

## **BOARD OF MASON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' BRIEFING MINUTES**

**May 4, 2011**

Cmmr. Ring Erickson called the briefing meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. in the Mason County Commission Chambers. Cmmr. Lingle was in attendance; Cmmr. Sheldon was absent.

Those in attendance: Jim Barrett, Undersheriff; John Keates, Parks Department; Bob Simmons, WSU Extension; Theresia Ehrich & Fina Ormond, Auditor's Office; Patsy Robinson, District Court; Robyn Lockwood, Superior Court; Barbara Adkins, Department of Community Development; Emmett Dobey, Utilities & Waste Mng.

Cmmr. Ring Erickson opened the briefing by stating the Commissioners have received notice that Mike Rutter is retiring sooner than expected. She has always struggled with the number of department heads that report to the Board and the Board is considering a restructure of departments.

Cmmr Lingle stated he has thought about the need of department consolidation and with Mike Rutter's retirement, it is an opportunity to look at a restructure and reduce expenditures.

John Keates, Parks Department, stated his desire is to look at ways their departments could work jointly together and see where consolidation would be possible to improve efficiencies.

Emmett Dobey, Utilities Department, believes it could be advantageous for the remote County sites so maintenance work employees are performing the maintenance duties and it is not done by the utility employees, allowing the utility employees to perform the work they are trained to do.

The Commissioners asked for input from the audience on potential efficiencies.

Bob Simmons, WSU Extension, offered that maintenance doesn't need to empty garbage cans in their office every day. He suggested redirecting resources to other maintenance tasks and possibility using Master Gardeners for some yard work such as pruning,

Jim Barrett, Undersheriff, stated the jail and the Sheriff's office are two of the largest buildings and need more attention than others. He pointed out the jail has unique requirements. He emphasized that the facilities, under Mike Rutter's direction, has served the Sheriff very well. They will work with whoever takes on Facilities to improve the office in the north end of the county.

Patsy Robinson, District Court, noted that the Courthouse has high usage and needs daily attention.

Cmmr. Lingle pointed out that the level of maintenance service would be the same, if not better, but under a new Director. He is not considering a restructure of the maintenance staff.

Fina Ormond, Auditor's office, noted their only maintenance issue is a rodent problem.

Undersheriff Barrett asked for clarification on the Board's intent.

Cmmr. Ring Erickson stated they are considering consolidating Facilities with another department. She feels there are too many departments reporting to the Commissioners. She believes this may be an opportunity to restructure, not necessarily change the system.

Theresia Ehrich, Auditor's office, noted that Building 9 also has a rodent problem although they do take out their trash on a regular basis. She pointed out that in most entities, the Parks Department also takes care of the facilities. She noted the person leading the Facilities Department needs to have project management experience. She agreed this would be a way to consolidate administrative costs.

Barbara Adkins, Planning, feels maintenance staff is responsive. She asked if Facilities is consolidated with Parks, would there be a problem with staff being off campus.

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Undersheriff Barrett shared that at the school district, they merged facilities with another department and facilities suffered because of competing interests for the director. If one director absorbs a department, it spreads the person too thin and diminishes the ability to respond.

Emmett Dobey, Utilities, stated that Mike Rutter does a good job of knowing when assets need to be repaired but there is not an asset management plan in place. He noted that John Keates also has a lot of experience with managing park assets so it makes sense to consolidate the departments.

Cmmr. Ring Erickson agreed that an asset management plan is necessary.

Ms. Ehrich stated the county assets are logged in showing their age but there is not an asset replacement plan in place.

Mr. Dobey commented that the issue of finding efficiencies is bigger than Facilities and Parks. There is also an issue of two managers in the Department of Community Development (DCD) who report to the Board for the same exercise. He suggested the Commissioners look at reorganization on a bigger scale.

Cmmr. Ring Erickson stated they would consider having one DCD director.

Cmmr. Lingle stated he has thought about having one director over the DCD department. It gives continuity and he is willing to discuss the issue.

Cmmr. Ring Erickson asked John Keates to work with Ms. Jackson to create a job description and a department reorganization that combines Parks and Facilities. She invited departments to submit written comments. She also asked Barbara to work on a DCD Director job description.

Cmmr. Lingle emphasized the Commissioners are looking for efficiencies and would like to maintain the level of service or improve it.

Undersheriff Barrett noted they do have a litter crew that can help. He noted that Emergency Management was under the Sheriff's Office in the past and asked if it has been considered to bring that department under their office again.

Cmmr. Ring Erickson stated she has heard positives on how Emergency Management is structured now and it is subsidized from the Road Fund. If the Sheriff wants it considered, please bring that up at the 2012 budget time.

Bob Simmons asked about the possibility of moving Facilities under ER&R since vehicles and equipment come under ER&R.

The briefing meeting adjourned at 3:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Zoren  
Assistant to the Commissioners

BOARD OF MASON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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Lynda Ring Erickson  
Chair

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Tim Sheldon  
Commissioner

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Jerry K. Lingle  
Commissioner