

MEETING MINUTES
Marion County Public Safety Coordinating Council
at Marion County Commissioners Hearing Room
1115 Commercial St NE
Salem, Oregon
January 14, 2014

Attendees: Patti Milne, Bob Royer, Walt Beglau, Ray Byrd, Rod Calkins, Jayne Downing, Tom Ewing, Faye Fagel, Don Frederickson, Tamra Goettsch, Pete McCallum, Todd McCann, Ed McKenney, Diane Morse, Anna Peterson, Tracy Prall, Michael Runyon, Tom Sermak

Guests: Doug Olson, Salem FBI

Staff: Don Russo

Chair - action, information

At 4:00 pm, Chair Patti Milne called to order a meeting of the Public Safety Coordinating Council. She introduced Lt. Josh Brooks, newly appointed member of PSCC representing Oregon State Police. She also introduced Doug Olson, FBI Senior Supervisory Resident Agent, who attended as a guest. Don Fredericks and Don Russo commented on the positive experience they had through the FBI Citizen Academy, which they completed in October.

Minutes of the December PSCC meeting were approved as presented.

Implementation challenges of SB 416 and HB 3194

Walt Beglau explained that increasing the length of short-term transitional leave from 30 days to 90 days will prompt the early release of some offenders from prison and cause the greatest reduction in prison population, as required by HB 3194. Prison population in January is at the projected level. He also said that SB 416 funded community supervision of prison-bound property crime offenders; there are 25 inmates participating in the program that began July 1, 2013; the target is to enroll 60 offenders.

Other news from members

Rod Calkins explained two successful proposals that Marion County Health Department providing grant funds from Oregon Health Authority to support a jail diversion program and a mobile crisis outreach service to improve intervention efforts when there is a law enforcement episode involving persons with mental illness.

Jayne Downing reported on progress in renovation of the new Center for Health and Safety office location for Mid-Valley Women's Crisis Center. Fund raising has reached 80% of its goal and has raised \$1.2 million to date. This is comprised of 22% from foundations, 35% from community donors, and 37% from government grants. She expects a grand opening in March.

Pete McCallum gave an update on Scott Russell, Woodburn Police Chief, who has had several surgeries in recent months for a total of 48 surgeries following injuries sustained five years ago in the Woodburn bank bombing case. Chief Russell is home recovering and expected to return to work soon.

Patti Milne reported that Judge Susan Tripp has stepped down from PSCC, and Presiding Judge James Rhodes has formally appointed Judge Tracy Prall as a new member.

Issues in Legalization of Medical Marijuana Dispensaries

Commissioner Milne said she reviewed the audio file of last month's PSCC meeting to hear the discussion of a resolution on medical marijuana. She invited comments about the draft resolution opposing the legalization of marijuana. Bob Royer suggested that PSCC wait until after the community forum to take a position on the resolution. Don Frederick asked if Marion County can afford to enforce activities that are legal or illegal. He said SB 1031 is confusing about guidelines for local communities, and also raises questions for employers about liability in the workplace if employees use drugs?

Commissioner Milne stated that marijuana is a complex issue that warrants study and discussion to help form a position, and she feels it is important for community leaders to make a statement. Walt Beglau said that marijuana is a very important issue to study this year as Oregon raises the question of legalization. He supports PSCC taking a position on the issue. He said the forum will help understand how our cities view the issue and thinks it is important to convene a forum. Commissioner Milne said marijuana use leads down a dangerous path that can damage certain individuals and families. She fears accidents on the roadway and in the workplace, as well as use of marijuana in the home around children, without knowing how to deal with the effects.

Pete McCallum suggested talking to our legislators in the forum and after the forum. Walt Beglau asked what specific issues should be discussed at the forum. Ray Byrd suggested looking to Colorado for issues that have become important since legalization. He expects open use in public and a negative example shown to youth. More students bring marijuana to school now, and in many cases, the marijuana came from their parents.

Tamra Goettsch said the survey she sent asks questions about what issues should be discussed at the forum. Anna Peterson suggested asking if cities desire to collaborate in regulating the use of marijuana. Commissioner Milne expressed concerns about conflicting law at the state and federal level. She has compiled ten pages of questions that have surfaced in her research. Anna said that the City of Salem has no business license policy, so a new establishment is not required to obtain a license. Ed McKinney said in manufacturing, safety dictates that an employer enforce a policy that prohibits drug and alcohol use in the workplace.

Tom Sermak said an employer can have a policy that prohibits employees from coming to work under the influence of drugs or alcohol. A policy may not be enforceable, however, if an employee comes to work with drugs in their system from use outside of work. Another issue he raised is that if an employee has a card for marijuana use, the employer cannot fire an employee for failing a drug test because they are using a legally prescribed pharmaceutical prescribed by their physician.

Tom Ewing asked, what question is the council trying to answer? Commissioner Milne responded, will PSCC take a position on legalization of marijuana through a resolution that could be used in different ways, such as working with the Oregon legislature and jurisdictions within the county to regulate its use. Tom Ewing responded that he would support a resolution. Judge Prall said her role as a judge requires her to abstain from voting on a resolution; she also offered to serve as a speaker at a forum.

Walt Beglau stated his position opposing medical marijuana facilities, as well as recreational uses. He also said the PSCC has a duty to inform, engage, and educate the community on this issue, and he feels that a resolution is worthwhile. Current law is a pathway to legitimacy for illegal growers, said Ray Byrd.

Tom Sermak stated his problem with the draft resolution is that HB 3460 has already been enacted, and yet the resolution takes the tone of opposing the law. He suggested PSCC take a position of advocating for the repeal of HB 3460 and oppose any other bill that would make marijuana use legal. He also suggested that the PSCC Forum should avoid over-reacting to the medical marijuana issue. He suggested PSCC should advocate for the logical, reasonable implementation of current or future law.

Don Russo reported on a recent meeting of the Association of Oregon Counties where Rob Bovett, AOC legal counsel, stated that both medical use and recreational use of marijuana need to be discussed, and he stated that AOC has formally opposed legalization of marijuana in all aspects. Commissioner Milne read more detail from the AOC position statement, which includes allowing local jurisdictions to opt out or ban medical marijuana facilities.

Mayor Anna Peterson said the City of Salem has no procedure requiring a new business to obtain a business license, and thus no easy way to prohibit marijuana facilities from obtaining a business license.

Legalizing the recreational use of marijuana is the objective of marijuana advocates, said Ray Byrd. The use of marijuana for medicinal value is a step toward the end game of legalizing recreational use, he said. The current medical marijuana law has been shamelessly exploited, said Walt Beglau, to benefit marijuana users and growers.

Bob Royer suggested that PSCC should pass a resolution that recognizes major concerns of marijuana use, make the marijuana issue a priority in the PSCC strategic plan, and take a first step by hosting a community forum.

Tom Sermak suggested waiting until after the community forum to discuss a formal resolution at the next meeting of the PSCC. The group agreed to defer the issue to the next meeting.

Walt Beglau said the PSCC Steering Committee on January 25 will discuss and plan the specifics of the Community Forum, and invited all who are interested to attend.

Strategic Plan

Commissioner Milne said a small group has met to discuss revisions to the PSCC Strategic Plan. Top priorities for the plan identified by the small group include: marijuana, HB 3194, addressing youth and gangs, minority over-representation in criminal justice, domestic violence, and mental illness. She said more information will be shared with council members, and she will invite members to comment and participate on specific elements of the plan that are of interest to them.

Adjourned

The meeting adjourned at 5:55 pm.

Next meeting

The Public Safety Coordinating Council will meet Tuesday, February 11.

Minutes by Don Russo