

Richardson Co Commission Receive Final Jail Feasibility Study

(KLZA) -- Richardson County Commissioners Tuesday received the final feasibility study from Prochaska and Associates for an addition to the armory on the west edge of Falls City to be used for a new jail.

Steven Riley and Jay Weingarten presented a program for Commissioners and audience members including Denny McComber, Chief of the Nebraska Jail Standards Board.

The proposal indicates a need for a 24-bed jail over the next 20 years and would required an additional three persons to work at the facility, which would create a need for an additional \$119,000 in the annual jail budget.

McComber said Jail Standards would be looking as the final plans for the facility would be developed to make sure it could hold "heavy hitters." He noted Richardson County has had a history of prisoners that have been difficult to deal with.

One of the topics discussed was the need to form a committee to help present information to the public about the need for a new jail in Richardson County. Commission Chairman David Sickel said he feels that would be a good idea.

The Prochaska representatives provided cost estimates for a 24 bed jail built from scratch at \$4-5-million. They said since Richardson County already has the armory facility an addition of approximately 3,500 square feet is being considered on the front of the current building, so costs should be much less.

Just last week Gage County Board members held a discussion about closing down their jail and transporting prisoners to other counties to be held. Steve Riley said that has not proved to be a good option for other counties in the past. He noted that over 20 years of transporting prisoners, you may have costs equal to having built multiple jails.

Another question posed concerned future space needs if at some point the Richardson County Sheriff's Department was to be the only law enforcement division in the County. Sheriff Houser said there is plenty of space if that were to happen.

Commissioners will continue to look at the possibility. They are expected to go ahead with repairs to the roof of the armory building. It is likely the project would not go to bid until the Fall of 2014 if it continues to move forward.

Many Signals Communications