

DRAFT – NOT REVIEWED BY THE COMMITTEE

**MDC REPURPOSING COMMITTEE
September 20, 2016
JEFFERSON COUNTY CLERK AND RECORDER CONFERENCE ROOM**

ATTENDANCE

Drew Dawson, Chair
John Driscoll
Ken Travis
Gary Craft
Tom Harrington
Rhandi Rachlis
Dick Norden
Sabrina Steketee
Dee Anna
Jim Heikes
Doug Scott
Debbie Gabse
Jan Anderson
Edie McClafferty (by phone)

Self-Introductions were made.

Governor's Office Report – Dan Villa

Dan Villa provided a short overview of the current status at MDC. Although progress is being made, there is still some difficulty with getting the clients placed and having a fail-safe system overall for placement. There is some uncertainty of the status of the ASU and there probably will be uncertainty until the end of the legislative session. There continue to be workforce issues for the developmental disability workforce in the state which can't be fixed in the next 8 months.

Dan has asked Bruce Guilio to take pictures of the facilities for the developer's package. An appraisal firm was selected yesterday.

[There was some additional information presented and some additional discussion. However, the recording was not started until later in the meeting and the chairman's notes were sketchy.]

Non-State Uses of the MDC Campus

Looking ahead – 2017 legislature – a preliminary discussion

Drew handed out a draft statement of testimony to present to the MDC Transition Council on Thursday, September 20th. [Only the final version is attached to these minutes.] He indicated the concept of keeping the MDC open had been brought up by Sabrina Steketee at the last BTAC meeting. After discussing this with several persons, Drew believes this is worth presenting to the Transition Council. As he sits through the Council meetings, everything is just trying to be accomplished in too fast a time frame. There is not time for the provider rates to get adjusted, there hasn't been time to think through the "fail-safe" mechanisms and, from our perspective, there hasn't been time to think through the implications for the community or to properly plan for repurposing. And, you can't repurpose as long as there are still going to be clients there.

It is also difficult for the state to plan what they are going to do with the facility while there are still clients present. No money to have a good fail-safe mechanism. The Administration is in an awkward position because of SB 411. It just makes sense because of the clients of MDC and because of the community to go on record as supporting this two year extension of time to support the full implementation of SB 411.

Discussion: there is some benefit for those folks at MDC for whom there is currently no plan. Neither Benchmark or aware took them and they are not currently in ASU. It would give the folks who have not yet been picked by someone a bit more sense of security that their needs will be accommodated.

Drew said he has had conversations with several families who are very uncomfortable with the current situation and would probably be comforted by this proposal.

Sabrina – the committee has come to the realization they need a facility of last resort, but they don't believe the legislature will choose Boulder. But, perhaps inserting some more time and space for some additional planning will help calm things down.

There is also a concern for potential new admits. The developmental disability needs of Montana do not get placed on hold during the transition or when MDC is closed.

There is also a need for more time to get state-operated group home up and running and to accept those patients who the providers will not accept. [There was discussion over the varying requirements of state-operated vs. privately operated group homes and a query about why

Jan: this statement takes a far more positive approach. And, she suggests some minor changes to convince legislature we are really trying to meeting the mandates of SB 411. [Changes were incorporated into the final document.]

The committee was comfortable with the statement. Drew believes it will generally be well received by the council and will frame the discussion in a positive way about the clients at MDC.

John Driscoll – as I read this language, it occurs to me that the skill sets of MDC employees and the mission of MDC might be very comparable to those required to help provide refugees with the skill sets to adjust to American life. Boulder sits within a 250,000 population area so a Voluntary Action Group (VAG), which has special status with the Department of State, might make a lot of sense IF the community has an interest. After watching what is going on in Missoula, Boulder could become a place where they are initially placed before they go out into the communities. MDC and the Boulder community have been addressing these type of issues for many years. Boise has a terrific program and may be willing to explain to Boulder. Richard Opper is a point of contact for Montana and has a person on his staff who is a contact for Lutheran Services. This may be an area to begin looking at and to address after the elections. It is a tough problem and we do not want to politicize it.

Tom Harrington suggested language be added to the statement about keeping the ASU open and that MDC may look very different in several years than what it looks now. [Language was added].

There was some discussion about the difference between the requirements between the community-based group homes and the state operated group homes with the those for the state home being more stringent. This is why they have had trouble finding suitable group homes in Boulder. There was discussion about the rationale for the cottages at MDC not being adequate for group homes, but the collective reasoning was that this was because the legislature mandated the closure of MDC and would likely not consider it.

Drew – we should also be thinking about the draft Master Plan when it is released. The committees will have assistance from MEDA as they begin fine tuning their individual action plans. If all goes well, this Master Plan can morph into the area's request for funding to the 2017 legislature. We need to consider other funding priorities as well.

There was a discussion of potential legislation. If the Governor's office adopts our proposal, they will propose the legislation and the budget. This will likely go to Appropriations Committee. However, Edie recommends that we have a bill drafted to submit so it is there as a contingency if something should "fall through the cracks". Then, it can be submitted in an alternate route. After the election, a legislator can submit requests for legislation and their first three (3) are drafted right away.

Sabrina said that Denise Hayman from Gallatin County is running unopposed for the House and could submit legislative drafting request now. It was agreed that this might be a good idea.

At the next meeting, we will review the ***Draft Process for Reviewing the Proposed MDC Campus Use***

The minutes of the August 30th meeting were approved as corrected by correcting the spelling of Dee Anna's name and correcting the language in the Proposed Language of Community

Criteria # 6 to strike: “and provide employment opportunities for them”. The language was corrected in the Community Criteria handout, but not in the minutes.

There was a question about the impact of the outcome of the Governor’s race. Undetermined.

NEXT MEETING IS OCTOBER 25TH at the BOULDER CITY HALL at 3:30 pm.

DRAFT