



TUOLUMNE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"Serving with Professionalism and Pride"

JAMES W. MELE
SHERIFF-CORONER


FILED

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Superior Court of California
County of Tuolumne

By:  Clerk

September 25, 2014

The Honorable Judge, Donald Segerstrom 
Tuolumne County Superior Court
60 North Washington Street
Sonora, CA 95370

Re: Response to 2013-14 Grand Jury Findings & Recommendations

Dear Judge Segerstrom:

The following is the response related to the Tuolumne County Jail section of the 2013-14 Grand Jury Report as requested and required pursuant to Penal Code Sections 933 and 933.05. Below you will find listed each Grand Jury finding or recommendation followed by my response to each.

Tuolumne County Jail Findings

F1. Finding: *The jail is dilapidated and needs immediate replacement.*

Response: I agree with this finding.

F2. Finding: *The Jail Repair Project was a temporary fix.*

Response: I agree with this finding.

F3. Finding: *The booking and intake area and other hallways are too congested.*

Response: I agree with this finding.

F4. Finding: *The control room has too many operations for the small staff.*

Response: I agree with this finding.

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To: Honorable Donald Segerstrom

From: Sheriff James W. Mele

F5. Finding: *The lack of personnel to monitor the visiting space influences the available visiting time.*

Response: The Tuolumne County Sheriff's Office has worked within the facility visiting space limitations and personnel limitations by creating an inmate visiting schedule that provides for all inmates to receive one visit per week totaling one hour per inmate each week. Title 15 states that in Type II facilities there shall be allowed no fewer than two visits totaling at least one hour per inmate each week.

F6. Finding: *The recreation area is on the roof and noise impacts nearby residents resulting in restrictions on inmates.*

Response: The Tuolumne County Sheriff's Office has worked within the facility recreation area limitations by designing a program that allows a minimum of three hours of exercise distributed over a period of seven days for all inmates as required in Title 15.

F7. Finding: *Space in many of the work areas fails to meet Federal (OSHA) and State (CAL/OSHA) egress safety standards.*

Response: I agree with this finding.

F8. Finding: *The required multitasking of jail employees translates into overburdened staff.*

Response: I agree with this finding.

F9. Finding: *The current counseling programs have a positive effect on inmates.*

Response: I agree with this finding.

Recommendations

R1. Recommendation: *Continue to seek additional funding to complete the Jail Project.*

Response: I agree with this recommendation.

R2. Recommendation: *No recommendation.*

Response: I agree with this recommendation.

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R3. Recommendation: *Avoid crowded spaces by ensuring that the new facility follows the established planning and design methods outlined in the US Department of Justice, Jail Design Guide.*

Response: I agree with this recommendation.

R4. Recommendation: *Provide dedicated spaces for various operational functions by ensuring that the new facility follows the established planning and design methods outlined in the US Department of Justice, Jail Design Guide.*

Response: I agree with this recommendation.

R5. Recommendation: *Providing a modern visiting facility in the new jail will allow more visit time for the inmates and reduce strain on the jail staff. Using a video system can provide visiting from remote locations and may be funded through the Inmate Welfare Fund.*

Response: I agree with this recommendation.

R6. Recommendation: *Provide adequate space for inmate recreational activities by ensuring that the new facility follows the established planning and design methods outlined in the US Department of Justice, "Jail Design Guide."*

Response: I agree with this recommendation.

R7. Recommendation: *The Sheriff and Jail management must provide safe egress paths for all office spaces in the existing Jail. Regarding the proposed new Jail, adequate office spaces and safe egress routes must be ensured. The new facility shall follow the established planning and design methods outlined in the US Department of Justice Jail Design Guide. Reference shall also be made to OSHA and CAL/OSHA's New Construction Regulations and Standards.*

Response: I agree with this recommendation.

R8. Recommendation: *No recommendation.*

Response: I agree with this recommendation.

R9. Recommendation: *Continue pursuing JEEP Grants for the counseling programs.*

Response: I agree with this recommendation. The JEEP program is not a grant, it is paid for through the AB109 funding and we will continue with the program.

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Tuolumne County Behavioral Health Department

F15. *Finding:* There is no secured room currently available for patients awaiting medical clearance and/or mental health evaluations.

R15. *Recommendation:* *The Jury recommends that SRMC and the community partners make every effort in FY 2014-15 to establish a secure room for potential 5150 patients.*

Response: I agree with this recommendation, the facility should move toward becoming a **Secured Nursing Facility**.

Sincerely,



James W. Mele
Sheriff-Coroner

Cc: Craig Pedro, County Administrator