



MARIN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

1600 Los Gatos Drive, Suite 200, San Rafael, CA 94903

JAMIE SCARDINA

Sheriff - Coroner

SYLVIA MOIR

Undersheriff

July 25, 2024

Marin County Civil Grand Jury
Rod Kerr, Foreperson
3501 Civic Center Dr. Suite 275
San Rafael, CA 94903

Reference Response by Sheriff Jamie Scardina to the Civil Grand Jury Report Entitled "Marin County Justice Center: A Model for Change"

Dear Mr. Kerr,

Pursuant to Penal Code Section 933.05(F) I am responding to the above-mentioned Grand Jury Report dated June 28, 2024.

F1: The Marin County Jail is dated and is held to standards in place in 1988 but does not meet modern day standards for a county jail.

I disagree with this finding. The Marin County Jail opened in 1994 and is only 30 years old. A 2013 study conducted by the Public Policy Institute of California, found that 89 of California's County Jails were constructed before the 1990's. When compared to other County Jails operating in the State, our Jail cannot be considered "dated".

The Marin County Jail has passed Title 15 and Title 24 State inspections every year of its existence. These inspections have been carried out by the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC), the highest regulatory authority of County Jails in the State of California. Only a very small fraction of our Jail is held to a 1988 standard which is common practice in Jails throughout the State.

BSCC updates their inspection standards regularly and our facility continues to meet those standards. In addition to passing State certification, in the past five years, the County has committed approximately 8 million dollars in infrastructure upgrades over 9 Capital Improvement Projects at the Jail. Our facility is cared for and well maintained.

F2: The complex inmate classification system and the increase in the AB 109 population have significantly reduced the available programming space at the Marin County Jail

AREA CODE 415

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479-2311

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ADMINISTRATION
473-7250

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SERVICES
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CORONER
473-6043

COURTS
473-7393

EMERGENCY
SERVICES
473-6584

INVESTIGATIONS
473-7265

JAIL
473-6655

SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS
UNIT
884-4878

PATROL
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RECORDS
473-7284

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because of the inability to mix various inmate classification groups both in and out of cells.

I disagree with this finding. Although AB109 has impacted the complexity of our Jail Classification System, our Jail design layout still provides adequate space to deliver quality, comprehensive programming in a variety of areas. The complexities created by AB109, in some ways, have been offset by a decrease in our Average Daily Population (ADP). In 2018, our ADP was 320 incarcerated persons. Currently our ADP is averaging around 220 where it has remained for at least the past 6 months. Our Classification Deputies have come up with effective and innovative ways to safely offer programs to all incarcerated persons across all classifications within the confines of our current facility.

F3: The Marin County Jail lacks the medical and mental health facilities needed to adequately address the significantly greater incidence of mental health and substance abuse conditions of the current inmate population.

I disagree with this finding. The Marin County Sheriff's Office asserts that our services provided by Behavioral Health & Recovery Services (BHRS) meet and exceed industry standards for mental health care. Our collaboration with BHRS has been instrumental in proactively implementing improvements. We are certified annually by the BSCC and consistently strive to have our service reflect these enhancements.

In 2023, we made significant proactive improvements by updating the safety cell log sheets to align with recent changes to Title 15. This revision allowed us to rework the entire form, adding clarity, especially regarding safety cell placements related to increased risk of self-harm. The result is that safety cell placements are more comprehensively monitored.

More recently in 2024, MCSO approved a BHRS initiative to transform the Special Housing unit into a "therapeutic milieu", which is an environment suitable for individuals and groups to access mental health care. This systemic change will enhance our ability to provide direct services to our mental health populations and eliminate existing barriers to mental health care.

None of these achievements would have been possible without the collaborative trust in BHRS to continually drive positive changes. In summary, our services are not only adequate and aligned with industry standards but are also continually evolving and improving.

F4: The current inmate population requires additional programming space that is not available due to the physical limitations of the Marin County Jail.

I disagree with this finding. Our Average Daily Population has been trending down for the past 5 years. All housing units inside the Marin County Jail, except for one, have multipurpose rooms equipped with multi-media connectivity, and provide adequate space to congregate for meetings.

Our entire incarcerated population can access tablets inside their respective housing units. These tablets provide additional access to personal and legal visits and provide educational and vocational applications for incarcerated persons to use while in custody. No additional space is required to access all the resources and programs our tablets have to offer. We are in the

process of obtaining more tablets for our incarcerated population and have a goal to increase our I/P to tablet ratio to 1:1.

In April of this year, the Sheriff's Office implemented our Jail Re-Unification Program. This program is designed to facilitate meaningful connections between incarcerated individuals and their families, recognizing the invaluable role of familial relationships in fostering positive behavior and reducing recidivism rates. An ideal space was carved out on the visitation level to carry out these special visits. The room was furnished by a local non-profit company and provides a clean and comfortable location to begin the incarcerated person's journey back to family life.

F5: The Marin County Jail's subterranean location precludes its expansion to build additional programming space and mental health and medical facilities.

I disagree with this finding. Without a proper study, it is unknown what the expansion potential of our current facility is. Additionally, the factors previously laid out in this response question the necessity of additional space in our current facility.

R2: In the study for a Marin Justice Center, the existing Marin County Jail should be used for incarcerated individuals with classifications that pose a significant security risk to Sheriff's deputies, staff or detainees. This would also allow for better access to programming spaces for this segment of the incarcerated population.

The Sheriff's Office does not support this recommendation. At our current facility, we already safely house and treat this demographic of our incarcerated population. In most cases, incarcerated persons who pose the most significant risk to our staff are not eligible for programming due to safety/behavioral concerns.

Yours truly,



JAMIE SCARDINA

SHERIFF - CORONER

JS/bc