

CITIZENS FOR PUBLIC SAFETY FINAL REPORT



CONTENTS

Assumptions.....	2
Planning Process.....	2
Phase I.....	2
Phase II.....	3
Final Recommendation	3
Master Recommendation –Intergovernmental Commission.....	3
Recommendation 1 -Short Term Jail Funding Issue	3
Recommendation 2 -Restoring Community Trust	4
Recommendation 3 -Ambulance Service	4
Recommendation 4 -Emergency Management	4
Recommendation 5 -Prevention	4
Recommendation 6 -Law Enforcement Patrol.....	4
Recommendation 7 -Consolidation of Services and/ or Operations.....	4
Valuable Ideas Suggested	5
Conclusion.....	6

Citizens for Public Safety Final Report

ASSUMPTIONS

A recommendation of the 2020 Klamath Vision document is that the community develops a strategic plan to meet future needs of emergency services and law enforcement. The recommendation specifically states, “Immediately create a citizens/community led advisory panel to take testimony, discuss potential actions and provide input for the Strategic Planning Process.” The Citizens for Public Safety (CFPS) is borne from that call to action, and is an effort to evaluate Public Safety resources, service delivery and revenue options. The information gathered will then be presented to policy makers as recommendations to guide the future of Public Safety in Klamath County.

The Public Safety system in Klamath County relies heavily on multiple jurisdictions, agencies and funding sources. The system as a whole is no stronger than the sum of its parts. If one entity experiences difficulty in funding and decision-making, the entire system is affected.

Historically, the federal government paid Klamath County a percentage of funds generated from the sale of timber on federal lands located within the county. When timber sales declined, the federal government compensated Klamath County with direct payments. During the 1990s when the federal timber funding was at its peak, Oregon voters approved Ballot Measures 5 and 50, which placed constitutionally applied fixed limitation that restrict local government property tax revenue. Passed in 1995, Ballot Measure 50 set permanent tax rates for local government, at 1997 levels. The substantial amount of federal timber funding in the 1990s caused the permanent tax rate levels to be fixed artificially low. This created a tax rate, that when the timber money is removed, the revenue is inadequate to fund County services.

Further, the decrease in the local property tax revenue created by job loss, property foreclosures and empty homes that is reflective of the current economic down turn that began in 2008, coupled with the loss of timber funds and the economical, political and social climate presents a fiscal crisis for local government and has forced difficult decisions with regards to Public Safety service delivery.

PLANNING PROCESS

In order to ensure public involvement in this planning process, members of the CFPS steering committee issued press releases, was interviewed by local print and network television media, made public statements on radio and appeared several times on the local public access television show. The citizens answered. The information gathered represents the work of around 700 voices who participated at some point throughout the process. The process received input by email, public forum, small groups, large group sessions and a survey. At no time was any citizen removed from the process, and this document represents an effort to address all issues raised.

PHASE I

On Wednesday October 20, 2010 CFPS launched Phase I with a large group session. In this session the Steering Committee attempted to explain the existing problem and the upcoming CFPS process. Then those interested in participating in the process formed five sub-groups that focused on fire, police, corrections, emergency management and health. All of the sub-groups had citizen and agency representatives, and some agencies and citizens were represented on more than one sub-group.

Citizens for Public Safety Final Report

The sub-groups met and discussed the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) and did an analysis of Political, Economic, Social and Technological (PEST) impacts on their respective disciplines. They ended by looking at gaps, overlaps and making recommendations.

At the end of Phase I a newsletter was published (Appendix "A") that outlined the reports produced from each sub-group. Then these reports were verbally presented in a condensed version to a large gathering of citizens at OIT on February 1, 2011. A written outline of the work done by each subgroup is included as Appendix "B".

Further citizen input was solicited through the use of a survey (Appendix "C") taken directly from the points made by each sub-group and asking citizen's opinions of the points. The Survey Comments can be found as Appendix "D".

PHASE II

February 1, 2011, the same night that Phase I ended, Phase II was launched at OIT. At the large group session it was explained the process would continue as a single group and focus on the financial issues and combining the recommendations from Phase I into solutions. To insure proper representation of the citizen, a signup sheet was provided to allow people to be contacted when the meeting dates occurred.

Phase II included open discourse, educational presentation, brainstorming and small group activities. The results of Phase II are the rest of this document.

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

MASTER RECOMMENDATION – INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMISSION

In keeping with the 2020 Klamath Vision recommendation and as a result of this process, CFPS strongly recommends formation of a long term, commissioned, inter-governmental, cross jurisdiction, policy work group representing a City-County coordination effort comprised of citizens, city and county staff. The group shall be tasked by Klamath County's City and County governments to vet the recommendations in this report and make implementation proposals. Local policy makers must begin this process immediately, and there must be an open and public commitment to implementation.

RECOMMENDATION 1 – SHORT TERM JAIL FUNDING ISSUE

The jail needs to operate to its fullest capacity. This is based on significant citizen support, as reflected in this process. CFPS has engaged in a long term planning process, and the solutions we recommend have a lengthy implementation time frame creating the need to maintain a stable criminal justice system in the interim. Many solutions have been developed in separate forums; CFPS supports the following short term funding solutions:

- Recommend passage of the current Three-Year Local Option Tax for County Jail Operations;
- Alternative short term funding options include, but are not limited to, City/County Road Fund Exchange and Legislative support of using Road Funds for patrol.

Citizens for Public Safety Final Report

RECOMMENDATION 2 – RESTORING COMMUNITY TRUST

A constant theme of citizen input focused on mistrust of government. Regaining public trust is needed to strengthen Public Safety and successfully implement these recommendations. CFPS recommends a series of best practices to improve existing local government. Specific recommendations from CFPS for restoring community trust can be found in Appendix E.

RECOMMENDATION 3 – AMBULANCE SERVICE

The lack of ambulance volunteers has created gaps in Klamath County where immediate response services are sometimes unavailable. The inter-governmental policy work group should refer to the report from the Klamath County Ambulance Advisory Committee Subgroup, (Available upon request from the KCAAC) and formulate implementation recommendations to create stable county-wide ambulance coverage and provide back-up for volunteer service providers.

RECOMMENDATION 4 -EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Immediate financial stress has compromised emergency management planning. The CFPS recommends adequate funding of this program to satisfy state and federal mandates. Participatory and funding partnerships should be built among the various Public Safety agencies to ensure cooperation and funding stability.

RECOMMENDATION 5 -PREVENTION

Studies in Oregon revealed that every dollar invested in prevention programs is returned three-fold. For every youth we prevent from a life of crime or drug and alcohol abuse, we spare the American tax-payer millions of dollars in social service costs. There are dynamic and innovative youth and adult programs doing great things in Klamath County. CFPS recommends a greater coordination of efforts to realize advantages and increase efficiency. It would benefit the community to have a coordinator position oversee and direct prevention strategies. We also recommend government entities support anti-drug and alcohol abuse campaigns, a dedicated detoxification facility and sustained or enhanced treatment programs. Further detail can be found in Appendix “F”.

RECOMMENDATION 6 -LAW ENFORCEMENT PATROL

There is a need for stable funding for county wide patrol services. Police patrol services should be controlled and paid for by the citizens receiving service. CFPS discussion groups identified several options, all of which should be thoroughly vetted by the inter-governmental policy work group to determine the most viable. These options are described in detail in Appendix “G”.

RECOMMENDATION 7 -CONSOLIDATION OF SERVICES AND/OR OPERATIONS

Consolidation is subject to varying interpretations. The CFPS working definition of “Consolidation” is two organizations coming together in a joint venture of mutual benefit by mutual agreement. Consolidation of public services was suggested by citizens as a means to either achieve cost savings in service delivery or as a means of freeing up financial resources for Public Safety

Citizens for Public Safety Final Report

services by consolidating non-Public Safety services. CFPS discussion identified several consolidation options that are described in detail in the Consolidation tab of Appendix “G”. The inter-governmental policy work group should establish a working consolidation plan to benefit Public Safety.

VALUABLE IDEAS SUGGESTED

This section of the document gives voice to every other idea formally generated during the CFPS planning process. Although some are valuable, they do not come with specific recommendations. Some of these ideas can be immediately incorporated into local Public Safety systems. Other ideas brought forth were deemed to have already been adopted but not publicized, and still others were found to be impractical or not within the boundaries of the law.

Revenue sources, other than property taxes, were also explored by CFPS. Specifically included in the report were whether the source was preempted by State, what relevant statutes applied to this revenue if there were any revenue limits imposed on the County, if it could be used in the General Fund and then any comments as needed. This full report can be seen in Appendix “H” entitled Revenue Generation.

An example of ideas that can be implemented was the question, could the Public Safety agencies in Klamath County benefit from a single volunteer grant writer? This question was posed in the Health Subgroup during Phase I, and was originally posed as a grant writer for all ambulance agencies. During Phase II, the group chose to expand this question to include all Public Safety, and possibly a grant administering agency. This person would seek out grants sources, give Public Safety agencies updates to available grant funding opportunities, assist or write grants, and then administer the grants when awarded. For additional ideas on Volunteers and Partners refer to Appendix “I”.

Included in much of the discussion during the process was the economic development of Klamath County. Economic growth is hindered when Public Safety services are at risk. Conversely, when growth occurs within our economy, the cost of Public Safety is shared by a greater number. Therefore, it can be said that economic growth within Klamath County has a direct impact on stabilizing the funding of Public Safety.

An idea that is already being employed is the question should we use volunteer CPAs to analyze public budgets to include ‘lean’ thinking for all departments? By Oregon State Budget Law, the local government agencies must include the public in their budget adoption process. The issue of separate oversight is not feasible for all of Public Safety agencies on the wholesale, as this is an exercise that is already done by concerned citizens as a part of each particular agency’s budget committee.

Citizens for Public Safety Final Report

An example of an idea that was not feasible to implement was the question can we replace career Public Safety personnel with less expensive volunteer responders? Although at first this seems like a good idea to save the budget, Oregon has very strong worker rights laws that preclude the replacement of career public employee responders with volunteers. The use of volunteers in public response occurs only to augment the existing system and cannot be used legally to replace. For a complete list of other items brought up during this process refer to Appendix "J".

CONCLUSION

These recommendations and suggestions have all been discussed and determined to have merit within this forum. They are presented based on their own facts and stand or fail on their own merit. All owe a great thanks to the concerned citizens and local Public Safety officials that added their voice to the process of preserving Public Safety in Klamath County. Let no man say that "Citizens for Public Safety" was not a worthy effort.