

MARCH 1, 2005  
RACELAND, LOUISIANA

STATE OF LOUISIANA  
PARISH OF LAFOURCHE

**THE LAFOURCHE PARISH DETENTION CENTER IMPROVEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE HAS BEEN SCHEDULED FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2005, AT 6:00 P.M. IN THE COUNCIL MEETING ROOM AT THE LAFOURCHE PARISH COUNCIL BARRIOS CENTER, 1612 HWY. 182, SUITE 100, RACELAND, LOUISIANA.**

Councilman Mark Atzenhoffer stated that the Detention Center Improvement Subcommittee was ready for the transaction of business at 6:00 p.m. Proceedings of the meeting were called to order with the following:

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Mr. Ronnie Winston	Mr. Mark Atzenhoffer
	Dr. Tommy Lasseigne	Mr. Lindel Toups
	Mr. Stephen Baudoin	Mr. Brent Callais
	Mr. Daniel Lorraine	Ms. Jennifer Plaisance
	Judge Bruce Simpson	Mr. Ulysse Morvant

**ABSENT:** Mr. Michael Delatte  
Sheriff Craig Webre  
Ms. Jessica Cassard

**MOTIONS**

The first item (1) on the agenda was the appointment of a Chairman to the Detention Center Improvement Subcommittee. Mr. Lindel Toups *nominated* Dr. Tommy Lasseigne as Chairman. Hearing no other nominations, a **motion** was offered by Mr. Brent Callais to **close** nominations. Mr. Atzenhoffer announced that *Dr. Tommy Lasseigne was elected as Chairman* of the Detention Center Improvement Subcommittee by unanimous concession.

The next item (2) on the agenda was a the appointment of a Co-Chair to the Detention Center Improvement Subcommittee. Mr. Brent Callais *nominated* Mr. Mark Atzenhoffer as Co-Chair. Hearing no other nominations, a **motion** was offered by Mr. Stephen Baudoin to **close** nominations. Chairman Lasseigne announced that *Mr. Mark Atzenhoffer was elected as Co-Chair* of the Detention Center Improvement Subcommittee by unanimous concession.

The next item (3) on the agenda was to set meeting schedules. Chairman Lasseigne opened a discussion to set the meeting schedule. The members of the Subcommittee discussed when and how often the Subcommittee should meet. A **motion** was offered by Mr. Lindel Toups, seconded Mr. Mark Atzenhoffer, to set the meetings for the third Tuesdays of the month at 6 p.m., and *carried* by a vote of ten (10) yeas, zero (0) nays, and three (3) absent, that being of Mr. Michael Delatte, Sheriff Craig Webre, and Ms. Jessica Cassard.

## DISCUSSIONS

The next item (4) on the agenda was a discussion concerning the scope of the Subcommittee. Mr. Brent Callais recommended that the members of the Subcommittee take a tour of the current facility to view the present conditions. A discussion ensued to which date and time would be good for everyone. A **motion** was offered by Mr. Lindel Toups, seconded by Mr. Mark Atzenhoffer, to set the March 15<sup>th</sup> Detention Center Improvement Subcommittee meeting to be held at the Lafourche Parish Detention Center, located at 952 Highway 3185, Thibodaux, Louisiana, for 6 p.m., and **carried** by a vote of ten (10) yeas, zero (0) nays, and three (3) absent, that being of Mr. Michael Delatte, Sheriff Craig Webre, and Ms. Jessica Cassard.

Chairman Lasseigne requested that Judge Bruce Simpson work with the District Attorney to get information on what is mandated by law. He wanted to get any information that would assist in making the best decisions, which would be economically feasible and in the best interest of the Parish.

Judge Bruce Simpson stated that the Statute that pertained to the jails was very broad; and it just says that the Parish Governing Authority has an obligation to provide a suitable jail, which needs to be located in the Parish Seat.

Chief Deputy Bud Dill with the Lafourche Parish Sheriff's Office stated that they would be able to provide the Subcommittee with the basic Department of Corrections guidelines. Chief Deputy Dill said that the Sheriff's Office would also provide the staff to assist and facilitate the Subcommittee because they want to help in any way possible.

Chairman Lasseigne asked if there was any physical facility projections. Chief Deputy Dill said that there was some rough study of the projections, but to also be reminded of the guidelines and standards that would need to be followed by the Fire Marshal, Board of Health, Department of Corrections, and any other standards. He said that he could provide that information and some other studies to the Subcommittee, but to remember that the costs changes everyday.

Chairman Lasseigne requested a proposal of the amounts of beds and any other alternatives.

Mr. Lindel Toups requested from the people speaking from the audience to state who they were and their titles. Chief Deputy Dill announced who was present from the Sheriff's Office:

Major Willie Johnson (over the corrections department)

Lieutenant Steven Guidry (corrections department)

Captain Eddie Rodrigue, Warden

Mr. Gary Price, Financial Director

Chief Deputy Dill said that he could offer other resources to do any necessary research.

A discussion ensued pertaining to other similar facilities and designs.

Chairman Lasseigne requested that the proposals be forward to the Council Clerk's Office to distribute among the Subcommittee members to have ideas and a sense of direction.

Mr. Ulysse Morvant asked what was the present capacity of the facility. Captain Eddie Rodrigue, responded that the capacity was 167, with an additional 56 beds that belongs to the Sheriff's Office, plus 28 beds that was approved by the Council, which totaled approximately 256 beds and with 18 or 19 people housed out of the Parish.

Mr. Ronnie Winston asked how many women could be housed. The response was 16 women.

Judge Bruce Simpson stated that it would be helpful if the Subcommittee would have an idea of what the need was. He then asked if there was any way of projecting estimations dealing with the issue of inadequate beds. Captain Rodrigue explained that they were already studying different changes and more will be done. Lieutenant Guidry gave a scenario of another Parish and explained that the higher the population of an area was, that it would also have a higher increase in crime. A discussion ensued on the security levels of inmates.

The next item (5) on the agenda was a discussion concerning the Detention Center. Mr. Callais suggested that the Sheriff's Office present ideas to the Subcommittee of what a new jail would need. Captain Rodrigue said that he would present pictures of other facilities as a PowerPoint presentation to show the Subcommittee of what they were looking into.

Mr. Lindel Toups asked if anyone could give him an idea of an estimated amount of money for the facility. Captain Rodrigue gave a rough estimate of \$15 to \$20 million, with a twenty year projection and housing over 600 people. A brief discussion ensued on the designs and being able to add onto the facility. Mr. Toups asked if the Subcommittee was to consider the feasibility of enlarging the present facility. Captain Rodrigue said that he did not think that it would be feasible because the structure was thirty years old and outdated. Discussions and explanations were held pertaining to the property and if another site would be needed and of the cost effectiveness.

Mr. Winston asked if there would be any cost sharing considered, maybe through grants. Chief Deputy Dill stated that they share the cost of operating the facility, but would not have the funds to help construct the new facility.

Mr. Stephen Baudoin asked if the \$20 million rough estimate included land acquisition. The response was no, it was just for the facility.

Captain Rodrigue said that he would provide the Subcommittee with handouts and explanations during the tour to give them ideas of what was wrong with the present facility.

A discussion ensued on the cost of purchasing land and where it needed or could be located.

Mr. Mark Atzenhoffer asked about court dates and if they could be handled via web broadcasts. Captain Rodrigue said that some video was being done, but there was other reasons why they would need to be transferred. He continued by stating that distance would be a public safety issue because the further you would have to transport, the bigger the risk of a situation occurring. Lieutenant Guidry said that it was very difficult to transfer inmates going to court and that it created logistic problems when they did not get out before lunch. He explained some operational procedures to the Subcommittee that they may have not been aware of.

A brief discussion ensued pertaining to the present property and of drainage issues, which were improved by a canal that runs along the back side of the facility.

Lieutenant Guidry gave some figures of other facilities; in 1992 the Terrebonne facility was built for approximately \$10 million and in 2001 the St. Charles facility was built for \$13,500,000. He said that time was important because the increase in cost would be considerable.

Mr. Atzenhoffer requested the current millages and taxes which support the jail, for the last couple of years. He said that the information could be useful if there was a possibility to bond money.

A brief discussion and explanations ensued pertaining to privately owned facilities and why it was not a good idea.

Parish President Charlotte A. Randolph asked if the Subcommittee would also like the information on what the Parish currently pays into the system. The response was yes.

Judge Simpson gave his observations on general propositions of having to release people because there are no available places to house them. Captain Rodrigue added that the option for the two for one privilege could not be offered anymore because almost all of the inmates get released as such.

A detailed discussion ensued on lowering the high per day cost of housing inmates and of the cost of sending them out of the Parish. Judge Simpson offered to assist the Subcommittee with a summary of how the Judges attempt to process prisoners.

Captain Rodrigue gave an intake number of 2,626 people in the last six months and the releases being 2,595, which averaged 20 people a day.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

The next item on the agenda was any other business. Hearing none, Chairman Lasseigne moved to the next item on the agenda.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On **motion** by Mr. Mark Atzenhoffer, seconded by Judge Bruce Simpson, and with no further business, the Lafourche Parish Detention Center Improvement Subcommittee **adjourned** at 6:55 p.m.

**TOMMY LASSEIGNE, CHAIRMAN  
DETENTION CENTER  
IMPROVEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE**

**ELLA DUPRE, MINUTE CLERK  
LAFOURCHE PARISH COUNCIL**