

Minutes Special Meeting Montville Town Council

March 29, 2011

Call to order 1:00

Roll call: Councilor Buebendorf, Councilor Caron, Councilor Hillman, Councilor McFee and Chairperson Jacobson. Also present was Attorney Michael Carey, and Mayor Jaskiewicz, 139th Representative Kevin Ryan, 142 Representative Tom Reynolds, 38th District Representative Betsy Ritter, 20 District Senator Andrea Stillman and 19th District Senator Edith Prague. Absent were Councilor Beetham, and Councilor Murphy.

Motion to open discussion by Councilor Caron, seconded by councilor McFee, pass 5/0

Tim Bannon (governor Malloy's Chief of Staff) opened the meeting by saying he just found out that the Attorney General's office would not be in attendance so discussion on matters of litigation would not be discussed. Mr. Bannon stated he wanted to use this time to speak on specifics. He understood in the past we have not committed to a secure facility. This will not be a half way house but a secure facility behind a perimeter. This is a problem that this administration is inheriting but it is not a problem we are going to avoid.

Commissioner Leo C. Arnone stated that the Power Point presented in June of last year showed a 24-bed facility with 12 beds coming from the DOC and 12 from the CSSD. The 12 from CSSD will be on probation. All services will be done at the facility. When in the community they will be escorted from Montville to Montville. They will be using an inpatient model. There will be no patient working in the community. There will be 24-7 staffing with a minimum of 3 staff members per shift. The doors will be alarmed along with the fence. There will be response alarms and armed perimeter patrols. Clients will be subject to random drug testing and searches. The clients will be escorted when going off site and searched upon return.

Clients will be referred into the program. Referrals will be made on a case by case basis. We want this program to work. We will pick the clients who we feel we can help. The client's information will be made available to the Town.

DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Arnone - We would be happy to negotiate a MOU with the Town. This is a problem that this administration is inheriting but not avoiding.

Attorney Mike Carey: Have security measures been made part of the contract?

Commissioner Arnone: Yes we have had meeting with them to discuss this.

Attorney Mike Carey: Have they formalized these security measures

Commissioner Arnone: No not yet

Attorney Mike Carey - Will all programming be onsite?

Commissioner Arnone: Correct, only going out for emergency treatment everything else will be done onsite. Some are probationers with insurance of their own so some will go to their home communities for medical treatment.

Senator Andrea Stillman - Who will go with them?

Commissioner Arnone: One of the Contractors?

Attorney Mike Carey: Will they be confined 24 hours a day?

Commissioner Arnone: Yes.

Attorney Mike Carey: Will you use GPS?

Commissioner Arnone: If there is a need for this.

Attorney Mike Carey: Does Connections Inc. have a key man so to speak with which this program is associated with?

Commissioner Arnone: Don't know.

Attorney Mike Carey: How many are eligible for the program?

Commissioner Arnone: There are hundreds every year who could be eligible.

Attorney Mike Carey: In a year how many are in the streets?

Commissioner Arnone: 200 or 220 who are in the streets but 2 to 4 can go through one slot per year. But yes, 100 to 150 will be in the program.

Senator Edith Prague: Isn't this better to treat them. Will you build more of these facilities?

Arnone: We have been zeroed in to get one up and running so, we have not yet looked into other sites.

Senator Edith Prague: I know Mike Lawler is a big proponent of this program

Commissioner Arnone: When they leave this program, they are not going home unattached. They will go home under the supervision of probation.

Attorney Mike Carey - Does the contract mandate an outcome for each resident?

Commissioner Arnone - I have not looked at that part of the contract. We want to be careful who gets into this program so we have success.

Attorney Mike Carey: Asking the legislative group, Has this been tried and worked anywhere else?

Senator Andrea Stillman: I cannot remember back 3 years. What is meant by random drug testing, will it be weekly monthly?

Commissioner Arnone: Randomly at least once a month.

Senator Andrea Stillman: What would cause us to do it more often?

Commissioner Arnone: Nothing, we would return them back over to the court system.

Senator Andrea Stillman: Would it be a 3 strikes and you're out or what?

Commissioner Arnone: We would outline a series of actions for behaviors but some will be told if you cross certain lines you're out of the program.

Senator Andrea Stillman: Under your treatment plan would some offenders not be sexual in nature?

Commissioner Arnone: When we read the complete record of an offense, yes sexual behavior could not be reflected?

Senator Andrea Stillman: Could it be cause of behavior while incarcerated?

Commissioner Arnone: No, and that will be outlined, sometimes because it is an out of state offense or because of the court or a prior offence that they are not currently in jail for.

Senator Andrea Stillman: So that will be outlined?

Commissioner Arnone: Yes.

Representative Betsy Ritter: Please expand on that.

Commissioner Arnone: Sometimes we have information on an offenders past, even though their current issue may not reflect a sexual offence. We want to run a program that will succeed.

Representative Betsy Ritter: Can we have that in a MOU? I am concerned that over time we will lose commitment to the program.

Commissioner Arnone: We will be pulling information from a lot of different sources.

Senator Edith Prague: Who would be held accountable?

Commissioner Arnone: There is always a way for people to smuggle in something, Staff has to be accountable to staff, and inmate to staff. If we have a contract and it says X, Y, and Z then they have to follow it. We are the boss and we can close the program down at any time.

Attorney Mike Carey: How will you handle an escape?

Commissioner Arnone: The State Police would respond. DOC would go into inmate lock up immediately. The probationer would go back to lock up immediately. This is a very minimal possibility.

Representative Kevin Ryan: I thought we set up this meeting to discuss the selection committee.

Mr. Tim Bannon: This is off the table now because of the court case?

Representative Tom Reynolds: What is the distance from the site to the DOC building? What is the distance from the site to the nearest resident? I think this program is ripe for performance. With the cost of the program and the set up will a profile of the residence of this program be available?

Commissioner Arnone: The type of predator inmates who prey on other inmates will not be in this program.

Representative Tom Reynolds: The most extreme and violent candidates would not be prime for this program so not the worst of the worst, but not, the least of the least.

Commissioner Arnone: The worst is something bad, down here is those who need nothing. These clients will be somewhere in the middle. Vicious predators will not be in the program. Example: a youth who committed 3 or 4 sexual crimes but now feel they could benefit from this program. We are willing to let the Town know who the inmates are and their history.

Representative Tom Reynolds: Is there a diagram of the site showing the fence line?

Commissioner Arnone: The fence will be the last envelope of security, first is staff, then locked doors and windows with alarms. All doors will have cameras, and monitored and recorded on tape. The fence will be alarmed. The fence is the final step. We want you to feel comfortable. The sixth is the perimeter patrol around the fence line. I lived close to a prison and that was my concern to protect the neighbors.

Representative Tom Reynolds: Can you show me on this map where the facility is?

Commissioner Arnone: Right there where the water towers were at. They are gone now.

Representative Tom Reynolds: Where is the perimeter fence?

Montville Town Councilor Bill Caron: There is one on interstate 395.

Commissioner Arnone: I am not sure

Montville Town Councilor Ellen Hillman: There is not one there on that side.

Commissioner Arnone: We share your commitment. We want to make sure this works, we want to continue to work on an MOU. Will sit in a room and not work with you. And put it in writing. We have the same goal.

Senator Andrea Stillman: Can the MOU be amended?

Commissioner Arnone: As time goes on we may have to do that. What we would do is add this to the Prison Advisory Commission that meets every quarter and this would be on their agenda. We are happy to provide measures to you to show how this works.

Motion to adjourn by Councilor William Caron seconded by Councilor Dana McFee 2:05 p.m.

Submitted by: Montville Town Councilor Ellen Hillman