



TUOLUMNE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"Serving with Professionalism and Pride"

Bill Pooley

Sheriff Cor

FILED

JUN 14 2019

Superior Court of California
County of Tuolumne

By: Diana Neely Clerk

June 11, 2019

The Honorable Kate Powell-Segerstrom
Tuolumne County Superior Court
60 North Washington Street
Sonora, CA 95370

Re: Response to the Grand Jury Report- Tuolumne County Jail

The following is offered in response to the 2018-2019 Grand Jury Report as it pertains to the Tuolumne County Jail.

Grand Jury Recommendations

R1: Recruit officers to fill current vacancies. This may include seeking additional budget funding.

(F1): The Jail is currently understaffed by four officers. With the opening of the new jail in 2019, additional officers will need to be hired.

Sheriff's Office Response (R1):

It is not uncommon to have a small number of job vacancies in our industry. Since the Grand Jury's tour we have hired three Jail Deputies. The Jail is currently fully staffed. Two additional deputy applicants have completed the background process and are ready to be hired as the vacancies arise. The recruitment and testing process for the opening of the new jail in the spring of 2020 is currently underway.

The Sheriff's Office has a recruitment team that continually attends job fairs, colleges, law enforcement academy's and meets regularly to project out future hiring needs.

Grand Jury Recommendations

R2: Address safety and health issues. These will need to be addressed if the building continues to be occupied as planned.

(F2): Safety issues found in the 2017-2018 Grand Jury report have not been addressed. These would include the gray water being collected in the drums rather than repairing the pipes and correcting the extension cord running down the hall.

Sheriff's Office Response (R2):

“Gray water being collected in drums rather than repairing the pipes.” This issue have been addressed. It should be noted this solution has passed inspections from the Environmental Health Department, the Public Health Department and the Board of State and Community Corrections.

In attempting to be good stewards of the taxpayer's money we have determined that the cost of these repairs would be far too great for a facility that will be decommissioned in the spring of 2020.

Sheriff's Office Response (R2) continued:

“Extension cord running down through a hallway into a cell block.” The extension cord provides power for an inmate's required special medical equipment. In the housing units at the current jail, we do not have power outlets available for these types of medical devices. This issue has been addressed in the plans for the new Jail.

R3: Adhere to security measures. This could entail refresher training on admitting private citizens into the Jail.

(F3): There appeared to be a lack of adherence to security protocol.

Sheriff's Office Response (R3):

There is no specific breach or lack of security protocols indicated in (R3) or (F3). However, the Discussion section of the report stated the following: **“A private citizen in the foyer when the 2018-2019 Grand Jury was receiving information about Jail operations, safety protocols and procedures.”**

Clarification: The information that was given in the “foyer” related to the activities that take place in that area, which is the Jail's public lobby. The information provided to the Grand Jury dealt with the operations in that specific area, which included, onsite video visitation, use of the money kiosk for putting money into inmate accounts, how to communicate with central control (for someone turning themselves in to the jail on a commitment or warrant), assistance with bail bonds processing, and attorney visits. As this is a public area, all information provided is available to the public in the normal course of business and should not be perceived as any type of security breach, as it is public information.

We have a minimum of 6.5 hours of training per month. This includes various types of training including safety and security of the facility.

R4: Pursue educational opportunities and rehabilitation programs for inmates. This may include studying for and obtaining a GED or post-secondary degree, and counseling services. Maybe some retired professionals would be willing to donate their time.

(F4): Better educational opportunities and rehabilitative programs may reduce repeat incarcerations.

Sheriff's Office Response (R4): The following is a list of Jail Programs that are currently available to all inmates.

GEO JEEP Program: A comprehensive program that includes Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT), Parent Effectiveness, Anger Management, Release Preparation, Educational and Individual Counseling.

Education Services Program: HiSet (High School Equivalency Test) is a GED and High School diploma program. In addition educational services related to Adult Education and/or college preparation are available. The County Superintendent of Schools offers educational counseling and support services such as tutoring, obtaining records, evaluating students' academic status, and granting diplomas to those that meet the criteria.

Release Preparation Program: Inmates are provided with the "Living on the Outside Handbook," and/or GEO "Passport" handbook, and a comprehensive directory of services to help them develop an individual release plan. They are also seen by the Department of Social Services staff to establish eligibility of Medi-Cal and other community services. A Substance Abuse Counselor will assess their needs for drug and alcohol treatment and referrals. The Jail Programs staff will also review their plan.

C.A.S.E (Clean and Sober Experience) Program: This is the Jail drug and alcohol treatment program that is a collaboration between the Sheriff's Office and Behavioral Health. This program features the Phoenix "New Freedom In Cell" curriculum. Volunteer staff supplements this program with services such as AA, NA, Celebrate Recovery, and Red Road Recovery.

Behavioral Health: Mental health services are available to all inmates on referral by the Jail medical staff, custody staff or inmate request. Programs are available through both the Tuolumne County Behavioral Health Department and our medical vendor Wellpath.

Misc. Inmate Services: Veteran's, Chaplain, Clergy, Bible Study, Native American Social Services, Recreational Reading Library (materials include: recreational reading, educational, variety of self-help resources, spiritual, and drug and alcohol recovery literature).

Work Crew Programs: In house programs include: kitchen, laundry and janitorial. Outside the facility programs include: nursery/agricultural, wood working, brush clearing for fire prevention, landscape, and sawyer programs. Providing inmates with vocational skills and a work ethic help them stay productive while serving their sentence and has been shown to promote positive inmate behavior and to reduce recidivism.

Grand Jury Report Clarification Points

Under Jail Inspection Section:

“Recently the Jail installed a state of the art visitation system in the front of the Jail. Visitors can now communicate with inmates via monitors that have been installed in the reception area.”

Sheriff's Office Clarification: Family and friends of inmates can also have video visitation with inmates from remote sites such as their homes by using any type of smart device, thus providing more inmate access to visitation.

“Safety and sobering cells are designed for a single person”.

Sheriff's Office Clarification: Only Safety cells are designed for a single person. The Sobering cells occupation is determined by square footage required per person. We are rated at 3 people per Sobering cell.

“Due to the limited space, entrance to the women's lockers necessitated going through the men's locker room. Training was also done in this area.”

Sheriff's Office Clarification: Female deputies currently have a separate entrance to their locker room through the garage in the basement of the Jail. Training only occurs in this area when other venues are not available.

Under Staffing Section:

“Minimum staffing, as required by law, is one supervisor and four deputies.”

Sheriff's Office Clarification: There is no law that outlines staffing ratios for adult corrections. This ratio has been determined by the Sheriff's Office to provide for the safety and security of inmates, staff and the safe operation of the facility.

The Minimum staffing level referenced in the Grand Jury report is the minimum number of staff required to cover a Graveyard shift.

The minimum staffing for Dayshift is one Sergeant and five deputies. Dayshift is augmented during regular business hours by (1) classification deputy, (3) work crew deputies, (4) transportation deputies as well as (2) additional Sergeants and the Jail Commander.

Under Programs Section:

“Inmates have access to computer terminals that allow them some limited online research.”

Sheriff's Office Clarification: Inmates do not have computer terminals that allow online/internet research. Inmates use kiosks in the housing units for video visitation, phone calls, incoming USPS mail, emails to family and friends, request forms to deputies, commissary orders and inmate account balances.

Requests for legal information are done with paper forms through Legal Research Associates.

“Unfortunately the recidivism rate is quite high. Of 251 inmates in one year, 56 returned to jail (22.3%).”

Sheriff's Office Clarification: The source of these statistics is unknown and at this time we cannot verify the accuracy of the numbers referenced in the Grand Jury report.

To date we have had 314 inmates participate in our outside inmate work crews. 67 of those inmates were rearrested in our county. Which equals a recidivism rate of 21.3%.

We are substantially lower than the National recidivism rate of 43.9% as provided by DOJ's May 2018, 30 States Report and California Prison recidivism rate is 46.1% provided in their 2018 Recidivism Report.

The Tuolumne County recidivism rate is one of the lowest in the state of California.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the findings and recommendations. Please feel free to contact the Sheriff's Office if you should have any further questions.

Sincerely,



**Bill Pooley
Sheriff-Coroner**