

Finance Meeting
Commissioners' Hearing Room
July 23, 2014, 1:30 p.m.

Present: Commissioner Cross, Hertzler, and Eichelberger. Chief Clerk Thomas, Deputy Chief Clerk/Meetings Manager, Sandy Moyle; Heather Ilgenfritz, Communications Manager; Beth Chornack, ERP; Mick Burkett, Human Resources; Warden Reitz, Jeff Ilgenfritz, Janet Scott, Prison; Rebekah Finkey, CJPIPP; Steve Marroni, Patriot News; and Daniel Walmer, The Sentinel.

Arbitration at the County Prison (see attached Power Point Presentation)

Chief Clerk Thomas reviewed PFM findings in regards to the cost to run the County Prison. Also, the issue with Arbitration will be discussed. He stated that the Prison staff performs a thankless job on a daily basis. The Union that represents the Prison is following the Law and the County respects that and will work together to address the issues.

Increasing Cost Drivers:

- Additional staff has been the main driver for the growing costs to the Prison. Warden Reitz explained that since they took over Central Booking from the D A's Office in 2004. Five full time staff are needed for coverage during a 24/7 time period.
- Another cost driver is security. The daily average population is currently 427. The current focus to reduce costs is to reduce population. The Commissioners requested a more accurate comparison to other Counties that are 4th class.
- PREA Legislation requires minors vulnerable to rape to be housed separately. This requires additional housing units or transporting to another County with separate housing. This is an additional cost, which the State does not fund.
- Costs are incurred as inmates arrive with drug & alcohol detox treatment and/or mental health treatment need, which the Prison cannot control.

Options to save Costs:

- Increase tax
- Increase fees
- Reduce Prison non-union staff
- Reduce services, rehab, & education
- Cut staff & services in other county departments
- Reduce Prison population
- Outsource Prison services, transports and/or extra operations
- Reduce employing union prison staff

Questions:

Commissioner Hertzler questioned why the Prison does not increase their fees for inmates from other Counties.

- Prison staff is currently working with the Controller's office. Currently they only hold Perry County females

The daily & yearly cost of an inmate was discussed.

What steps are being taken to cover cost for out of County inmates?

- The only way to reduce costs is to close a housing unit. Currently there are 4 units not in use. Chief Clerk Thomas questioned where would the additional revenue go.

Commissioner Cross stated that the rehab service does improve the inmate's health, but the duplicate services/costs should not happen. Chief Clerk Thomas stated pay only for what works, not for what doesn't work.

Commissioner Eichelberger stressed the need to reduce prison population by diverting incarceration. Chief Clerk Thomas suggested setting bail vs incarceration. Warden Reitz stated that they are working to reduce population, but there are drivers that keep it from happening. County population is increasing and there are more troubled individuals.

Chief Clerk Thomas summarized the meeting discussion.