

BARNSTABLE COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF DELEGATES
Report / Minutes of the Standing Committee on Finance
Proposed Ordinance 15-14
January 20, 2016 and December 20, 2015

Dear Mr. Speaker and Assembly Delegates:

This is a report on Proposed Ordinance 15-14. The proposed ordinance was submitted to the Assembly of Delegates by the Board of Regional Commissioners at the Assembly of Delegates regular meeting on December 2, 2015.

A public hearing was scheduled by the Standing Committee on Finance on Wednesday, December 16, 2015 at 3:30 p.m. at the Assembly of Delegates Chamber Hall, First District Courthouse Route 6A, Barnstable, Massachusetts. The public hearing was duly advertised in the Cape Cod Times on December 9, 2015. The committee met but did not hold the public hearing. It was to be re-advertised and re-scheduled to another date.

The purpose of the proposed ordinance is to amend Barnstable County Ordinance 15-05 by changing the language in Section 1.d (second item) from County Complex Redesign to County Complex Construction. The amount of funding will not change and is stated at \$250,000.

Committee members present on 12/16/15: Chairman John Ohman, Teresa Martin, Suzanne McAuliffe, and Julia Taylor. Absent: Deborah McCutcheon.

Chairman John Ohman opened the committee meeting, had brief discussion and accepted general comments from committee members, Finance Assistant Bob Lawton and Facilities Director Steve Tebo. A brief tour of the old county jail complex concluded just prior to the meeting. Based on the tour some members expressed skepticism regarding the cost to renovate the old jail cell wing for \$250,000.

Committee members asked what the big plan was for the county complex and would prefer to see a master plan from the state regarding its intentions at the county complex in order to determine the appropriate county response.

In conclusion there was not enough information to go forward with a recommendation to the full Assembly. It was suggested that other Assembly Delegates schedule time to take a tour of the old jail facility and become aware of what is being requested prior to a vote.

The committee would like to take up discussion of this proposed ordinance at another meeting date yet to be determined. No recommendation was made for consideration by the Assembly. A new public hearing would be scheduled by the Clerk.

Suzanne McAuliffe motioned, and it was seconded to adjourn the meeting at 3:55 p.m.

A public hearing was scheduled and held by the Standing Committee on Finance on Wednesday, January 20, 2016 at 3:00 p.m. at the Assembly of Delegates Chamber Hall, First District Courthouse Route 6A, Barnstable, Massachusetts. The public hearing was duly advertised in the Cape Cod Times on January 13, 2016.

Committee members present on 1/20/16: Chairman John Ohman, Suzanne McAuliffe, Deborah McCutcheon, and Julia Taylor. Absent: Teresa Martin

Suzanne McAuliffe motioned, and it was seconded, to waive the reading of the public hearing notice. Motion carried 4-0-0.

Chairman John Ohman opened the public hearing and invited Paul Niedzwiecki to address the committee and answer questions regarding the use and demand for space at the county complex. Facilities Director Steve Tebo and County Commissioner Leo Cakounes were also present for the discussions.

The Building Space Needs Committee issued a report last fall and as a result the Commissioners appointed Paul Niedzwiecki as facilitator of the county complex and charged him with working as the external contact with the trial court and other consultants as needed to address and evaluate the physical plant for discussions with the state. Conversations have taken place with the state and outside contractors regarding the services that are needed. The county has also received a variance with the Department of Capital Asset Management (DCAM) to do the necessary design work with the state. Originally, the budget request focused on design and now the primary focus has changed. Therefore, bond counsel would like to see language specific to the primary focus of the \$250,000 that is being requested for construction versus design work.

The space needs of the court have drastically increased. The county can increase its revenue stream by leasing more space to the courts. The Facilities Director determined that additional court space could be made available if the county could relocate staff and offices from the First District (Assembly Hall and Office) and Family/Probate Court (Cooperative Extension Service) buildings to renovated space in the old jail facility. The end result would be a positive revenue impact on the county. Capital and maintenance expenses to buildings occupied by the state will also be passed along to the state and generate revenue.

A long term design plan would cost approximately \$150,000 in addition to the \$250,000 being proposed for construction purposes (for approximately 3100 sq. feet for the old jail wing and the Harborview Room ceiling). The county does not have sufficient reserves and it is doubtful there is any additional money available for design purposes. There were initial concerns with not having a plan prior to spending money on construction. However, this is only a plan to generate revenue now and can be done by bonding the expense. This is only to be considered a short term space plan. Concerns were expressed regarding a true cost for renovating old outdated space and the possibility that it could cost more than the \$250,000 budgeted coupled with the fact there are some individuals who are of the opinion that the space is not a health or otherwise a good work environment.

It was emphasized that the short term financial needs of the county outweigh a long term design and the financial situation is dire. A redesign of the old jail for long term purposes would probably reveal lots of hidden costs at the facility.

Quotes for the renovation work that needs to be accomplished are solid and by all accounts has worked well in the past. The Facilities Director is confident with the numbers received to complete the work necessary for the facility.

Questions were asked regarding the leasing of county space. Following the FY17 budget cycle the Board of Commissioners will probably take up and review all relationships and county space being leased or used by agencies other than the county.

In conclusion, what is being proposed is a step towards helping the county's largest tenant and will also help the county survive based on its current financial structure.

There were no comments from the public and Chairman John Ohman closed the public hearing.

Suzanne McAuliffe motioned, and it was seconded, to recommend Proposed Ordinance 15-14 to the full Assembly. Motion carried 4-0-0.

Motion was made by Suzanne McAuliffe to adjourn at 3:40 p.m. Unanimous.

Submitted by:

John Ohman
Suzanne McAuliffe
Deborah McCutcheon
Julia Taylor