

**General Meeting
Minutes
February 4, 2009**

Call to Order: John Goffinet called the meeting to order at 12:19 pm

Minutes- minutes were approved by the General Membership

Guests- Steve Mullens, Calusa CA; Dean Ferguson, Regional Representative for Congressman Walt Minnick; Chris Goetz, Clearwater County Sheriffs.

Announcements- Office will be closed Monday and Tuesday of next week and there will be a board meeting Monday.

Executive Director's Report-

There is a list of events on the website and the list of general membership meetings is in the Newsletter.

Committee Reports

Public Affairs - Dennis Harper

Policy Statement was approved by the board of directors.

-Legislative conference call- the issues at hand are ATV legislation and funding as well as licensing. There is also election consolidation issue that we are facing. State revenues down in report emailed out to the chamber members. Conference call is open to all members to attend. It is every Wednesday at 7am at Walruth insurance.

Promotional – Laura Wolverton

After hours- In need of business after hours? Need one second week in March. Clearwater Valley Hospital will hold theirs in April.

Auction Committee-Heather Leach

This committee will meet at the Mexican Restaurant this Friday the 6th at noon.

Programs – Stephanie Deyo

Next program is Chris St. Germaine with Bald Mountain ski hill update. Our program for today is Terema Carlin from the Orofino Prison.

Terema is here to talk to us about the rumors of the privatization of the Orofino Prison. Terema is Warden for the Orofino Prison and has been Warden for 5 weeks. She has worked for the Dept of Corrections for 12 years.

The governor of Idaho has asked the Dept of Corrections to cut 12% of their budget. The Director of the Dept of Corrections has come up with a plan which is called "No Growth for 2010." If the Dept does not grow they can save the 12% without losing any jobs. There may be more budget cuts from the state. The director has challenged his department to be able to meet any new budget cuts. This means making there programs and processes more efficient, part of this means making programs more affective at getting offenders to meet parole dates. It is much less expensive to have people on parole than incarcerated. So designing programs that help offenders reach these goals more efficiently is a high priority for the Department of Corrections. The Dept of Corrections is expecting final decisions from legislatures on budget cuts then end of next week.

They have looked at privatization of the facility because the private facility in Boise had renewed their contract for much less than what the Orofino Prison could do for costs. The RFI (request for information) process is asking for information about the Orofino Prison. There are about 141 state employees at this facility and 24 contract staff (medical and substance abuse managers). Maintenance issues will be included in the RFI as well as information on the project program (red shirts). Then they will send out this information to a multitude of private companies to see if they would be interested in contacting out services in running the prison. The information would help the companies know what there responsibilities would be to run the prison. The State would still own the facility, but the company would have to maintain the facility.

This is still 30 days of going out and if they find somebody is interested they will ask for an RFP (Request for Proposal). This is more like a bid as far as the Warden understands. That is more like 6 months on the RFP which makes this whole process about 1 year from completion.

Last week in Boise the Warden and the Director of the Dept. of Corrections met with Mayor Smathers and Rick Laam the City Administrator as well as others from Orofino and Clearwater County. There was a lot of concern and in this meeting Robin Sandy who is on the board of Corrections was made aware of the concerns of our area about this process. The board is the authority on whether or not the prison goes private or not.

They have encouraged their staff and the community to contact the legislatures with their concerns. The Warden understands that the community originally did not want the prison to be in Orofino. Now that it has been here it has become part of the community. The goal of the Warden today is to keep us informed at what is going on. She wants to have a representative at our public meetings and she introduced her staff in attendance. They were Deputy Warden Todd Martin who is in charge of security, business manager Kent Shriver, and Deputy Warden Eric McCackeren.

The Warden was unaware of any statistics between the public and privatization of prisons other than there is a higher violence rate in private prisons in contrast to public prisons. She is unaware of how many employees would be retained if the prison would be privatized or what their starting wage might be for employees of the prison.

Neal Johnson mentioned that there was a recent audit of the private prison in Southern Idaho that stated the violence of the prison was 3-1 in private prisons. Since the Sheriff has to come to every incident and investigate as well as prosecute in the County Courts this would be a huge increase in burden to our County if the violence rate increased to 3 times as much. This would be a cost to the taxpayers of Clearwater County. The concern is that we might lose the prison. If it came push come to shove that we would be better off with at least keeping the prison private or public.

Woody Biomass has been a big topic and Chris St. Germaine commented to the Warden that she was working on pushing this through to get Legislatures aware of cost saving benefits to make the prison more energy efficient to help save the prison money. She said she would get information to Kent Shriver to get this ball moving. Kent let us know about the project earnings. He said that they typically make around \$1 million a year that self funds the program. It pays for staff, vehicles, and equipment.

There was a comment from Dennis Harper about possibly having a board meeting here in Orofino. The Warden suggested that it might be a good idea to have the city invite. There is going to be a Northern Idaho representative on the board and her name is Janie Dresser. She is from Coeur d'Alene and hopefully will give us a Northern Idaho influence to the board of directors.

Adjourn