

## Summary Highlights: Study Design Research Projects Prior To Phase 3 Contracted Study (Public Outreach 5.3)

### *Justice System & Public Safety Services Study Design: 2015 (Study Design)*

#### *Appendix B4. Josephine County's Minimally Adequate Level of Public Safety Services (MALPSS) Standards*

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

Mike Walker & Jon Whalen, Members  
JS&PSS Exploratory Committee  
Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society



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Subject: Student & Faculty Researchers' Opportunities To Engage With Local Citizens In Studying & Identifying Public Policy Options For The Josephine County (JO CO) Justice System & Public Safety Services (JS&PSS) Problem/Issue

Understanding the JO CO JS&PSS problems/issues, identifying alternatives, and assessing solutions are complicated tasks as there are substantial differences between Oregon counties in terms of their geographic and demographic characteristics, historic crime rates, willingness to tolerate certain levels of crime, and priorities such as past and present funding of various public safety services.

Those academic institutions with a record of involvement in important Oregon policy issues will be interested in these potential research projects. The possibility that faculty members could engage with us and other stakeholders in studying the issue and identifying options, after winter term through 2016 - 17, would be fortunate indeed. Likewise students majoring in economics, political science, criminology, criminology justice, and sociology would have research opportunities to consider that reach the threshold of important Oregon policy. Some of these research projects could be designed and executed by students within one to two academic terms.

As background, since 2012 JO CO and the City of Grants Pass have had five (5) safety tax levies/proposed sales tax failures in as many years. An issue is that, since 2000, Congress had repeatedly sent messages that federal payments would be phased out, and this was intended to give counties *time to plan for the change*. Our aspiration is that the final *Study* product of the *Study Design* project be considered part of this needed planning. It will document: 1. the publicly identified issues, range of 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. The time frame for implementing *Study Design* is flexible. The *Study Design* process will be completed in three phases: Phase 1. *Study Design*, Phase 2. Grant Process, and Phase 3. *Study*. There are several products of *Study Design*'s planning phases.

- Product 1a. Final *Study Design*, including appendices such as Appendix B4, JO CO's MALPSS Standards.
- Product 1b. Independent public safety research proposals (e.g., public opinion, MALPSS standards, vetted inventories, zero based budgeting & agency staffing, law enforcement staffing standards, etc.).
- Product 2. *Study* Grant Proposal.
- Product 3. Request For Proposals (RFPs) for *Study*.
- Product 4. Award of Grant to Independent Third-Party *Study Team*.
- Product 5. Analysis of the Public Situation (APS).
- Product 6. Final JS&PSS *Study*.

## Study Design Research Projects Prior To Phase 3 Contracted Study

**1. Public Opinion Through Content Analysis (CA)** The research topic, *Public Opinion Through Content Analysis*, is an unqualified success. In 2015 Nathan Davis, a 2<sup>nd</sup> year graduate student at Oregon State University (OSU), formally settled on tiering his Master's of Public Policy (Mpp) Essay Research Paper to the JO CO JS&PSS public safety issue. Davis is in the OSU School of Public Policy which is part of the OSU Rural Studies Program. The focus on citizens as the decision-makers will be the core of his MPP paper, which is recording and analyzing the public's opinions, pro and con, across their range of values, through a CA research method. The data base for this CA is over 800 LTTE, 10 guest opinions, and five (5) voters pamphlets. The CA project is scheduled for public availability in the Spring of 2016.

**2. Mandated Public Safety Services (PSS)** There are plenty of expert opinions about the government's responsibility to provide PSS. The Association of Oregon Counties and the State of Oregon identified 20 PSS types and three categories of funding: 1. State provided, 2. State/County shared and provided, and 3. County provided.<sup>1-2</sup> What are the mandated state required PSS per the Oregon Constitution and the mandated JO CO Home Rule Charter PSS, as supplemented by any applicable court opinions? The JO CO Management Team's August 19, 2014 recommended strategy elements to identify mandated and elective PSS would be one place to initiate this research.

**3. MALPSS Standards<sup>3</sup>** Methodology to define Minimally Adequate Level of Public Safety Services (MALPSS), and to determine what it is for JO CO. For example, how would the county seek a declaration of a public safety fiscal emergency from the Governor of Oregon where fiscal conditions compromise the county's ability to provide a *minimally adequate level of public safety services* for state-required services (MALPSS; 2013 Oregon HB 3453), and how would the Governor of Oregon proclaim a public safety fiscal emergency? We believe that an opportunity for citizens to understand the standards, how JO CO would determine whether a MALPSS is being provided, is one of our elected officials most critical responsibilities. The practical value is not for a declaration, but a definition of the standards, and a real example of what that a declaration looks like (see Public Outreach 5.5, JO CO's MALPSS).

Let's remember the MALPSS question. It is much more than the question of whether the CO should turn over PSS to the State. First the CO must provide to the Governor, in a written MALPSS declaration of fiscal emergency request for a proclamation of a public safety fiscal emergency, that an analysis of the CO's fiscal conditions compromise its ability to provide a MALPSS. Next, the State's MALPSS analysis conclusion must agree with the CO. Finally, an intergovernmental agreement must be entered into that specifies the functions or activities to be performed, and by what means. The potential CO advisory question would have significant value for an informed public, if citizens understood the CO's proposed MALPSS declaration of fiscal emergency, before the advisory question was put to a vote. Otherwise, in the Committee's opinion, the people will not really understand what they are voting for, except yes or no, nor whether there was a PSS problem, or not, and by what standards.

**4. Accessible Vetted Public Facts/Inventories** Understanding is made more difficult with all those noisy facts when truth isn't always something as clear and unquestionable as desired. It is believed that a step in the right direction is for different publics, that don't trust each other to share vetted, or checked, information, for citizens to speak a common language, to solve problems, not to spend valuable time and energy discussing potential conflicting facts. For that purpose, a web page of "*listening*" to baseline information, vetted facts, and disputed facts, has been started for consideration by the public and in *Study*: letters-to-the-editor (over 800); guest opinions (10 and adding), media articles (over 650), voters pamphlets (5), and studies & information (24 - e.g., declining federal payments to counties, demographic & population, health, OR reports of criminal offenses and arrests, local crime information, budget, etc.).

**5. Zero Based Budgeting and Agency Staffing<sup>3</sup>** Defining patrol staffing allocation and deployment requirements is a complex endeavor which requires consideration of an extensive series of factors and a sizable body of reliable, current data. It is significantly beyond law enforcement to population ratios as a basis for staffing decisions. Zero-based budgeting is an approach to planning and decision-making that reverses the working process of traditional budgeting. In traditional incremental budgeting, departmental managers justify only variances versus past years based on the assumption that the "baseline" is automatically approved. By contrast, in zero-based budgeting, every line item of the budget, rather than only the changes, must be approved.

**6. Public Safety Services' Staffing Analysis<sup>3</sup>** Staffing decisions for the five safety tax levies/proposed sales tax/public safety fund PSS (i.e., 1. adult jail, 2. juvenile justice center, 3. district attorney's office, 4. rural patrol deputies, 5. criminal investigations & related sheriff's office support services, and 6. animal protection) must be made based upon actual workload and very few agencies have the capability of conducting that analysis. Once an analysis of the actual workload is made, then a determination can be made as to the amount of discretionary time that should exist, consistent with the community's ability to fund.

**Conclusion** In conclusion, we believe there is an real opportunity for practical research to effect meaningful change in the dynamic world of public policy in JO CO, with its environment of tight budgets, need to produce more with fewer resources, and a political environment of increased public mistrust in government.

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1. Oregon Secretary of State. May 2012. *Oregon's Counties: 2012 Financial Condition Review*. Report Number 2012-17, Secretary of State Audit Report Kate Brown, Secretary of State Gary Blackmer, Director, Audits Division. Salem, OR.

2. Association of Oregon Counties. October 1, 2010. *Task Force on Effective and Cost-Efficient Service Provision*. Rep. Nancy Nathanson, Chair.

3. Walker, Mike & Whalen, Jon, Members. JS&PSS Exploratory Committee, Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society. Very Draft December 15, 2015. *Appendix B4. Josephine County's Minimally Adequate Level of Public Safety Services (MALPSS) Standards, Including Law Enforcement Staffing & Deployment. Supporting Justice System & Public Safety Services Study Design: 2015*. Hugo, OR.

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