

Part of 5.

**COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
INTEROFFICE COMMUNICATION**

DATE : July 1, 2009

TO : County Executive Scott Walker
Chairman Lee Holloway, County Board of Supervisors
Sheriff David A. Clarke, Jr.
Members of the Community Justice Council

FROM : The Huber Work Release Relocation Work Group

SUBJECT: **Report on Huber Work Release Relocation**

The 2009 Adopted Budget created a work group consisting of staff from the Department of Administrative Services (DAS), the Sheriff's Office, the Courts and County Board that shall "develop options for locating a new Huber work release center, either on the existing site [Community Correctional Center] or a new location."

BACKGROUND

The 2008 Adopted Budget anticipated full closure of the Community Correctional Center (CCC) in 2008. The inmates in the Huber work-release program were to be transferred to an expanded home detention program that incorporated the use of global position surveillance (GPS) technology. The home detention program was budgeted for 710 inmates, an increase of 360 inmates over the 2007 Adopted Budget, and 36.0 FTEs were abolished. Before that implementation could occur, the plan was to be reviewed by the newly created Milwaukee County Community Justice Council (CJC) and the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors.

The closure of the CCC was deemed necessary for several reasons including code violations and security issues.

At the time of budget deliberations for 2009, the CCC had not been closed and because the review by the CJC and County Board had not yet occurred, the House of Correction (HOC) requested approximately \$4,796,572 in expenditures to support the Huber program in 2009, offset by revenue of \$2,900,240. The County Executive, with support from the Sheriff, proposed a recommended budget that closed the CCC and transferred control of the HOC management and programming to the Sheriff's Office. The County Board concurred with this recommendation and the Sheriff began plans late in 2008 for transitioning all Huber inmates out of the CCC by January 1, 2009.

Pursuant to the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office and House of Correction Merger Quarterly Report, the last inmate was transferred out of the CCC on January 2, 2009 and all inmates on work release are now housed in the Criminal Justice Facility. Additional changes have since been implemented to the work release and electronic monitoring programs. The Sheriff reported positive changes in security, staffing, overtime control, and accountability of inmates in these programs.

Status of Huber and Criminal Justice Facility (CJF)

The CJF was retrofitted to expedite the entry and exit of the employed inmates with community access privileges. Work release inmates that have verified employed are housed in the CJF, and inmates who have other forms of community access are housed at the HOC and transported downtown as necessary.

ISSUES

Because the closure of CCC and the corresponding loss of jail bed space could potentially strain the criminal justice system, DAS was instructed to convene a work group to review alternative options for housing Huber individuals.

The work group has convened and from these discussions, it is apparent that although a new facility would be ideal, the County lacks much of the information necessary to make an informed and cost effective decision. Determining the long-range needs of the County's criminal justice system and policy priorities for the system should precede any inmate relocation recommendation.

Inmate Population Analysis

Prior to the addition of jail bed space, review of various indicators can help explain the growing inmate population and enable the County to meet the demand for jail space in an effective manner over time. According to the National Institute of Corrections, a detailed analysis of the data contained in a jail's information system is necessary to provide information on the populations that disproportionately increase jail space demands. An inmate Population analysis is currently being undertaken on a contract basis by the Pretrial Justice Institute from Washington, D.C. that will provide a solid base of information to assess future demands on the criminal justice system. It is anticipated this study will be complete in the fall.

Criminal Justice Master Plan

The inmate population study is only a small tool in the larger evaluation that should be conducted within the County's criminal justice system. The Milwaukee County Community Justice Council was recently convened to "efficiently and collaboratively coordinate services and to effectively allocate financial resources to ensure crime reduction, victim support, offender accountability, and restorative community-based programs. Through strategic planning and research the Council will identify, evaluate, and develop strategies to improve the justice system to enhance public safety and the quality of life in Milwaukee County." These are essential components to make informed and evidence-based policy decisions to regulate the inmate population. Without the tools necessary to regulate the annual increase in the County's inmate population, the inmate population could continue to grow beyond today's capacity, and any future capacity added to the system.

Summary

With the full closure of the CCC on January 2, 2009, inmates have been successfully transferred to either the CJF or HOC depending on their employment and community access privileges. The Sheriff has implemented an expedited system for Huber inmates to enter and exit the building and is confident that security at the CJF is not jeopardized by this system. Although the Huber inmates have displaced other inmates from the CJF to the HOC creating unforeseen strains on the system, the Sheriff has been working through these issues to establish better practices and procedures.

The completion of the inmate population study will provide information key to planning for potential future inmate population growth. It is recommended that this study be completed before a relocation plan is created.

Recommendation

This report is for informational purposes only. No action is necessary.

All members of the Work Group have reviewed this report and concur with its findings.