

MENDOCINO COUNTY JAIL, COURTHOUSE HOLDING CELLS, AND EVIDENCE ROOM

March 20, 2006

SUMMARY

In accordance with duties required, the Mendocino County Grand Jury visited the Mendocino County Jail, Mendocino County Courthouse Holding Cells, and the Mendocino County Evidence Room.

BACKGROUND

California Penal Code §919 (b) states that "The Grand Jury may inquire into the conditions and management of the public prisons within the county."

METHODS

The Mendocino County Grand Jury toured the Mendocino County Jail Facility, including the Sally Port (inmate delivery) and Booking Area, the Mendocino County Courthouse Holding Cells, and the Mendocino County Evidence Room. The Grand Jury interviewed jail personnel, Deputies, and Evidence Room Technicians, and attended meetings of the Mendocino County Criminal Justice Policy Council.

MENDOCINO COUNTY JAIL

FINDINGS

1. The Mendocino County Jail (MCJ) can currently accommodate 302 inmates.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

2. There are currently 57 budgeted positions for the Corrections Department: one Captain, two Sergeants, eight Corporals and 46 Correctional Deputies, not including additional support staff.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

3. The position of Correctional Deputy was recently reclassified under California Penal Code Section §830.1.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this

finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

4. In the current contract, Correctional Deputies are scheduled to receive a three percent pay raise spread over 18 months. Additional qualifications, such as an AA or BA degree or Field Training Instructor status, will result in a further increase, up to a maximum of eight percent.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

5. There are Bi-Lingual Correctional Deputies, with pay incentives for those who qualify, at a rate of three percent for basic command of a second language and five percent for advanced knowledge.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

6. Correctional Deputies receive \$1,000 a year as a clothing allowance.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors disagrees with this finding. Please see the response provided by the Sheriff.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO disagrees with this finding. Please see the response provided by the Sheriff.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff disagrees with this finding. The amount is actually \$800.00

7. In 2005 there was a 13.6% turnover rate among Correctional Deputies.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

8. Basic Correctional Deputy training consists of twelve weeks working in-house with a Field Training Deputy, six weeks of Core (basic) training, and three weeks of California Penal Code Section §832 training.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors disagrees in part with this finding. Please see the response provided by the Sheriff.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO disagrees in part with this finding. Please see the response provided by the Sheriff.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff disagrees in part with this finding. The Sheriff agrees that the Core (basic) training is six weeks, however the initial in-house training is thirteen weeks and the California Penal Code Section 832 arrest and firearms training is two weeks.

9. Correctional Deputies do most of the transporting of inmates; Field Deputies transport inmates on an “as needed” basis.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

10. MCJ has received funding for five Sheriff’s Service Technicians to relieve the bottleneck in the Booking Room.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

11. The average stay for an inmate in the MCJ is 16.6 days.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

12. There are currently six Tasers available to Correctional Deputies on duty.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

13. From January to June of 2005 there were 21 incidents of Taser use by Correctional Deputies; from July to December 2005 there were five incidents of Taser use.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

14. There is a medical doctor on staff and on call who sees to the health needs of the inmates.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

15. There is one full-time Registered Nurse Manager on staff.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors

agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

16. A Licensed Vocational Nurse is on duty at all times.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

17. There is a psychiatrist on staff who spends up to 15 hours a week at the MCJ; in 2005 there were 1,636 psychiatric visits.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

18. Mental Health workers from the Mendocino County Mental Health Department provide counseling for inmates. The number of visits from Mental Health workers in 2005 was 4,542.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

19. The medical staff creates and maintains medical records on all inmates.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

20. The nurse on duty dispenses inmates' medications at the direction of a medical doctor.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

21. There is an extremely high percentage of inmates with a history of methamphetamine use.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this

finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.
22. There is no Social Worker on staff.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

23. The MCJ works with the Ukiah Adult School for inmates who want to earn a GED.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

24. There are Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA) programs available for inmates.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

25. At the time of inspection, there were many significant problems with the MCJ facility, including malfunctioning door locks, roof leaks, aging plumbing, floor tile in need of replacement, and inadequate storage space.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim GSA Director): The Interim GSA Director agrees with this finding.

26. Mendocino County General Services is charged with the maintenance of the MCJ.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

MENDOCINO COUNTY COURTHOUSE HOLDING CELLS

FINDINGS

1. There are four Holding Cells.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors

agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

2. All Holding Cells were clean and all fixtures were in working order at the time of inspection.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

3. Thirty minutes is the average amount of time an inmate occupies a Holding Cell.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

4. A Correctional Deputy is stationed outside a Holding Cell when it is occupied.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

5. There is no video surveillance or monitoring system for the Holding Cells.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

6. The different colored coveralls worn by inmates indicate to Correctional Deputies the security classification of each inmate.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

7. Female inmates are separated from male inmates in the Holding Cells.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

8. Sheriff's Department vehicles transport inmates between the MCJ and the

Mendocino County Courthouse.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

MENDOCINO COUNTY EVIDENCE ROOM

FINDINGS

1. The Evidence Room is used by the Mendocino County Sheriff's Department and the Mendocino County Major Crimes Task Force.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

2. At the time of inspection the Evidence Room was well maintained.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

3. Staffing at the Evidence Room is insufficient to purge the large quantities of out-dated evidence.

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The Interim CEO agrees with this finding.

Response (Sheriff): The Sheriff agrees with this finding.

OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Grand Jury recommends that:

1. a social worker be added to the staff of the MCJ. (MCJ Finding 22)

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The recommendation has not yet been implemented and requires further analysis. Please see the response provided by the Sheriff. The Board expects the analysis to be completed within 12 months.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The recommendation has not yet been implemented and requires further analysis. Please see the response provided by the Sheriff. The Interim CEO expects the analysis to be completed within 12 months.

Response (Sheriff): The recommendation requires further analysis due to being part of the request for proposal in the third round of the Mentally Ill Offender Crime Reduction Grant. If received will begin in 2007.

Response (Interim GSA Director): The recommendation has not yet been implemented and requires further analysis. Please see the response provided by the Sheriff.

2. the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors should at the earliest possible date relocate and consolidate all of the Mendocino County Justice facilities to one central location on a site that is easily accessible. (MCJ Finding 25 and Holding Cell Finding 8)

Response (Mendocino County Board of Supervisors): The recommendation has not yet been implemented and requires further analysis. The Board has directed its Criminal Justice Committee to oversee the progress toward the goal of consolidation of Criminal Justice Facilities. The General Services Agency is currently reviewing Request for Qualifications for a Feasibility Study to be completed. The Board expects the analysis to be completed within the next 24 months.

Response (Interim Chief Executive Officer): The recommendation has not yet been implemented and requires further analysis. The Board has directed its Criminal Justice Committee to oversee the progress toward the goal of consolidation of Criminal Justice Facilities. The General Services Agency is currently reviewing Request for Qualifications for a Feasibility Study to be completed. The Interim CEO expects the analysis to be completed within the next 24 months.

Response (Sheriff): Further analysis needs to be completed prior to implementation. The Criminal Justice Master Plan and Needs Assessment are complete. The Feasibility Study will be complete in the first quarter of 2007.

This will have budgetary impacts and those costs are going to be explored in a feasibility study. We will continue to work with our criminal justice partners, the County Executive Officer, and the Board of Supervisors to achieve this recommendation.

Response (Interim GSA Director): The recommendation has not yet been implemented and requires further analysis. The General Services Agency is currently reviewing Request for Qualifications for a Feasibility Study to accomplish the goal of the combining of Criminal Justice Facilities. We expect the analysis will be completed within the next 24 months.

COMMENTS

The Grand Jury commends the staff of the Mendocino County Jail for the tremendous work they do in maintaining a safe environment for the staff and inmates. The challenges are enormous considering the poor condition of the antiquated facilities in which they have to work. The creation of a Criminal Justice Policy Task Force, though long overdue, gives reason to expect positive change in a system badly in need of improvement.

RESPONSES REQUIRED

Mendocino County Board of Supervisors (all Findings and Recommendations)
Mendocino County Chief Executive Officer (all Findings and Recommendations)
Sheriff, Mendocino County (all Findings and Recommendations)
Director, Mendocino County General Services (MCJ Finding 25, Recommendation 2)