

Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society

P.O. Box 1318
Merlin, Oregon 97532
541-471-8271
Email: hugo@jeffnet.org

Web Page: <http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/>

September 30, 2015 Letter/Email

Ryan Mulkins, District Attorney
Josephine County Courthouse
500 NW 6th St., Dept. 16
Grants Pass, OR 97526
541-474-5200
Email: da@co.josephine.or.us



Subject: Share Information About Josephine County's (JO CO's) Justice System & Public Safety Services (JS&PSS) Problem/Issue

Dear Ryan:

We contact you, our elected official, as a significant stakeholder in defining the JO CO's JS&PSS problem/issue, and in seeking solutions for it. The JO CO Criminal Prosecution Division prosecutes adults and juveniles for criminal conduct, and is part of the JS&PSS system (Appendix A). We also believe that there is a major connection with your government position to the issue, in that you and others are elected officials of JO CO. In our view, to be effective, elected officials must work as part of a team to establish a shared vision for the future (including public safety), make plans that ensure that future possible, and work with their colleagues and constituents to enact the local policies and laws, that will ultimately lead to solutions.

The Hugo JS&PSS Exploratory Committee has been trying to understand the JS&PSS Issue since 2013 (Appendix B), and we would like to get together and brainstorm ideas. For example, some of the Exploratory Committee's core beliefs are that all citizens, voters, and votes are legitimate. Our 2015 JS&PSS Study Design project flows from this center. The results are a study to be researched and written from a neutral point of view, meaning representing fairly, proportionately, and, as far as possible, without bias, all public views that have been published by reliable sources on the safety topic.

The final Study product of the Study Design project is to document a comparison of the publicly identified range of alternative solutions for the JS&PSS Issue. The Study will be accomplished by documenting: 1. the publicly identified issues, range of JS&PSS alternative solutions, and affected conditions; and 2. analyzing the impacts of each alternative evaluated by condition indicators and standards through a combination of citizen input and professional expert investigations.

To accomplish our goals, the trust, or mistrust, of citizens with their government must be addressed. How can JO CO demonstrate trust and enhance communication between our neighbors and government? The Study Design approach primarily relies on citizens to provide insight about how to identify and manage problems, and formulate their own goals and solutions for the future (e.g., voting, writing letters to the editor and guest opinions in *The Grants Pass*

Daily Courier, writing arguments in voters' pamphlets, etc.; Appendix B - web page address for Study Design issues). It emphasizes the importance to citizens of knowing they are being heard, of being the decision-makers that decide their own futures. As active participants, neighbors at the grassroots level can gain ownership of Study Design information processes and become "stakeholder" decision-makers in the range of potential solutions they, as a group, identified.

Understanding the JS&PSS Issue and designing a solution are complicated tasks. The Exploratory Committee's rationale for this position is that there are substantial differences between Oregon counties in terms of their geographic and demographic characteristics, priorities, historic crime rates, willingness to tolerate certain levels of crime, and past and present funding of various public safety services. Given these substantial differences, how would JO CO seek a declaration of a public safety fiscal emergency where fiscal conditions compromise the county's ability to provide a *minimally adequate level of public safety services* (MALPSS; 2013 Oregon HB 3453)? We believe that a public opportunity for understanding the standards, how JO CO would determine whether a MALPSS is being provided, is one of our elected officials most critical responsibilities. The value is not for a declaration, but a definition of the standards.

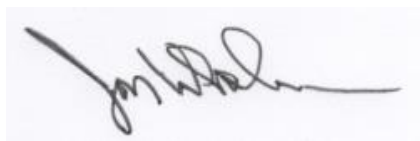
In conclusion, we feel there are significant unique decision-maker differences between our proposed Study Design and the usual major information or impact studies (Appendix C). We hope you will be interested in sharing information with us one-on-one. As a follow-up we will contact you again in hope of scheduling a meeting.

Sincerely,

Mike Walker, Chair
JS&PSS Exploratory Committee
Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society
P.O. Box 1318
Merlin, Oregon 97532
541-471-8271
Email: hugo@jeffnet.org
Web Page: <http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/>



Jon Whalen, Member
JS&PSS Exploratory Committee
Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society
326 NE Josephine Street
Grants Pass, Oregon 97526
541-476-1595
Email: bear46@charter.net
Web Page: <http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/>



Appendices

- Appendix A. Josephine County District Attorney Is An Elected Official
- Appendix B. *Justice System & Public Safety Services Study Design: 2015*
- Appendix C. Why Support Another Safety Study?

APPENDIX A. Josephine County District Attorney Is An Elected Official

Josephine County District Attorney's Office (JCDAO) Public safety services normally associated with the JS&PSS Issue include the following: county jail, juvenile justice center, district attorney's office, court services, animal protection, rural patrols, criminal investigations, and sheriff's office support services. The services the JCDAO's provides is one of those services. The Criminal Prosecution Division prosecutes adults and juveniles for criminal conduct. This is the District Attorney's primary function (<http://www.co.josephine.or.us/SectionIndex.asp?SectionID=114>). The objectives of the JCDAO follow.

- To maximize public safety;
- To hold offenders accountable for criminal conduct;
- To seek dispositions that protect the public and reintegrate the offender into the community; and
- To serve victims in a manner that minimizes trauma, brings closure and secures restitution.

JO CO District Attorney Is An Elected Official One of the major connections of your position to the public safety issue is that you and others are elected officials of JO CO (i.e., Commissioners, Assessor, Clerk, Circuit Court Judges, District Attorney, Legal Counsel, Surveyor, and Treasurer). They provide the citizens with the vital services they need. Equally, the power to govern comes directly from the people through free and open elections by its citizens.

Part Of A Team To be effective, elected officials must work as part of a team to establish a shared vision for the future (including public safety), make plans that ensure that future possible, and work with their colleagues and constituents to enact the local policies and laws, that will ultimately lead to solutions. Holding a public office is an act of service to the public – that is, service to all the citizens, not just those who share their views or those who voted for them. It is a challenge that requires every office holder to rise above the fray, to reach beyond comfort zones, and to work with others with whom they may have significant differences. Rising to that challenge is what makes democracy work. It's what makes shaping our own shared future possible. It's what others have done before us. And it's what has made our communities places we can be proud of.

JO CO Home Rule Charter January 5, 1981; last Amended May 1996; 2005 Annotations On Charter by County Counsel; (<http://www.co.josephine.or.us/Page.asp?NavID=193>)

JO CO Home Rule Charter Conflict With HB 3453? Section 29.7, Prohibition Of Income Tax, of the charter identifies that Josephine County shall not establish an income tax; both personal and business income taxes would be disallowed. Cheryl Walker¹⁻³, JO CO Commissioner and the Editor, *Grants Pass Daily Courier*, Dennis Roller¹⁻³, had been quoted that JO CO's home rule charter prohibits imposition of an income tax, but the bill would allow taxes on 911 services or some other fees for service.

Footnotes

1. Hugo Justice System Exploratory Committee. July 12, 2013. *Josephine County Home Rule Charter*. Brochure III.E.1.5, Justice System & Public Safety Services Series. Hugo, OR.
2. Jeff DUEWEL. 07/09/13. *State Gives JoCo Emergency Option*. The Grants Pass Daily Courier, Front Page News. Grants Pass, OR.
3. Dennis Roler, Editor's Opinion. 07/11/13. *Josephine County's Financial Woes Lead Workers To Bail Out*. The Grants Pass Daily Courier, Opinion Section Grants Pass, OR.

APPENDIX B. HUGO JS&PSS STUDY DESIGN: 2015

Web Page: <http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/justicesystemexploratorycommittee.htm>

- ***Justice System & Public Safety Services Study Design: 2015***
 - Arguments For Supporting Study Design
 - Interested In Becoming Involved?
 - Publicly Identified Problems/Issues
 - Publicly Identified Range of Alternative Solutions
 - Aspiration Letter From Authors Of Study Design
 - **Appendix A. Issues**
 - Appendix A1. Being Heard
 - Appendix A2. All Values Are Legitimate
 - Appendix A3. Measures Representing Public Opinion
 - Appendix A3.1. Letters To The Editor As A Measure of Crime Salience
 - Appendix A3.2. Content Analysis. Writing@CSU [Colorado State University]
- Authority: 2013 *Justice System & Public Safety Services Issue Scope Of Work*

APPENDIX C. WHY SUPPORT ANOTHER SAFETY STUDY?

(Appendix B - Arguments For Supporting Study Design)

Question Why support or sponsor another study that purports to represent the citizens of Josephine County, Oregon in their efforts to address the county's Justice System & Public Safety Services (JS&PSS) problem/issue?

Answer In a nut shell the proposed study's design basis is based on formal inventories and an impact methodology model which promotes informed decision-making through a unique decision process where the citizens are the decision-makers.

As an introduction we provide some rationale for the uniqueness of the long-range planning Study Design. There are significant unique decision-maker differences between the proposed JS&PSS Study and the usual major information or impact study.

- Study focuses on the human face of citizens in decision-making.
- Study is unique in not representing a singular point of view objective, and in representing strictly citizen values.
- Study flows from "public" identified issues, affected conditions, alternatives, and impact standards. It emphasizes the importance to citizens of knowing they are being heard, of being the decision-makers that decide their future.
- Study is not associated with any specific proposed levy, tax, etc.
- Study is limited to investigating, researching, and evaluating the JS&PSS Issue. Study will not make evaluations of proposals or alternatives as to right or wrong, nor make recommendations to the citizens on how to vote.
- Study is non-political; it will not be used in politics in the sense of lobbying for a particular outcome.
- Study is independent research and education of neighbors the best it can by sharing information publicly through web page publications.
- Study formally acknowledges the public as the designer of the Study and as the decision-maker.
- There will be no Analysis of Management Situation in the proposed JS&PSS Study process; there will be an Analysis of Public Situation.
- There will not be a formal government decision selecting a study alternative or some combination of alternatives as a part of Study Design.
- The end result of the Study is information for informed public decision-making, not a decision by the government.