



Memorandum Date: November 28, 2023

Order Date: December 13, 2023

TO: Board of County Commissioners

DEPARTMENT: Lane County Administration Office

PRESENTED BY: County Administrator Steve Mokrohisky

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: DISCUSSION: IN THE MATTER OF ESTABLISHING THE
GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE LIMITED-DURATION
PUBLIC SAFETY FUNDING TASK FORCE

I. MOTION

None. Discussion only.

II. AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda item is to discuss with the Board of County Commissioners the guiding principles for the limited-duration Public Safety Funding Task Force.

III. BACKGROUND/IMPLICATIONS OF ACTION

A. Board Action and Other History

Steep decline in federal forest revenue (more than \$40 million annually in inflation-adjusted dollars) during the past 20 years has affected public safety funding particularly hard, resulting in a cost shift from federal funding to local funding and an inability to maintain critical services at an appropriate level without additional investment from taxpayers.

In 2005, a previous Public Safety Task Force convened to identify the gaps in the system and provide goals for the following five years. The final report included an analysis of possible funding opportunities to support the five-year goals; however, none were ultimately pursued.

After nearly 20 years, the work performed by the 2005 Public Safety Task Force is no longer accurate enough to inform current discussions and guide possible actions; however, it may serve as a framework for the current effort if appropriate.

Currently, the Lane County Sheriff's Office and the Youth Services Division receive voter-approved levy funds to help support a minimum of 255 local adult jail beds and 16 youth treatment and detention beds. The first levy was approved by voters in 2013 and has been renewed twice. It represents the only voter-approved funding specifically for public safety services provided by Lane County.

On October 17, 2023, the Board of County Commissioners voted to create a limited-duration task force of Lane County residents to explore funding opportunities for public safety services.

B. Policy Issues

A task force may be created by the County Administrator following an Order from the Board of County Commissioners delegating the responsibility to the County Administrator (Lane Manual 3.105).

C. Board Goals

Maintaining the stability of the public safety system in Lane County is directly in line with the strategic priority of "A Safe, Healthy County" as discussed in the 2022–2024 Lane County Strategic Plan. Objective B2 under the strategic priority expressly directs Lane County to "actively pursue a renewal of the 5-Year Public Safety Levy which ends June 2023."

D. Financial and/or Resource Considerations

The greatest resource will be the staff time required to support the task force, including logistical support, subject matter expert support, and coordination. It is possible the County Administrator will identify an independent facilitator to work with the task force. If that occurs there would be costs associated.

E. Health Implications

Health implications related to public safety can be identified most readily as the improvement in safety and wellbeing for residents and families across Lane County when our public safety system is able to support critical services. In the context of this task force, the public safety system includes those services provided by Lane County, such as the Sheriff's Office, District Attorney's Office, Parole & Probation Division, Youth Services Division, Behavioral Health Division, and the Office of Emergency Management.

F. Analysis

Engaging a non-partisan, limited-duration task force to evaluate and recommend possible long-term public safety funding solutions is an important first step in a community discussion regarding the future of public safety in Lane County.

The task force, once established, shall work together to create one or more recommendations to the County Administrator regarding funding opportunities

for public safety services provided by Lane County.

The guiding purpose of the task force is to identify possible funding solutions to more adequately support our public safety system to ensure Lane County remains a safe, healthy place for residents and visitors while addressing the reality of declining funding from traditional sources and the acknowledging the mandated responsibility of Lane County to provide many public safety services.

In order to support the task force, the County shall:

- provide task force members with location, materials and logistical support to conduct meetings.
- make available requested County staff who may have expertise or information that can assist the task force.
- provide access to requested existing information or documentation unless prohibited by statute.
- make all reasonable efforts to provide other logistical support to the task force as requested.

In turn, the task force shall be expected to:

- establish a regular meeting schedule that accommodates members' needs, allows for a quorum of members to be available at each meeting, and provides adequate time to take in information, evaluate options, and decide upon a recommended course(s) of action.
- thoroughly evaluate multiple funding options to support Lane County's public safety services.
- make use of the available County staff to request information, ask clarifying questions, and request resources necessary to support the work of the task force.
- focus their discussion on the needs of the public safety system services provided by Lane County Government, including services provided by the Sheriff's Office, District Attorney's Office, Parole & Probation Division, Youth Services Division, Behavioral Health Division, and the Office of Emergency Management, as well as the programs those departments and divisions may support or operate with community partners.
- provide the County Administrator with a final report that provides detailed information regarding the task force's recommended opportunities.
- be available to respond to questions from the Board of County Commissioners once the County Administrator presents the task force's final report to commissioners.

IV. ALTERNATIVES

Information only. No action requested at this time.

V. RECOMMENDATION

Information only. No action requested at this time.

VI. ATTACHMENTS

None.