because we have already submitted a plan in recent years to deal with our variance beds, we would not be in a favorable position if we went back to the Jail Commission for continuation of variance beds without making an effort to add capacity.

Ms. Pool asked if the decision had already been made to deal with the variance beds. Mr. Trimble said correct. Mr. Trimble finalized his presentation by stating that the cost for constructing variance and replacement beds only would be \$63.5million, and the cost for variance and flex beds only would be \$24.1 million. He then opened the floor for questions.

Mr. Martin made the comment that if the beds are sound and not compromising safety, then we should further explore the prospect of retrofitting. He asked "Would you agree?" Major Balagia agreed that it is routine to house people beyond the jail's design, but it would depend on the facility and how much population over capacity there was.

Since Mr. Trimble had concluded his presentation, the floor was turned over to Mr. Gieselman to discuss project selection criteria for the use of ranking potential road capacity.

3. Receive Staff Report on Draft Project Selection Criteria for the use of Ranking Potential Road Capacity.

Before the discussion began about project selection criteria for road capacity projects, Mr. Gieselman stated that he wanted to present information to the Committee about the status of a 2001 bond project that is being implemented in Southwest Travis County. He presented a vicinity map where the County plans to establish a park near the Pedernales River.

Mr. Gieselman spoke of Reimers Ranch as being over 1,200 acres. He stated that the County does not have the capacity to buy the entire ranch, so we are working with a private partner who is going to buy the entire ranch, sell us a portion of it, and build a conservation development on his land. Parkland will be purchased with 2001 voter-approved bond funds for the Southwest Metro Park.

Mr. Perry inquired about the partner purchasing the property. Mr. Gieselman stated that he could not disclose that information yet.

The Hogge tract, adjacent to Reimers Ranch, is another area, about 1000 acres that the County's private partner is purchasing. It is the County's desire that the Hogge Springs portion of this tract be subsequently purchased by a non-profit and maintained as a preserve which is accessible to the public and managed by Travis County. Mr. Gieselman stated that by doing so, there is a potential for a thousand acre park/preserve to be established on the Pedernales River. He said that to accomplish this, the County would need to acquire an additional portion of the Reimers Ranch from their private partner and proposed this acquisition of land as a candidate project for the 2005 bond.

Ms. Penridge asked how much did it cost. Mr. Gieselman stated he could not answer that question at this time because the price was still being negotiated.

Mr. Gieselman also stated that the larger vision is to protect the quality of water feeding Hamilton Pool and Hogge Springs by establishing conservation agreements with land owners of property containing Hensel sand deposits upstream of these springs. He stated that this park will not be the location for sports fields with lights - we look at this park as being suitable for fishing, picnicking, hiking, and activities of that sort.

Ms. Penridge inquired about the location of the development conservation. Mr. Gieselman responded that it is located on the remainder of the track, and pointed it out on the map."

Ms. Penridge asked if there had been a traffic impact study to know how much traffic would be generated on Hamilton pool road because of this park. Mr. Gieselman stated that a two lane county road would typically carry about 12,000 cars a day. He said looking at our other parks, they typically generate about 500 to 1200 vehicles on the weekend and 300 or less on weekdays. Mr. Gieselman stated that there was a proposal to upgrade the entrance road and that a four lane road may be needed. Mr. Gieselman then gave the floor to Mr. Charlie Watts.

Mr. Watts opened by stating that staff had already spoken to the Committee about the threshold prioritization criteria for parks and drainage in the previous weeks and stated that he would now do the added capacity mobility projects. He stated in the threshold criteria, we ask four threshold criteria questions: 1) Does the county have an obligation to complete the project? 2) Is the project within the unincorporated area of the county, and outside the city of Austin? Mr. Gieselman stated that in addition to the concept of the "City Limits" there are also jurisdictional areas called "Near Term Annexation Areas." These are areas where the city has the intention of annexing the area as "full-purpose" within three years. Mr. Gieselman asked the group, should the county be spending bond money, if the city is going to annex it within three years?

Mr. Watts continued with question #3, where he stated that we ask ourselves what is the purpose and characteristics of the project. Is it a safety or intersection improvement, is it consistent with the CAMPO plan or is it an existing County collector roadway.

Mr. Gieselman stated that the last bond election 2001, we had a few new location roadways that are on undeveloped property. He stated that there is somewhat a dance, if the public sector merely using tax dollars to build roads that should have otherwise been built by the developer at the time of development. He said we could really lose voter approval when it looks like we're just building roads to help the developer out. Mr. Gieselman stated that it was okay to do new location roadways, but we need private parties with some kind of commitment, at the table with us to do private partnerships.

Mr. Watts continued with question #4, does the project have a design life of 20 years or better? Mr. Watts stated that after these questions are answered, we then start to apply the ranking criteria to the projects. He stated that basically we have four different criteria: 1) Project readiness based on the amount of pre-construction work already completed, and the amount of right-of-way that could already be acquired. 2) Future needs, we call it the "do nothing" ratio. This ratio is calculated by taking the projected 2030 traffic volume and dividing it by the design capacity of that road. 3) Cost effectiveness involves the cost per trip. Mr. Watts stated that we rank all projects and divide them into quarters.

Mr. Gieselman stated that we have a lot of different projects, and those that come out on top should be those that demonstrate a need and are cost effective – getting your money's worth out of the project.

Mr. Gieselman stated that not all land developers are equal. We have home-builders and home builder's developers, who are people that put roof tops on the ground. Then you have land investors who really do nothing but broker the property. Investors are difficult to get to the table. He said that's why we have to be careful with partnerships that are of the latter variety. Mr. Gieselman presented a list of bond project locations, along with a spreadsheet that lists the projects.

Mr. Bob Turner and Ms. Stacey Scheffel addressed floodplain concerns in Garfield, FM 973 between 969, Timber Creek, and other areas. Mr. Turner explained that Swiss Alpine has a large area in the 100-year flood plain. Other areas such as Thoroughbred Farm subdivision, Timber Creek, and Caldwell Lane, were all in serious floodplain areas.

Chairman Moya adjourned the meeting, it was seconded and meeting was adjourned.

4. Receive Staff Report On The Status And Management Of Past And Current County Capital Improvement Projects

Item was not discussed

5. Receive Staff Report on Potential List of Candidate Mobility, Parks, Bridge and Drainage and Open Space Projects

Item was not discussed

5. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm