

Board of County Commissioners

Quarterly Report on Conditions of Confinement and Security at the Washoe County Jail

The enclosed is the second report in the quarterly reporting for the Washoe County Jail. Generally, the quarterly reports will focus on the conditions of confinement and security of the jail, as delineated in Nevada Revised Statute. The report may also contain relevant information from the Sheriff to the Board on emerging topics or trends.

The first quarter report to the Board was a broad overview of the history of the physical plant and security measures that have been undertaken over the years. The first report also contained statistical data relative to inmate populations, types of inmates held and budgetary issues facing the County and the Sheriff.

This second quarter report will focus on some of the same statistical data and include some recommendations from the National Sheriff's Association following a review of their draft report.

As the Board may be aware, the Sheriff asked the National Sheriff's Association to conduct an on-site audit and review of the Detention Center. This audit encompassed a review and recommendations regarding the physical plant, the processes used to move and house inmates, staffing needs for the facility and the medical care provided to the inmate population. Within these broad areas, they also reviewed our practices when dealing with mentally ill inmates and those suffering from substance abuse issues.

Security

Included in the draft report were recommendations to improve security in several areas. One important observation was of the design of the 1987 housing units. In 1987, the Detention Facility was designed to house lower risk inmates, a much different inmate population than we have today.

In 1987, the facility was built with 7 identical detached housing units. Each of the units was designed to house 72 inmates, with 56 cells. In 1987 some of the cells were double bunked. Additionally, a 120 bed minimum security unit was operational. All of the 7 initial housing units were designed with porcelain sinks and toilets, a wooden desk, wooden bunk(s) and a wooden door. Each cell also had a light fixture with an electrical outlet and pull chain for light control.

The NSA draft report suggests that all of these units be hardened to include removal of the sink and toilet in favor of a detention grade steel. The wooden bunks, by design are also a security issue. The original design allowed a small gap between the bunk and the wall, which provides a potential ligature point for inmates contemplating suicide.

Because we no longer have the lower risk inmate population, the design of the existing units presents challenges for maintenance and security. Over the years, measures have been taken to harden several of these units to provide housing for the mentally ill and disruptive and violent

inmates. These measures are expensive and require displacement of the inmates while work is conducted.

While the NSA draft report did not identify urgent security matters that would put the public at risk, there are nonetheless recommendations that should be considered as Capital Improvements are prioritized throughout the county.

Welfare of the Inmates

The welfare of inmates in a custodial situation is best measured by several factors, to include: the health of the inmates, their access to medical care, infectious disease and vermin control, food services, environmental controls, the safety of the inmates, and out of cell time. Each of these important components can be a measure of the overall welfare of the inmate population.

The NSA draft report identified restrictive housing, sometimes referred to as segregation or special housing, as an emerging national matter. Our facility, since at least 2002, has operated under a standard which is legal, however a standard that is much different than nationally recognized best practices. The genesis of our operation can be found in increased inmate populations, limitations with the physical plant and staffing availability. As an example, each wing of the Special Housing Unit has 14 cells. If each inmate came out alone, each day for 1 hour, we would need additional staffing as the unit is only double staffed from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Generally, inmates should be afforded at least 1 (one) hour of out of cell time each day. While inmates in General Population are afforded much more than that each day, inmates in restrictive housing are only offered 1 hour and 15 minutes every other day under our current policy. The inmates most affected by this limited time are those who cannot function in a General Population setting, to include violent and assaultive inmates, gang members, disciplinary violators and the severely mentally ill.

We have instructed our Inmate Management Unit to explore ways to move away from the restrictive housing tier time model, with the goal that every inmate is afforded at least 1 hour out of cell time each day. Not only will this align with nationwide best practices, it serves to improve the conditions for the inmates in these units.

The NSA draft report also identified mentally ill and substance abuse inmates as a national challenge for all jails. In the past 5 months we have reorganized our mental health unit toward a model of engagement with the inmates with a more comprehensive strategy toward improving the inmate's health while they remain in jail. This unit is not a new idea, however we now have a renewed focus on helping this vulnerable population with the goal of reducing recidivism.

The scourge of opiate addiction is also an issue for our facility, similar to the national crisis facing other Sheriffs and communities. We have taken proactive measures to be a key partner in community-wide discussions regarding a response to the growing crisis. We know from the draft report and national trends that jails have become the de facto place for the mentally ill and drug addicted. We are no different. The draft report suggests, and we are already well into, establishing a treatment program to address opiate addicted inmates. We stand ready to lead this

discussion, however community resources are needed to ensure a wrap-around care model exists in our region.

Our team recently travelled to Massachusetts to learn from a leading Sheriff the best practices to reduce recidivism in opiate dependent inmates. With the community's assistance and support from the Board, a program within the jail could become a reality.

In regard to the health of the inmate population during the second quarter, the contracted medical provider performed 526 mental health evaluations during the 2nd quarter. During that same period, some 1800 inmates received mental health medications. 2,100 inmates during the 2nd quarter were identified as suffering from a chronic medical issue, with in excess of 3,600 inmates having prescribed medications.

Medical Billing

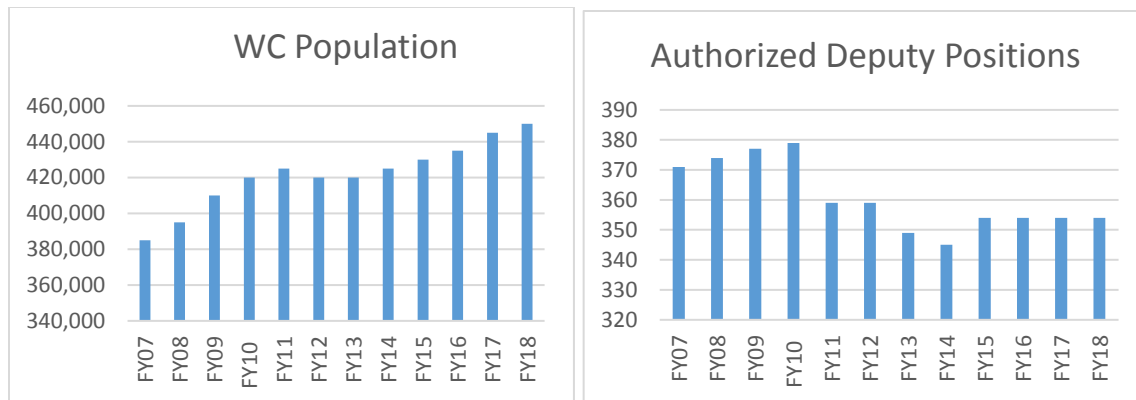
Inmates in the Detention Center are billed for medical visits and medicines. The billing system is based on a co-pay however excludes chronic care issues, mental health issues and pregnancy care. Insurance companies are not billed, with the exception of hospital stays. During the last CY we billed inmates in excess of \$145,000 for visits and prescriptions.

Staffing

In the October 2017 first quarter presentation, the Commissioners requested information regarding needs and possible staffing solutions.

As we did in FY 16-17, the Sheriff's Office submitted budget requests for staff for the upcoming budget cycle. The NSA draft audit guided these current requests. These requests include sworn and non-sworn staff needed to effectively operate the Detention Facility while reducing the overtime expenditures. As noted in the last presentation, excessive overtime is not only a costly way to do business, it has an effect on employee morale, productivity and their health.

Total authorized deputy sheriffs for Detention is 210. Currently we have 210 assigned, however when considering those on training and other unavailable (48 in services), that number drops to 147 available to staff mandatory positions in the facility. Several staffing reports have confirmed that we need 164 fulltime deputy sheriffs to sufficiently staff the jail. The NSA draft report shows that military leave alone accounts for 7 full time positions that are consistently unavailable. For every post manned 24/7, we need nearly 6 full time deputy sheriffs when accounting for leave use, training and other matters.



Agencies Booking into Jail

In the October 2017 first quarter presentation, the Commissioners requested metrics that would reflect usage of the jail by agency.

During calendar year 2017, the jail accepted 21,435 inmates. 43% of those inmates represented arrests by the Reno Police Department. The Washoe County Sheriff's Office represented only 13% of the overall bookings, with Sparks Police also booking 13% of the total arrests.

Currently, the Reno Municipal Court accounts for nearly 12% of the total inmate population. This 12% are inmates who have no other charge aside from a misdemeanor arrest. This is a direct correlation to the Reno Police Departments level of bookings annually. Many of the bookings represent nuisance crimes occurring in the downtown/mid-town areas. We anticipate any increase in patrol staff at RPD or SPD equating to more bookings.

Theses bookings also translate into significant staff time downstream, to include housing and transportation to court. The bulk of all inmate transports annually are to the Reno Justice Court, accounting for 12,855 individual inmates during FY 16-17, with 5,619 being transported to the Reno Municipal Court alone. Arrests generated by the Reno Police Department (both Felony and Misdemeanor) represent nearly half of the total transports the Sheriff's Office does. Based on our analysis, the cost to include staff salaries and vehicles means every general population inmate taken to court costs about \$170 per outside appearance. We currently staff court transportation with 15 deputy sheriffs and one sergeant.

Pre-Trial Risk Assessment

In the October 2017 first quarter presentation, the Commissioners inquired about the risk assessment and bail reform pilot program.

Following the meeting, significant staff time was dedicated to the analysis of time in booking and a correlation to the new process. A report provided in November 2017 showed a slight increase in the average time spent in Intake, from 10.20 hours pre-implementation to 10.82 hours post-implementation. Although this represents a slight increase in time in Intake, the correlation to increased releases from Intake must be considered. Simply put, since the inception of the program, we released almost 22% more inmates from Intake. These are inmates we did not have to process and house.

Although we have seen an increase in the Average Daily Population, it is important to understand the risk assessment and bail reform were not designed to reduce the inmate population. Challenges persist with judicial review of money bail, which are being reviewed in the next month by the Supreme Court.

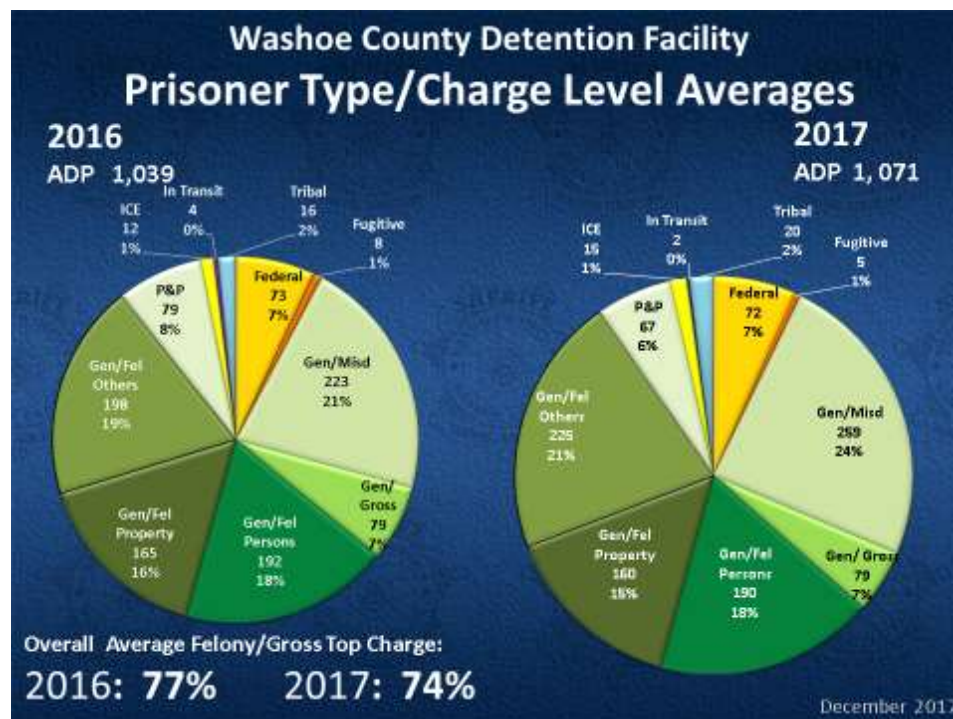
Pros

The most obvious benefit of a risk assessment is that we have a better understanding of our jail population and those who could be released, regardless of their financial ability, if the risk they present can be mitigated through community supervision. With the implementation of the risk assessment and the removal of the uniform bail schedule, this County has been in line with the national push and the injustices facing indigent offenders.

Cons

An artifact of any new or changed process can present a delay. Historically we have seen medical reviews causing delays, new booking procedures causing delays and Pretrial Services interviews causing delays. Ultimately, a workflow assessment would benefit the entire intake process as would a staffing increase in both booking and Pretrial Services. What we do know, the lack of a bail amount at booking is causing additional work for the civilian staff in the booking process. That additional work equates to the need for an additional full-time booking employee 24/7, which would represent additional FTEs.

Inmate Population



Average Daily Population

