

**Marion County
Public Safety Coordinating Council
Draft Minutes**

SEPTEMBER 12, 2006

Members: Faye Fagel, Delaney Hanlon, Ed McKenney, Commissioner Milne, Chief Jerry, Moore, Dan Murphy, Bert Ortiz, Anna Peterson, Sheriff Ramirez

Guests: Commander Troy Clausen, Undersheriff Mike Wilkerson

Staff: Dan Estes, Hitesh Parekh

Announcements

Sheriff Metal Thefts

The Sheriff said that he had a meeting with the *Construction Industry Crime Prevention Organization* to discuss the work that the *Sheriff's Association Agricultural Crime Coalition* was doing on metal theft, and how the two organizations could work on legislation and regulation with recyclers from a statewide perspective. From the meeting they had formed a legislative sub-committee tasked with reviewing legislative and operational issues. They also expanded their sub-committee from the agricultural community to include private industries and anyone with the potential- from a statewide perspective- to be a victim. So all of these people are at the table to look at how we move forward around this issue of metal theft. The Sheriff said that he had already started contacting the Washington State Sheriff's Association as well as the Idaho Association. Need to look at this as a regionally as they will be moving across state lines. So need to recognize this across the Sheriff's Associations. Oregon Washington and Idaho need to come together.

Commissioner Milne said that both Dan Estes and she had been reviewing problems farmers are having with theft from a land use standpoint. Farmers do need to be able to have a caretaker, night watchman, someone who is on site. Some ranches are enormous, hard for owners to keep track of things on the property. The information from farmers is that if someone is there it will make a difference. They have been working with Representative Kevin Cameron, and already have a placeholder bill. They are looking for other legislators to get involved with this issue as well. If pre-session filed then they have a good chance.

Sheriff Ramirez said that he fully supports this. The other piece is the ability of Sheriff's Officers to establish sub stations out in the rural areas. This was a major obstacle with the legislature, but they allowed us to do this in Marion County only. If looking at creating a presence out in the rural areas, makes sense to do this. Fire departments can do this. But this is an issue we can use some help on in terms of doing this statewide. Commissioner Milne mentioned that the other issue Representative Kevin Cameron has been working on is that he would like to see drug testing as a requirement for getting unemployment benefits. Bert Ortiz said the Chambers of Commerce would support this, and would be willing to help.

Dan Estes said that as soon as he can get a bill from Representative Cameron's office he would circulate it. He said that they could definitely use support from the community and it will take some pressure to get a hearing. The bill they were originally discussing had a night watchmen or caretaker on the property, but currently Oregon's land use laws don't allow non-permanent housing on exclusive farm use zoned property. This means that a farmer can have his single dwelling, but it could be miles away, doesn't even have to be on a contiguous piece of property. As long as the farmer owns the property, he's not allowed to have anything else there, not even a mobile home.

Q: What is the down side of this?

Some people may say this weakens Oregon land use laws, this may be a slippery slope to allowing multiple dwellings on farmland- you're taking valuable farm land out of production, even though I don't think that we're talking about putting up a 2,000 sf home.

Commissioner Milne said that from her perspective she would advocate for something that is permanent, but modest. The main thing is to put some kind of language there to make it clear that this structure is a home, the purpose of which is to allow someone to oversee the property; Not rental income for a farmer, not there for a family reason even though it is possible the caretaker or night watchman is a family member. We need specific language to spell this out. There are a few people who are afraid this is not in the best interests of agriculture, when this is exactly what we are trying to protect.

Ed McKenney said that one of the major problems agriculture has in the Willamette Valley is that there is too much farmland. Farmers are struggling to make a living. One of the reasons that there is too much farmland is that the desert has been converted into farmland. So now there are varieties of crops growing in places they didn't use to. Problem in the Willamette Valley is not that farmland is being lost, but that its getting harder and harder to make a living on it. Takes a bigger and bigger chunk of land. So the concept that we have to worry about disappearing farmland is not true.

Dan Estes agreed and added that a lot of land labeled as farming is not farmable; its on a slope, has bad soil etc. One of the reasons behind measure 37 was so that farmers can do more with their land.

Commissioner Milne said that if they can help address the theft, crime and vandalism that takes place, this helps farmers protect their investment. When talking about irrigation pipes for example, its thousands and thousands of dollars. No insurance on it. Sheriff Ramirez said that the real loss is in the production if the farmer can't replace the pipes in time then looking at hundreds of thousands of dollars of crop loss. This is just like the construction industry: when they stop building a house because they're waiting for a piece of machinery- both the homeowner and the construction company loses. So having a law officer present at substations in these areas is important. We need to have a presence out there. We already have fire depts. that have this ability. Commissioner Milne said that she would talk to Senator Beyer, so that they can have someone in both houses.

Ed McKenney said that Jeff Kropf would be very willing to get a bill started before his term ends.

Sheriff Ramirez said that it was Billy Dalto who pushed our effort for Marion County. It was the Farm Bureau that was in opposition, but now they're also concerned. Commissioner Milne said that she thought they could get them to the table to discuss this.

Dan Murphy said that they had a field trip with legislators and candidates today at the Juvenile Department. One of the things that came through was early intervention. The DA was saying that by the time people get to his department it is way too late, so more needs to be done at the front end.

List of Public Safety Priorities

Anna Peterson said that everyone on the MCPSCC should have gotten the public safety list. The Council had been talking about this list for the past 3 or 4 months. So it shouldn't be new. Anna said that they were trying to get a broad public safety picture from all public safety councils across the state. So trying to have some communications across all these groups and then presenting this as a cohesive statewide psc issue. Just wanted to prioritize the issues by vote. She was asking for 5 major issues from the list to be prioritized by the MCPSCC.

The Sheriff reminded the group that it was only one hundredth of one percent of the people that need it end up in drug court. This was a very small window. The group agreed to send in their prioritized list.

Meeting Adjourned for tour of the new Department of Public Safety Standards building.