

TUOLUMNE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"Serving with Professionalism and Pride"

James W. Mele
Sheriff-Coroner

July 28, 2015

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

(Handwritten initials)

FILED

AUG 06 2015

Superior Court of California
County of Tuolumne
By: *(Signature)* Clerk

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

The following is offered in response to the 2014-2015 Grand Jury Report as it pertains to the Tuolumne County Jail.

Grand Jury Findings

Finding #1 The Grand Jury finds that, despite the age of the facility, the jail is well maintained and sanitary.

Response: Agree

Finding #2: The Grand Jury finds that signage from the courthouse locating the reporting entrance of the Jail facility is inadequate and proper directions are not given to the defendant at the time of sentencing

Response: Agree

Grand Jury Recommendations

Recommendation #1 No response requested

Recommendation #2 The Grand Jury recommends that by December 31, 2015, the Board of Supervisors approve and the County install four new signs as follows:

- A) One sign on the corner of Washington and Yaney streets (visible from either direction on Washington Street), that says "JAIL" with the address and arrows pointing in the appropriate direction.
- B) One sign, measuring 20" x 30", with lettering that is visible from 30 feet, on the front of the Tuolumne County Justice Building at 28 N. Lower Sunset directing persons around the corner to the Yaney Street entrance to the Jail.

- C) One double-faced sign, hung perpendicular to Yaney Street, which clearly states this is the entrance to the jail.
- D) Install a sign in the lobby of the jail that clearly stated "For assistance or to report to Jail push button" in no less than 3-inch letters and to make the button to call for assistance stand out by using a fluorescent color.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented; see below for request and time specific responses

The specific signage recommended by the Grand Jury is a reasonable approach to an identified problem. However, while the Sheriff has a keen interest in addressing the recommendations of the Grand Jury, there are several concerned parties who should be consulted prior to implementation of the recommendation.

- A) Signage at the corner of Washington and Yaney streets directing to the Jail will need to be mounted to the City of Sonora's sign posts. If such determination is made, the City of Sonora must be consulted and a request for the sign postings granted by the City Council. Upon approval from City Council, Tuolumne County Facilities Management will be consulted regarding the commission and hanging of signage. Expected timeframe for approval/disapproval by City of Sonora, commission of sign and mounting is within 6 months.
- B) Signage that will accommodate the 30 foot visibility requirement requested by the Grand Jury and may be necessary to mount the signage on street-side sign posts to achieve the greatest visibility. If such determination is made, the City of Sonora must be consulted and a request for the sign postings granted by the City Council. Upon approval from City Council, Tuolumne County Facilities Management will be consulted regarding the commission and hanging of signage. Expected timeframe for approval/disapproval by City of Sonora, commission of sign and mounting is within 6 months.
- C) Tuolumne County Facilities Management will be contacted immediately to begin the process of making and affixing a sign to the Jail building. Expected timeframe is within 1 to 2 months.
- D) Tuolumne County Facilities Management will be contacted immediately to begin the process of making and affixing a fluorescent sign with instructions for assistance. Expected timeframe is within 1 to 2 months.

Recommendation #2-1 The Grand Jury recommends that the Sheriff create and provide to the court a map with directions to the jail and reporting instructions to be included in the defendant's sentencing paperwork, to be implemented by December 31, 2015.

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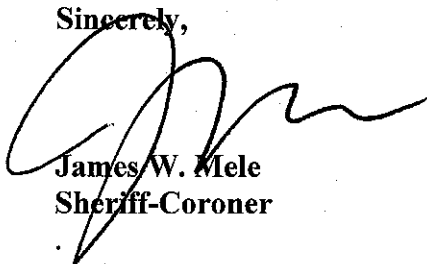
Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented; but will be implemented immediately with approval by Presiding Judge.

The Grand Jury also recommended a printed map to the jail should be provided by the court to defendants directed into custody at the time of their sentencing. This recommendation meets the needs identified by the Grand Jury and is easily carried out once approved by the Presiding Judge

The printed maps to the Jail from the courthouses can be undertaken immediately upon concurrence of the Presiding Judge.

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James W. Mele', written over a printed name and title.

**James W. Mele
Sheriff-Coroner**