

Great Game Huddle Notes

August 1, 2017

Character Core

Debbie Allen, Greene County Auditor's Office, presented our Character Core for August – **FLEXIBILITY**.

Flexibility is defined as “Adjusting to change with a good attitude.”

The one thing you can always expect in life is that things will change. Being flexible allows us to adapt to changes without getting bent out of shape. Prepare yourself for the possibility of change. Get back up when you are knocked down and keep going. Recognize the opportunities that change brings.

1. Adapt change.
2. Roll with the punches.
3. Recover and Rebuild.

Don't be a victim of circumstances. Change can help you find new methods and refine your goals. Maintain a good attitude through the process and willingly tackle your new challenges, and you will grow.

“The ability to recognize opportunities and move in new – and sometimes unexpected – directions will benefit you no matter your interests or aspirations.” —Drew Gilpin Faust

Commission Corner

The Commissioners discussed the Jail Agreement and what it means for the County moving forward.

Please know that as we get through one hurdle, we are preparing for the next one — in this case a tax. We will have more information to share with you about that as well in the coming weeks. Again, if you have questions about either the jail agreement or tax, the Commission will gladly answer to the best of our ability.

What the addendum does:

The addendum amends the Law Enforcement Sales Tax agreement made in 1997. Here are the 2017 addendum's main points:

- The Greene County Sheriff's Office will pay to transport up to 35 Springfield municipal prisoners per day to and from out-of-county jail facilities. The City of Springfield will contract and pay for those out-of-county jail facilities.
- Should a new general revenue tax be approved in November 2017, the County Commission agrees to expand the jail. Within 36 months of voters passing a new County sales tax, the Sheriff agrees to house up to 48 Springfield municipal inmates at no cost to the City.
- If the County's tax passes, the City will seek approval to reallocate \$2 million of its level property tax for the County jail expansion.
- The parties will have the opportunity to revisit the agreement regularly, starting in 2027. If a consensus can't be reached to continue or renegotiate the agreement, it will expire on December 31, 2037, and future proceeds from the 1997 Law Enforcement Sales Tax will be paid into a third-party escrow account until the parties execute a written extension agreement.

More information about the agreement, including the full addendum, can be found on our website:

<https://greencountymo.gov/files/PDF/file.pdf?id=31063>

What it doesn't do:

The Commission and Sheriff's Office stress that this does not fix the systemic problems we face with the jail and justice system. This is a stop-gap measure to begin addressing the many unmet needs challenging the Greene County. Those are, in part, highlighted below.

- The jail has the capacity for 601 inmates. Although we currently only accept state and federal prisoners (which we are mandated by law to house), we exceed that capacity every single day, forcing us to house upwards of 180 inmates in other county facilities, including Cedar, Miller, Henry, Pettis and Johnson counties. A contract with Cole County (Jefferson City) may be forthcoming.
- The County hired a nationally recognized consultant to analyze our space needs for the jail. His study (to be released this Friday, Aug. 4) estimates that should the justice system continue on its current pace and the County's population continue to grow at its current rate, we will need more than 1,900 beds in the County jail by 2037.
- Taxpayers pay for the jail through the County's general revenue fund and two law enforcement sales taxes, with an overall 2017 budget of about \$8.7 million. Those funds cannot support a sustainable jail expansion, especially at the level projected in the jail study.
- The County doesn't control many aspects contributing to the backlog of the justice system. For example, we cannot affect the number of public defenders allotted for our region, and the state funds only 14 percent of Juvenile Court costs. If we had more revenue, however, we could improve efficiency by increasing resources to the Prosecuting Attorney, Pretrial Services and courts; addressing evidence storage space needs; contributing to the mental health and treatment needs of our community; and more.

Learn more about the challenges we face in the jail:

<http://www.news-leader.com/story/opinion/contributors/2017/07/22/presiding-commissioner-no-easy-fixes-jail-challenges/498707001/>

In conclusion ...

Our vision for the future of Greene County will require a community effort. In the coming months and years, we will work with our local, state and federal counterparts to identify how we can increase jail capacity, support our Prosecuting Attorney's Office, and collaborate with area agencies to strengthen our region's mental health and treatment programs, as well as many other strategies we can employ to ensure the safety and happiness of our citizens.

You all will be an integral part of that process as well, and I look forward to working with you to keep improving our community!