

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT

Report Title: Inspection Report for San Luis Obispo County Law Enforcement
and Detention Facilities

Report Date: October 20, 2020

Response by: Sheriff Ian Parkinson

Title: Sheriff-Coroner

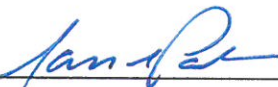
FINDINGS

1. I (we) agree with the findings numbered: F3 and F4
2. I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: F6
(Attach a statement specifying any portions of the findings that are disputed; include an explanation of the reasons.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Recommendations numbered _____ have been implemented.
(Attach a summary describing the implementation actions.)
2. Recommendations numbered R3 and R4 have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.
(Attach a timeframe for the implementation.)
3. Recommendations numbered _____ require further analysis.
(Attach an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or director of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of the publication of the Grand Jury report.)
4. Recommendations numbered _____ will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.
(Attach an explanation.)

Date: 10/20/2020

Signed: 

Number of pages attached: 2

Grand Jury Response to Detention Facilities in San Luis Obispo County

Findings

Finding F3- Agree

"The Sheriff's Department has done an exceptional job of improving the overall quality of care for inmates."

Finding F4- Agree

"The use of Wellpath, being overseen by the County Chief Medical Officer, to provide the medical, dental, and mental health care for the inmates, has improved the recognition of potential problems before they become major issues."

Finding F6- Disagree partially

"It is the observation of the Grand Jury that the space is inadequate and insufficient and needs to be addressed."

The Sheriff's Office believes that the current facility is adequate but not ideal and could use expansion. Prior to 2012 the Sheriff-Coroner's Office occupied a makeshift facility at a local mortuary where the coroner's staff performed autopsies. The coroner's detectives occupied office space in the detective building located at Sheriff's Headquarters on Kansas Avenue in San Luis Obispo. In April 2012, the County entered into a lease agreement to occupy 835 Aerovista PL., Suite 130 where a permanent coroner's office and morgue could be established.

The goal of the Sheriff-Coroner's Office was to establish a permanent state of the art surgical room in which to conduct autopsies, a refrigerated unit of adequate size to store human remains in pending forensic examination and an evidence room of sufficient space to store samples and other evidence collected during coroner's investigations. The square footage of the office suite allowed sufficient room for these goals to be achieved, but at a cost in available office space for the detectives and clerical staff assigned to the coroner's office.

The Sheriff-Coroner's Office is committed to renewing the lease, which expires in April 2022 and is currently upgrading the surgical room with a new negative air pressure HEPA filtration system to meet Federal OSHA and Cal OSHA requirements and to control the spread of infectious disease.

The upgrade will cost \$58,000.00 and is paid for with Coronavirus emergency supplemental funding from the Bureau of Justice Assistance.

Because of the investment made into the current office suite it would be not be cost efficient to abandon this location in favor of another site. The Sheriff-Coroner's Office has advised the property managers that it would like to discuss leasing another suite in the same complex for use as office space, record storage and meeting rooms.

Until such space becomes available and the budget supports the expenditure, the Coroner's staff will continue to make do with the current arrangement, understanding that the primary mission is to have

adequate facilities at hand for the conducting of autopsies, storage of human remains and retention of evidence samples.

Recommendations

Recommendation R3- Will not be implemented, at this time

"Plans for additional space should be developed to expand the working area."

The Sheriff's Office has developed a plan and would like to add additional space. Once the space becomes available and the budget supports the expansion, the Sheriff's Office will implement a plan.

Recommendation R4- Will not be implemented, at this time

"Coroner's records should be digitized to save space."

Coroner case files are retained in paper form at the coroner's office for approximately one year. During that time, the file can be updated with additional information as it becomes available. Once the coroner's case is completed clerical staff scan the files into Laserfiche to create an electronic database and the written case file is transferred to a permanent storage facility located offsite. Maintaining the original coroner's case file is important as documents, photographs, or other evidentiary items may be needed in the future to settle legal questions about a decedent's identity or the circumstances of their death.