

Minutes of the Daggett County Commission Work Meeting held on **Tuesday, January 24, 2020** in the Commission Chambers at the Daggett County Courthouse. Commissioners Randy Asay, Jack Lytle and Matt Tippetts were present. Auditor/ Recorder Keri Pallesen, Sheriff Erik Bailey, and Clerk/Treasurer Brian Raymond were also present. The meeting was called to order at 1:15 pm by Commissioner Asay.

Also present: Senator Ron Winterton, Representative Logan Wilde, Marlena Connor, Bryan Smith, Becky Bindl, Ruth Lee, and Jerry Steglich

**Discussion of Yesterday's Meeting with Lt. Governor:** Commissioner Tippetts said that Bryan Smith, Adam McFetridge and he met with the Lt. Governor, Mike Mower and others yesterday and it went well. There was a recent Audit from the State Auditor's Office released that wasn't so good for the State. The State is willing to engage but is not going to solve the problem as they have their own problems staffing the facilities they already own.

**Possible State Proposal:** Representative Logan Wilde said the Commissioners need to figure out what they want. Commissioner Asay said he did not feel that just paying off the loan was adequate and fair to the taxpayers of Daggett County. Keri Pallesen was asked the cost of the Jail and replied that the initial Bond was \$2.8 million and a subsequent bond of \$150,000 was also part of it. There was also another bond added later on for the new sewer line and that is held by the Town of Manila for approximately \$11,000 per year for maybe 20 years..

Commissioner Tippetts asked Senator Winterton and Representative Wilde how the negotiations for a purchase price would fit into this legislative session. They responded that it wouldn't with the repeal of the Tax Bill the first week, so that puts a lot of things in question. Appropriations for this year would be really scrutinized, so it will be hard. What if the State could make a one year payment would that help. Commissioner Tippetts said they asked about the

Senator Winterton asked for any analysis of the economic impact of the jail closure. It was replied that it has not been done, but there was an impact of 15 jobs, lodging and restaurant revenues from visitors to jail, students from the schools are gone and funding is also gone. In some ways we are a little better off with the jail closed due to the expenses involved with running a jail. Senator Winterton said some counties lose 400,000 to 1 million dollars per year, but it gives greater depth for the Sheriff's department. Sheriff Bailey said we have budgeted \$25,000 for housing of inmates in Uintah County. It was asked if there was any programming and it was getting ready to start and the school had hired someone to do some of it. The programming helps with additional funding. The original proposal to build the jail included that it should make money or at least break even, but jails are not designed to make money. Senator Winterton said most of the county jails were close to breaking even the first few years, but they have fallen farther and farther behind in their ability to cover their costs over the years. Jail numbers and revenues were discussed and the jail was starting to get close to where we might have been able to pay part of the bond had things continued as they were before it was closed. There was also a little set aside for improvements.

Senator Winterton asked what the County needed if they turned the jail over to the State. Is there enough housing? Housing was discussed and the lack of employees to shift out here was also discussed. Housing is an issue in Salt Lake as well as here. Most previous jail employees are no longer in the area. Taxes were discussed briefly including the coming crisis of allocating revenues. Housing was discussed further. The Sheriff's Office could be turned into housing or the Vacation Inn is like a group of Condos and might be rentable. There are hundreds of lots available with infrastructure to the property and it could be reasonably affordable to build on them. The discussion also went to how many certified employees would be needed. There would need to be 8-10

employees plus the not certified people like the controllers and kitchen staff. The County is in the process of hiring an economic development person who can work with UBAOG on the housing issue. Further discussion about affordable housing continued. The low wages here could make it difficult to get people out here even if affordable housing was taken care of. Hot shots could be doing things to help with housing when they are not busy and they could be housed at the jail.

Senator Winterton said we need to figure out what you want for the facility. Further discussion was held about wages, benefits and housing. Vacation Inn is up for sale now and maybe it could be part of the solution. The best option for us is to work something out with the State as they have more resources than the county, so should we ask for one time money or something else. Senator Winterton said the State prefers to do lease purchases. The Jail is an 18,000 sq ft facility. A \$1 a sq foot would cover the costs. The State would do it over time and try to pay it off earlier if possible. The Audit will work to the County's advantage, but it's still going to be tough this year. The relocation of the prison was discussed and it is over budget due to the cost of construction going through the roof. Representative Wilde said the question is whether the Commission wants to bring people to Daggett or if they want the State to do that. Commissioner Tippetts said the State seems to have a willingness to do something to help. The closure and effects were discussed again, so there needs to be further discussion of what the State is willing to do. We need to figure out how to make it work. Senator Winterton said you need to go to the State with a plan of how to solve the problem and you need to do it quickly if you want this to happen during this session. Commissioner Tippetts said that those he met with yesterday left the ball in our court. There needs to be some numbers applied to this. Is there a penalty for early payment? It wasn't thought so, but more research needs to be done. The Commissioners were encouraged to talk it over and let the Representatives know what they want to accomplish. Individual conversations took place until the recording was turned off.

The work meeting was adjourned at 2:57 pm.

/s/ Randy Asay  
Commissioner Randy Asay

s/ Brian Raymond  
Clerk/Treasurer\_Brian Raymond

/s/ Jack Lytle  
Commissioner Jack Lytle

/s/ Matt Tippetts  
Commissioner Matt Tippetts