

2016-2017 Detention Facility Inspection Report

Summary

The 2016-2017 Nevada County Grand Jury (Jury) has conducted an inspection of the detention facilities in the County of Nevada (County) to “inquire into the conditions and management of the public prisons within the county” as required by Penal Code Section 919(b). The Jury toured and inspected the Wayne Brown Correctional Facility (Wayne Brown), the Carl F. Bryan II Juvenile Hall (Juvenile Hall), the Washington Ridge Conservation Camp (Washington Ridge), and two holding facilities: the Nevada County Sheriff’s Office’s Truckee Sub-Station (Truckee Jail), and the Nevada County Superior Court Holding Facility (Holding Facility).

The Jury recommends several changes in the security system at the Holding Facility: 1) a larger monitor to view output from security cameras and 2) a new security camera to monitor the exterior at the main entrance to the courthouse. In addition, the Jury recommends that the Nevada County Sheriff’s Office (NCSO) bring its staffing up to authorized levels at all facilities that it administers.

Other than those issues and in general, the Jury found the public prisons in the County to be well managed and in good condition except for problems related to the age of the facilities at the Courthouse and at the Truckee Jail.

Glossary

AB109	California Public Safety Realignment Act of 2011
Cal Fire	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CDC	California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
CO	Correctional Officer
County	County of Nevada
Holding Facility	Nevada County Superior Court Holding Facility
Jury	Nevada County Grand Jury
Juvenile Hall	Carl F. Bryan II Juvenile Hall
NCSO	Nevada County Sheriff’s Office
Truckee Jail	Nevada County Sheriff’s Office’s Truckee Sub-Station
TYDP	Transitional Youth Diversion Program
Washington Ridge	Washington Ridge Conservation Camp
Wayne Brown	Wayne Brown Correctional Facility

Background

The California Constitution of 1849 provides in Section 23 of Article 1 that a grand jury “be drawn and summoned at least once a year in each county.” Accordingly, each of the 58 counties in the State yearly impanels a grand jury whose civil function is to investigate the operation of

the various officers, departments, and agencies of local government. A grand jury may examine all aspects of county and city government, special districts, and other tax-supported organizations to ensure that the best interests of the citizens of the county are being served. The grand jury reviews and evaluates procedures, operations, and systems utilized by local agencies to determine whether more effective methods may be employed.

In addition, California Penal Code Section 919(b) requires each county's grand jury to inquire annually into the condition and management of public prisons within the county.

Approach

The Jury inspected each of the public prisons in the County as follows:

Courthouse	August 18, 2016
Truckee Jail	October 13, 2016
Wayne Brown	November 10, 2016
Washington Ridge	November 17, 2016
Juvenile Hall	December 1, 2016

These inspections included a walk-through of the facility, interviews, and a review of procedures and documents related to each facility. In addition, the Jury reviewed previous Jury reports on the facilities.

The Jury observed the condition of each building and discussed the management of each facility with its staff. Where appropriate, the infirmary was inspected for any insufficiencies and/or hazardous conditions. The kitchen in each facility was inspected. Educational and vocational programs as well as discipline and inmate grievance procedures were reviewed. Policies for inmate classification, orientation, and visitation were also reviewed.

The following describes the current condition of each facility.

Wayne Brown Correctional Facility

The NCSO manages Wayne Brown. The facility has a maximum capacity of 283 beds. There are an additional six beds available in the infirmary. At the time of the Jury's inspection there were 210 inmates in custody. Inmates are segregated by gender and by individual classifications based in part on the seriousness of each inmate's offense. In addition to inmates from the County, the facility houses inmates from the State of California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDC) assigned under the California *Public Safety Realignment Act of 2011* (AB109), federal inmates pursuant to a contract with the Federal Bureau of Prisons and other California county inmates pursuant to agreements with those counties.

At the time of the Jury's inspection there were 48 correctional officers (COs) assigned to Wayne Brown, half male and half female. Staffing currently is at three fewer COs than budgeted.

Additionally, three more COs may soon be transferred to patrol duty with the NCSO. As a result, overtime is frequently required. Staffing levels are mandated by law and all positions must be filled daily, causing shift extensions and utilizing staff who are off duty. Ongoing in-service training for the COs is done in-house by other officers and administrators and covers all training required by the California Board of State and Community Corrections.

The Jury visited the infirmary where two medical personnel handle sick call and minor medical situations. Inmates with serious medical problems are transferred to Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital. There are also professionals on call who can evaluate mentally disordered or mentally incompetent inmates to determine if they should be transferred to a state hospital or other secure treatment facility for their care and treatment.

The Wayne Brown kitchen was clean and appeared to be well supplied with necessary equipment. Food preparation is managed by a full time cook with inmate assistants. Inmates also staff the laundry.

The Jury visited the holding cells at the dormitories, the recreation room and the intake area where new inmates arrive at a sally port and go through the booking process.

Wayne Brown appears to be exceptionally well managed and maintained. The Jury has no recommendations for change at this time.

Carl F. Bryan II Juvenile Hall

Pursuant to California law, only persons under 18 years of age at the time of his or her violation can be held in juvenile detention facilities. For a variety of reasons discussed in detail in the Jury's 2015-2016 report entitled *Carl F. Bryan II Regional Juvenile Hall - Is It Worth the Cost?* (2015-2016 Report), there is an ongoing national and local trend away from incarceration of juveniles and in favor of alternatives to detention, including release on recognizance, release on bond, community support, and formal evidence-based monitoring programs. At the time of the Jury's inspection of Juvenile Hall, there were four detainees resident in a facility configured to hold 30 detainees. Two of the detainees were from Nevada County and two were from Tuolumne County pursuant to an agreement with that county. Housing of detainees from other counties will likely be significantly reduced upon the completion of a new juvenile facility in Tuolumne County.

As discussed in the 2015-2016 Report, one result of the decrease in juvenile detention and state-mandated staffing levels has been a steadily rising cost per detainee. A new California program, the Transitional Youth Diversion Program (TYDP), may help reduce the financial problems discussed in the 2015-2016 Report. This program relates to detainees who are 18 years of age or older, but under 21 years of age on the date their offense was committed. It permits incarceration of such detainees outside of county jails in facilities such as Juvenile Hall that offer programs for rehabilitation. Modifications are being made to Juvenile Hall so that detainees in the program can be detained there but not co-mingled with the 17 and under detainees. The

program has the potential to reduce the per-detainee costs of detention that were discussed in the 2015-2016 Report.

At the time of the Jury's visit, the facility was clean and well maintained. Recreational facilities and educational programs are provided. Detainees may also acquire work skills in gardening and the culinary arts.

The interaction between inmates and COs appeared to be cordial and respectful. The staff appears to be forward thinking and firm but respectful of their charges. There are numerous programs and incentives for the detainees to get a fresh start. For example, one detainee had recently earned a high school diploma through the Sugar Loaf Mountain Juvenile School at the facility.

In summary, it appears that Juvenile Hall continues to be a well-run and maintained facility. While the financial issues discussed in the 2015-2016 Report continue to be a concern, the TYDP may mitigate some of those issues and reduce the cost per detainee of the facility. The Jury has no further recommendations for change at this time.

Washington Ridge Conservation Camp

Washington Ridge, located in the County, is one of 39 conservation camps administered jointly by the CDC and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire). The cooperation between CDC and Cal Fire is impressive. While in the camp the inmates are under the supervision of CDC but when working as firefighters or performing community service projects they are under the jurisdiction of Cal Fire. There are 13 CDC officers at this camp with a shift of seven on duty at all times.

Washington Ridge has a resident inmate capacity of 100 but can handle up to 300 additional fire fighters when necessary to respond to major disasters. During last year's Jury visit there were 87 inmates assigned to Washington Ridge including support inmates assigned to do the cooking, cleaning, yard maintenance, and equipment maintenance. This year the number dropped to 73. The primary cause of this decline is the reassignment of non-violent offenders from State prisons to county jails as mandated by the California Public Safety Realignment Act of 2011 (AB109). As a consequence of AB109, the eligible pool of inmates available for assignment to conservation camps decreased from 1800 last year to 1400 this year. In response, the CDC and Cal Fire have started to broaden the prerequisites for eligibility to serve time in the conservation camps.

The camp is self-sufficient. It has its own well and a back-up generator that can run the entire camp. It maintains five fire trucks, each having a crew of 13-17 inmates. The trucks are equipped to be self-sustaining for days if necessary. The inmates do the maintenance on the trucks and on the other fire-fighting equipment including chainsaws and hand tools.

The fire-fighting inmates are carefully trained to perform their dangerous duty. Even though over 150,000 man-hours of service is provided yearly fighting fires within the State the number

of accidents is very low. In addition to fire-fighting, the crews perform needed work in the community. Local projects have included cutting firewood, working in public parks, and performing needed work for non-profit programs such as maintenance for parks and sports fields. Crews are available for \$225.00 per day for a full crew to counties, cities, and certain nonprofit organizations.

Washington Ridge continues to be a well-run and maintained facility. The Jury has no recommendations for changes at this time.

Nevada County Sheriff's Office's Truckee Sub-Station

The Truckee Jail is used to temporarily hold inmates arrested in eastern Nevada County until they can be transferred to Wayne Brown and to house inmates transferred from Wayne Brown to stand trial at the Truckee Branch Courthouse. The Truckee Jail also serves as a holding facility for the Truckee Police Department, Sierra County, Placer County and the California Department of Parks and Recreation. There is 24-hour staffing with a minimum of two COs including one female CO and two trustees. One trustee is on site full time and one part time. Transportation to and from Wayne Brown is the responsibility of NCSO deputies. In addition to staff on duty, first response medical personnel and the local fire department serve the facility as needed.

The Truckee Jail was built in the early 1960s and it is showing its age. Nevertheless, it appears to be adequate for its limited use.

Nevada County Superior Court Holding Facility

The Holding Facility is used for temporary detention of inmates who are appearing for hearings in the Superior Court. Inmates are transferred from Wayne Brown on the morning of their court appearance and returned to Wayne Brown by the end of the day. The Holding Facility includes holding cells and rooms where inmates can confer with their attorneys.

After an inmate arrives, he or she waits in a holding cell until his or her appearance is scheduled. Inmates are then escorted by COs through the courthouse building to the department in which the appearance is to take place. The Holding Facility includes a control room where multiple cameras allow the COs to monitor the movements of inmates from the cells to the courtrooms. There also are cameras directed at entrances and exits to the courthouse and some on the exterior of the building to help control access. There is no camera outside the main entrance to the courthouse. The first security protection at that location is a metal detector and guards inside the courthouse door. The guards at the main door and the COs in the control room could benefit from being able to view anyone approaching the main entrance.

The images from the various cameras are displayed on a monitor in the control room in a tile format so that multiple images can be viewed at the same time. However, the monitor is small, making it difficult for the CO monitoring the video to discern much detail in any of the images.

A larger monitor would clarify the images and increase a CO's ability to see detail, likely reducing operator fatigue.

The facility is experiencing some challenges in maintaining sufficient staffing. Staffing has recently been reduced, with reserve COs covering for absentees.

Overall, the Jury found the Holding Facility to be well managed and operated.

Findings

- F1** The video monitor in the control room currently being used to monitor the numerous camera sources at the Holding Facility is too small. This makes the job of monitoring all of the video sources unnecessarily difficult.
- F2** A camera monitoring the outside of the main entrance to the courthouse would increase security. It would allow COs in the control room and the guards at the main entrance to observe potential problems.
- F3** All detention facilities administered by the NCSO are understaffed. This results in excessive overtime.

Recommendations

The Nevada County Grand Jury recommends:

- R1** The Nevada County Sheriff's Office should make an investment in a larger monitor for the control center of the Nevada County Superior Court Holding Facility.
- R2** The Nevada County Sheriff's Office should install a camera to allow observation of the exterior area approaching the main entrance to the courthouse.
- R3** Video from this exterior camera should be fed to both the control center and a monitor observable by the screening guard.
- R4** The Nevada County Sheriff's Office should increase staffing to authorized levels.

Request for Responses

Pursuant to Penal Code section 933.05, the Nevada County Grand Jury requests responses from the following:

All findings and all recommendations:
Nevada County Sheriff – July 24, 2017