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JUN 24 2014

Trinity County  
Board of Supervisors  
By: \_\_\_\_\_



## Superior Court of California County of Trinity

ELIZABETH W. JOHNSON  
Judge

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Trinity County Sheriff Department  
Board of Supervisors ✓  
Trinity County CAO

**FROM:** Staci Holliday, Court Secretary

**DATE:** June 24, 2014

**RE:** 2013-2014 Trinity County Grand Jury Report  
*JUR-2013-2014-006 Trinity County Adult Detention Facility:*

This report is being provided to your department pursuant to Section 933.05 of the Penal Code relative to grand juries. Penal Code § 933.05(f) requires that grand juries, **following approval by the Superior Court Presiding Judge and at least two working days prior to the public release of the report**, shall furnish each respondent a copy of the report which pertains to the respondent. No respondent shall disclose any contents of the report prior to the public release of the final report.

This report will become a matter of public record on **June 30, 2014**. Sections 933 and 933.05 require you to respond in writing to the findings and recommendations pertaining to matters under the control of you or your department. Your original response should be addressed to Elizabeth Johnson, Presiding Judge of Trinity Superior Court with a copy to the County Administrative Office "Clerk of the Board".

Enclosure

TRINITY COUNTY GRAND JURY  
2013-2014

Judicial Committee  
Final Report

JUR-2013-2014-006 - Trinity County  
Adult Detention Facility

Approved April 21, 2014  
Bob Morris, Foreperson

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JUN 23 2014

TRINITY COUNTY  
SUPERIOR COURT

**2013-2014 Trinity County Grand Jury  
Judicial Committee Investigation  
Final Report  
JUR-2013-2014-006 - Trinity County Adult Detention Facility**

**April 21, 2014**

**Summary**

The Grand Jury is required to annually inspect the county's incarceration facilities. This requirement was met for the Juvenile Hall, The State Conservation Camp, and the County Jail. This report focuses strictly on the county jail, which is operated by the Sheriff's Department. As has been the case in previous years, the County Jail remains in a state of physical decline with plumbing, air conditioning, electrical, furnishings, and structures falling into a dilapidated state. Serious insufficiencies remain in staffing levels, pay equity, and humanitarian conditions. The jail rests in such a state that immediate actions must be taken to protect the community, staff, and the inmates.

**Glossary**

**TCJ – County Jail  
CO – Correctional Officer  
JW – Jail Warden  
DC – 911 Dispatch Center  
TCS - Trinity County Sheriff  
CAO – Chief Administration Officer  
BOS – Board of Supervisors  
TCSCJ – Trinity County Superior Court Judge.**

**Background**

The Grand Jury by law must inspect the CJ annually. This inspection was made on April 3, 2014. The Jail resides within the Weaverville city limits. It can house up to 53 inmates. The jail is arranged to support and segregate males and females. The jail also houses the 911 dispatch center. This 24x7 system is currently being upgraded to support all emergency call formats and mapping. The dispatchers serve 12-hour shifts. If the dispatcher cannot complete a shift, then he/she is replaced with another CO working in the facility. Television cameras are distributed around the jail to monitor the cells, dormitories, and inmate yard. These locations are visible in the dispatch center using overhead television screens.

The cost per inmate is \$100/day. As required, inmates receive medical care including medications and oxygen. The jail has a small library. Inmates are given opportunities to complete high school. If an inmate wishes, religious services are available.

The inmate population of the inspection date was 39. The CO staff consisted of a dispatcher, two guards, and the JW.

### **Method of Investigation**

The method of investigation for this report was a guided inspection led by the JW.

### **Discussion**

As a result of the inspections the Grand Jury found significant deficiencies in the TCJ:

1. The DC has recently been outfitted with a multi-camera system that allows viewing the inmates in the dormitories and the exercise yard. However, because of insufficient staffing, these cameras cannot be monitored continuous. The dispatcher works in the same room as the video screens, but he/she cannot focus on the screens and respond to calls simultaneously. Hence, inmate behavior cannot be detected.
2. Sometimes during heavy workloads a CO must be pulled from the floor to help in the DC. This violates prison rules that two CO's must be on the floor at all times.
3. The 911 computer system will be upgraded to a modern system that supports all call formats and a mapping system. Though this 911 system is improved technology, the CJ does not have adequate space and environmental systems to support the equipment. Essentially a storage closet was converted to house computer and data communications equipment. The corresponding AC upgrades do not appear to be upgraded to the required level.
4. The intercom system from the inmate areas to the DC does not work. Serious problems can, therefore, arise and the jail staff cannot be notified.
5. Though female inmates exist in the TCJ, only one(1) female CO exists. This shortfall presents a serious deficiency when issues arise in the female dormitory. Male CO's are not permitted to manage the female wing.
6. The TCJ often serves as a holding tank for intoxicated people. The general sentence periods range from two(2) to four(4) years. Most of the inmates are waiting for sentencing. Sentencing periods can range from four(4) months to four(4) to five(5) year. One inmate has waited nearly five(5) years for sentencing. This particular individual has serious medical problems that require continual oxygen.
7. Staffing turnover is approximately 50%. This disruptive condition is due to low starting wages of \$12.50/hour. A trained CO can receive higher wages in other counties.
8. Bulletproof vests are not available to CO's, except through personal expense. Not having this essential piece of personal equipment creates a serious hazard to the CO's life.
9. Food is prepared in the same area that blood is drawn from inmates. In other words food is prepared in a biohazard area. Serious illness, such as Hep C, can be contracted through blood products inadvertently entering the food distribution.

10. The Grand Jury viewed a typical lunch sandwich preparation. The food consisted primarily of “baloney” placed between two slices of bread. The “baloney” had a yellow/green color. Apparently no one has reported becoming sick from this food. Apparently the food meets minimal standards for prison diet.
11. The TCJ has no safety cell and an insufficient number of sobering cells exist. The intake shower does not work in that water temperature cannot be adjusted. During the Grand Jury visit, a plumbing problem occurred in Dormitory F.
12. The bunk dormitory had a humid, cool atmosphere. Beds were unmade. The floor was littered with clothes, such as underwear.
13. No bathroom or sink exists in the exercise yard. Inmates go to the bathroom on the ground.

### **Findings**

- F1. TCJ has a new mult-camera/screen inmate monitoring system, but insufficient staff to use it.
- F2. Insufficient staff—both male and female--exists for operating the jail as well as the DC.
- F3. A new 911 computer system is being installed, but the air conditioning is inadequate not only to support this new system, but also the jail itself. The jail atmosphere is humid and cool.
- F4. The inmate intercom system does not work.
- F5. The time inmates wait for sentencing is long: years in some cases.
- F6. Salary and benefits for CO’s is insufficient for retention.
- F7. CO’s do not have access to necessary protective equipment, e.g. bulletproof vests.
- F8. Food is prepared and distributed in a medical area in which blood samples are drawn.
- F9. No bathroom and sink is available in the exercise yard. Inmates go to the bathroom on the ground.

### **Recommendations**

Recommendations R1 through R9 correspond to each finding above. The TCS must address each finding in a report to the BOS and the CAO. The report must contain the required fix, the associated cost, and a schedule for completion. The report must provide guidance to the necessary action agent: CAO, BOS, and/or TCSCJ. This report must make clear to all recipients the associated risks of non-response to the required fixes. If insufficient budget exists to deliver necessary repairs and upgrades, then the BOS must develop a plan to demonstrate how

community safety will be maintained in light of serious shortfalls in police staffing. This plan must address:

1. Upgrades to TCJ staffing and salaries for sufficient male/female balance and personnel retention.
2. Repairs to the existing TCJ.
3. CO health and safety
4. Inmate health and safety
5. Inmate sentence processing.

### **Request for Responses**

The TCS must respond to all nine findings within 60 days. A copy of the report must go to the BOS, CAO, and TCSCJ. The BOS must respond to the TCS within 30 days after receipt of the report. The response must be public and recorded for distribution in county files.