



TO: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager
FROM: Mark Lauzier, Assistant City Manager, City Manager's Office
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: **Resolution Authorizing an Agreement with Pierce County for Jail Services – June 16, 2015**
DATE: June 10, 2015

SUMMARY:

Resolution authorizing the execution of an agreement providing for the provision of jail services with Pierce County, effective July 1, 2015 through December 31, 2020. This is one of several agreements that in total will provide a long-term solution to meet Tacoma's jail incarceration needs.

COUNCIL SPONSORS:

Mayor Strickland and Council Members Campbell, Lonergan and Woodards.

STRATEGIC POLICY PRIORITY:

This emergency agreement for jail services best aligns with the following strategic policy priorities:

- Strengthen and support a safe city with healthy residents.
- Encourage and promote an efficient and effective government, which is fiscally sustainable and guided by engaged residents.

BACKGROUND:

In 2006, the City Council approved Resolution No. 36868 authorizing an execution of an agreement with Pierce Council for jail services from January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2015. In March 2015, the Pierce County Sheriff's Office suspended services to the City of Tacoma based on staffing shortages. The City began working with Pierce County on a long-term agreement in late February-early March as it became clear that an agreement for a long-term contract with the City of Fife was unlikely. The new proposed five-year jail services contract with Pierce County provides for keeping as many pre-sentenced inmates in Pierce County as possible.

By October 1, 2015, the Pierce County jail will be able to house 75 pre-sentenced inmates provided that the City of Tacoma provides six (6) monthly payments of \$98,996 (for a total of \$593,976) in 2015 to hire new staff and open a new jail pod. This funding for start-up costs would provide for training and overtime wages during the six-month ramp-up period (the second half of 2015).

In 2015, the City of Tacoma:

- Will pay Pierce County the start-up costs monthly payment plus a rate of \$75.80 per inmate bed.
- The \$75.80 per inmate bed represents a 21% decrease from the current daily rate of \$92 per inmate. Booking fees will be \$50 per inmate and transport costs to the Tacoma Municipal Court will be \$120 per trip regardless of the number of inmates transported on the trip.
- The proposed agreement also provides for the City to receive a credit for months in which the inmate population averages less than 75.
- In 2016, the monthly rate is anticipated to be \$75.25 which would yield a monthly payment of approximately \$171,665 for inmate bed days based on 75 beds.

**ISSUES**

Due to cancellation of the Fife jail services agreement by the City of Fife and the desire to have a more affordable, long-term agreement with Pierce County due to the pending jail services agreement expiration, the City of Tacoma must approve several jail agreements. These agreements will help provide a smooth and orderly transition from Fife to Pierce County and ensure Tacoma pre-sentenced misdemeanants can be booked and held at the Pierce County jail.

Recent developments regarding jail services agreements and operations are as follows:

1. **Fife Jail Services Contract Cancellation:** It is necessary for the City of Tacoma to assume the responsibility of coordinating jail services for Tacoma misdemeanants due to the City of Fife's notice of cancellation under the existing jail services agreement that was set to expire in 2022. Fife currently performs the key roles of booking and jail services coordination, the latter which will now have to be handled by a City department. Additionally, Fife subcontracts for sentenced inmate bed days with other corrections facilities including: SCORE (South CORrectional Entity), Yakima County and the Nisqually Tribe Corrections Department. The City of Fife has agreed to extend services through June 30, 2015; and the City Council will consider a resolution authorizing the execution of a standard emergency agreement for services with SCORE during the transition until December 31, 2015.
2. **Pierce County Sheriff's Office:** The City has a current jail services agreement with Pierce County that is set to expire on December 31, 2015 under which the Pierce County Sheriff's Office handles the City's booking and incarceration needs for City inmates. Beginning in March 2015, the Sheriff's Office suspended booking and incarceration services to Tacoma based upon staffing shortages as determined by the Sheriff's Office and/or Pierce County. The City began working with Pierce County to assist with jail population management in late February and early March.

ALTERNATIVES:

The City could negotiate an agreement with other jail facilities; however, keeping as many pre-sentenced inmates in the Pierce County jail as possible allows the court system to be most efficient.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff presented four jail related recommendations to the Public Safety, Human Services and Education Committee (PSHSE) at the Special Meeting on June 10th. The PSHSE approved the forwarding of the following action item to the full City Council for consideration:

- **Long-term and Cost Effective Jail Services Agreements for Pre-sentenced Inmates:** The Pierce County jail will be able to handle pre-sentenced inmates provided that the City provides them funding to hire staff to open a new pod. With an average daily population total of approximately 150-180 Tacoma inmates, the current capability of Pierce County will be limited to 75 pre-sentenced inmates after an aggressive recruitment process. An amendment to the proposed Pierce County agreement would be needed for any further expansion within Pierce County. Non-Pierce County jail solutions for sentenced inmates will be more cost effective.

FISCAL IMPACT:

A jail services contract has been negotiated with Pierce County which provides for keeping as many non-sentenced inmates in Pierce County as possible. The proposed \$75.80 per day per inmate rate is 21.4% lower than the current rate of \$92.00 being charged by Pierce County.



Actively managing the flow of inmates by establishing a coordinator/contract manager position to ensure smooth operations under the proposed three agreements is critical. The coordination role previously provided by Fife Corrections was not meeting Tacoma Municipal Courts' needs. Cutting out the "middle man" which currently results in a daily rate mark-up under the Fife contract will save substantial funding through bed location management efforts. The estimated cost of a contract manager to perform this function from September 1, 2015 for the remainder of the biennium is approximately \$160,000 which will be funded within current resources through daily bed rate savings.

Pierce County is currently housing about 25 Tacoma inmates. The one-time costs associated with Pierce County ramping up the staffing necessary to open another pod in order to handle the overall impact upon jail capacity needs due to Tacoma inmates is \$593,976. This provides the training and overtime funding for post coverage during the six-month staffing ramp-up period (second half of 2015). During the ramp up period the City will also be incurring daily inmate charges at Pierce County and also via the SCORE agreement. As Pierce County increases its jail capacity, the inmate count at SCORE will be reduced over a period of time which will save expenses. The Nisqually and Pierce County contracts are expected to save an estimated \$400,000 net of additional costs during the 2015-2016 Biennium. However, expenditure patterns have shown increased incarceration rates which at present would bring the projection down to a surplus of about \$200,000 at this very early point in the biennium. At this point in time City staff is not requesting additional resources but will need to revisit the contract impacts in six months.

