

MINUTES
MULTNOMAH COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OCTOBER 2, 1990 MEETING

Chair Gladys McCoy convened the meeting at 1:35 p.m., with Vice-Chair Gretchen Kafoury, Commissioners Pauline Anderson and Sharron Kelley present, and Commissioner Rick Bauman absent.

1. Year 1 METRO Annual Waste Reduction Program Report.
Presented by Joanne Garnett

Joanne Garnett of the Planning and Development Division gave an update on the program and discussed proposed implementation of the County's six designated objectives and regional goals via intergovernmental agreements with Portland and Gresham.

In response to a question of Commissioner Anderson, Ms. Garnett explained that communication is maintained between the three jurisdictions via attendance on a solid waste technical committee.

In response to questions of Chair McCoy, Ms. Garnett explained the County does not have zoning permitting recycling containers for multi-family units outside the urban growth boundary, and the County could be eligible for funding to provide recycling containers to single family units.

Commissioner Kelley reported there may be as many as 20,000 families living outside the urban growth boundary and explained that recycling and hauling efforts for the Corbett area are being discussed.

In response to a request of Ms. Garnett, the Board endorsed submission of Multnomah County's first annual work plan to Metro.

2. Informal Review of Formal Agenda of October 4, 1990

Karen Mayfield of the Department of Human Services, briefed the Board on C-4, advising the agreement was previously approved but is being brought before the Board again due to a minor change.

Wes Stevens of Multnomah County Library Services, briefed the Board on R-1, explaining the equipment consists of book targets used in some of the Library branches which set off a radio wave activated alarm if certain books, video and audio cassettes are removed without being checked out.

Chair McCoy directed that staff provide the Board with statistical information as to how successful the radio wave activated alarm system is and whether the goal is to install the system in all branches.

Chair McCoy discussed the revisions proposed in R-2.

Carolyn Marks Bax of Commissioner Kelley's staff, reported that John Legry of the Citizen Involvement Committee will attend the formal meeting to discuss R-2 and R-3.

The Board recessed at 1:55 p.m. and reconvened at 2:30 p.m.

3. Discussion of Implementation of Hispanics and Multnomah County Services Report

Commissioner Anderson advised this work session was scheduled as a result of the report prepared by Martin Winch and contains many recommendations it appears the County should consider implementing. Commissioner Anderson suggested acceptance of the report by the Board would be in order and that if the Board concurs, a resolution to that effect would be written for submission next week. Commissioner Anderson asked that each Commissioner look at recommendations from their liaison departments in order to suggest which would be the most feasible to implement and in what time frame.

Martin Winch of Commissioner Anderson's staff, discussed suggestions the Board could implement such as recruiting, staged increases in training budgets to pay for multicultural and language training, a plan to fund systematic implementation of multicultural services within each County division and requiring multicultural competency in RFPs. Mr. Winch described suggestions which the Board could implement in conjunction with other governmental units and external organizations pertaining to public safety, human services and service delivery issues and suggested that issues be separated so jails would not overwhelm social services issues.

Billi Odegaard, Health Division Director, introduced management staff Lucina Siguenza and discussed the need for aggressive recruitment of Spanish speaking employees to fill positions throughout the County.

Ms. Siguenza discussed the need for Personnel to be aware that potential employees be bilingual as well as culturally sensitive. In response to a question of Commissioner Anderson, Ms. Siguenza suggested that active recruitment in areas other than Portland be pursued. In response to a question of Commissioner Kelley, Ms. Siguenza discussed the need to hire bilingual nursing professionals as opposed to using interpreters who may not be medically trained translators.

In response to a question of Commissioner Anderson, Ms. Odegaard reported on classes offered to Health Division employees which provides beginning conversational Spanish but does not qualify a person to interpret medical information.

Mr. Winch reported it was suggested that recruitment could be expanded by encouraging high school and community colleges to draw ethnic minorities into appropriate professional training programs.

Ms. Odegaard advised she supports funding for multicultural training and noted there is a significant difference between the level of services provided to Hispanics by Multnomah and Clackamas counties. In response to Ms. Odegaard suggesting there be some organized communication about services, the Board discussed the possibility of pursuing ways in which Multnomah County could provide certain services on a voucher system with Clackamas County.

In response to questions of Commissioner Kelley, Ms. Odegaard reported efforts are being made with the assistance of Rick Schwartz and Amy Gredler to try to open an east county clinic with evening hours similar to Neighbor Care and that she would find out why the County stopped operating an evening clinic in east county.

Commander Chuck Fessler of the Sheriff's Office, submitted a memo in response to Mr. Winch's report and suggested that Hispanics in jail be treated as a diverse population. Cmdr. Fessler reported that the Sheriff's Office agrees the need for culturally sensitive employees and programs is urgent and discussed addressing the various needs of the emerging east county Hispanic population.

Commander Bill Wood of the Inmate Programs Division, discussed the need for a countywide policy endorsing crosscultural training, sensitivity and recruitment. In response to Vice-Chair Kafoury asking whether Hispanic offenders are held at an earlier stage than the average and what is planned to correct that, Cmdr. Wood reported that out of 1,100 persons in custody today, only one is in custody with an immigration hold only and that other Hispanics in custody with immigration holds have additional charges which are progressing through the court system.

In response to a question of Commissioner Anderson as to whether certain Hispanic offenders could be out on pretrial release, Cmdr. Wood reported there were 38 with Hispanic surnames from the 434 matrix pretrial releases in April.

In response to Chair McCoy asking whether Hispanics with lesser charges are held more on INS holds than the space in our jails would warrant, Cmdr. Wood reported that from the alpha list of everyone in custody on September 12, they identified 137 persons with Hispanic surnames and of that 137, 86 had immigration holds, 99 were being held on distribution or possession of drugs, 11 were violent A felonies, 3 were held for other A, B or C felonies, 3 were held on parole and probation holds, 16 were held on Marshal holds only, 2 were held on immigration holds only and 3 had misdemeanor charges as well as immigration holds. In response to a question of Chair McCoy, Cmdr. Wood advised that Oregon statute requires that the Sheriff detain individuals on Federal holds.

In response to Commissioner Anderson suggesting that the County meet with INS to discuss the possibility that they buy a facility to hold individuals they want held which INS would be in charge of rather than the County, Cmdr. Wood reported that INS does have some day facilities for immigration holds only. Cmdr. Wood related that some judges have been sentencing persons with misdemeanor or felony charges to local time with the remaining balance to be cancelled if immigration would agree to deport the person and advised that INS might agree to do so in the future. Commissioner Anderson suggested that the County discuss with INS the possibility that they be responsible for providing a facility to house those people who would otherwise be eligible for pretrial release if INS wants them held.

Commissioner Kelley advised she has asked County County Larry Kressel to provide her with a legal opinion on INS holds.

Cmdr. Fessler advised he believes INS would be willing to discuss other alternatives.

Mr. Winch reported the regular pretrial release mechanism appears not to work the same way with Hispanics as it works with other offenders and suggested it may be because there are few pretrial release programs established for Hispanics.

Cmdr. Fessler reported that two deputies have been sent for total immersion training in New Mexico and one will be sent to Mexico for training next month.

Cmdr. Wood advised that some corrections staff have been sent to Portland Community College for conversational Spanish classes and a few have requested permission to attend a three term Spanish class. Cmdr. Wood reported that BPST and Gresham is co-sponsoring cultural sensitivity training classes in November and advised that the Sheriff's Office has requested that Personnel expand its recruitment and publish job notices in Spanish newspapers.

Chair McCoy reported she checked with Personnel and the crosscultural training program will begin within the next month which will result in training for all Multnomah County employees. Chair McCoy asked Cmdr. Wood to put together a list of the programs presently offered within the corrections facilities and short and long range plans for addressing the issues raised in Mr. Winch's report.

Cmdr. Wood discussed the need to look at possible additional compensation for those employees able to provide translation services.

Commissioner Kelley related that the City of Gresham and Gresham Police Department have been working with the Hispanic community and have made sure pertinent documents are translated into Spanish and provided to community members.

In response to a question of Commissioner Kelley as to whether the Sheriff's Office was doing anything to facilitate better communication, Cmdr. Wood advised that they are now translating facility inmate manuals into Spanish, as well as some inmate information forms used for court hearings.

In response to Commissioner Anderson asking whether the corrections facility library had books in Spanish, Cmdr. Fessler expressed the need for the library to acquire Spanish recreational reading material.

Cmdr. Wood, speaking as Chair of the Multnomah Council on Chemical Dependency, advised the Council has discussed and identified some of problems and barriers to the Hispanic population in receiving alcohol and drug treatment, and submitted a letter and report prepared by the Minority Committee which expressed the need to address the shortage of culturally sensitive staff and suggested that values and beliefs play a key role in community interactions. Cmdr. Wood discussed Council suggestions regarding the need to recruit Hispanics as treatment staff, provide crosscultural training for existing program staff and establish treatment facilities in the Rockwood and Gresham area.

In response to a question of Commissioner Anderson, Cmdr. Wood reported the Council is reviewing grant applications which go to the State to see whether they address minority population issues and is commenting on them in the hope the programs will address those issues as they apply for additional monies.

Martin Winch discussed the need to advise the Congressional delegation of the extent and nature of the demand for funding to provide services for newly legalized Hispanics within Multnomah County.

Al Jasper, owner of the Marco Polo Garden Restaurant at 19 NW Couch in Old Town, advised he endorses many of the items in Mr. Winch's report and expressed concern over the negative impact of certain Hispanics involved in illegal drug activities in Old Town. Mr. Jasper suggested that some of the information pertaining to Old Town and some of the terminology contained in Mr. Winch's report is inaccurate and requested that area businesses be invited to provide input into the report. At the suggestion of Chair McCoy, Mr. Jasper advised he would provide the Board with written comments.

In response to Mr. Jasper expressing concern that the report may suggest ignoring or disobeying Federal immigration laws, Commissioner Anderson assured Mr. Jasper that the County has no intention of disregarding Federal laws and explained that the Board is just discussing the possibility of sitting down with INS to see if there is some way to possibly alleviate the situation of Hispanics in jail on INS only holds.

Chair McCoy suggested the discussion be continued for two to three weeks to allow staff time to provide a more definitive County implementation plan following further input from Department Managers.

In response to a question of Commissioner Anderson, Chair McCoy agreed that a resolution accepting the report could be prepared for the Board's consideration.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

OFFICE OF THE BOARD CLERK
for MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

By DEBORAH ROYERS