



MARIN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

3501 Civic Center Drive, Room 145, San Rafael, CA 94903

ROBERT T. DOYLE

Sheriff

DENNIS FINNEGAN

Undersheriff

April 12, 2005

The Honorable Terrence R. Boren
Presiding Judge Marin County Courts
Hall of Justice, Civic Center
San Rafael, CA 94903

Subject: Response to the 2004-2005 Marin County Civil Grand Jury Report of February 18, 2005, Regarding Marin County Jail Healthcare: "Plush" & Expensive

AREA CODE 415

24-HOUR NUMBER
499-7233

Dear Judge Boren:

The following reply is pursuant to the requirements of Penal Code Section 933.05, regarding the Marin County Grand Jury Report of February 18, 2005, regarding Marin County Jail Healthcare: "Plush" & Expensive

FAX
507-4126

ADMINISTRATION
499-7250

FINDINGS

Grand Jury Finding #1:

CIVIL
499-7282

The cost that Marin County pays to provide healthcare for inmates of the Marin County Jail is significantly higher than the costs paid by all Bay Area counties other than San Francisco.

COMMUNICATION
SERVICES
499-7243

Sheriff's Department's Reply to Finding #1:

I agree with this finding, however, the costs for healthcare in the Jail may be a bit misleading. For example, in addition to healthcare, the budget always includes mental healthcare services and those costs association with Juvenile Hall and the Helen Vine Detoxification Center. If the costs for Juvenile Hall and the Detoxification Center were backed out, although still high compared to other Bay Area counties, medical costs per bed would be lower.

EMERGENCY
SERVICES
499-6584

INVESTIGATIONS
499-7265

Grand Jury Finding #3:

JAIL
499-6655

Marin County does not contract the delivery of healthcare to inmates of the County Jail. Rather, the Sheriff's Office retains HHS staff to provide the services.

MAJOR CRIMES
TASK FORCE
884-4878

Sheriff's Department's Reply to Finding #3:

I agree partially with the finding. Health and Human Services staff provides medical and mental healthcare services to the Jail, however, there is a Memorandum of Understanding between the Sheriff's Office and Health and Human Services, which does not expire until May 1, 2006.

PATROL
499-7233

RECORDS
499-7284

WARRANTS
499-7297

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Grand Jury Finding #5:

Marin County representatives acknowledged that they are belatedly beginning to explore these areas of potential cost efficiencies.

Sheriff's Department's Reply to Finding #5:

I agree with the finding.

Grand Jury Finding #6:

The same staff that provides healthcare to inmates of the Marin County Jail has been charged with looking into ways to lower costs. The same staff says that contracting services is not being considered.

Sheriff's Department's Reply to Finding #6:

I agree with the finding, however, I am not certain that although Health and Human Services currently provides healthcare to the Jail, that they would be the only authority to decide whether the current arrangement continues or the County decides to award a contract to someone else.

Grand Jury Finding #8:

If Marin County could reduce the costs that it pays to provide healthcare for inmates to levels achieved by neighboring Bay Area counties, the potential savings is approximately one-half percent of the County budget (over \$1.7 million.)

Sheriff's Department's Reply to Finding #8:

I don't agree or disagree. It is true counties who have contracted with private healthcare providers have achieved savings. Unless and until Marin County decides to pursue an outside contract, we don't know what the potential savings, if any, would be.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Grand Jury Recommendation #1:

That the Board of Supervisors and the Sheriff's Office designate a department of the Marin County government that does not have a vested interest in the delivery of healthcare to jail inmates or retain an independent consultant to manage a process to determine which organization will best provide delivery of healthcare to inmates of the Marin County Jail.

Sheriff's Department's Reply to Recommendation #1:

The recommendation requires further analysis. I don't necessarily agree with the recommendation but before I take a position, I would want to confer with the County Administrator's Office and the Director of Health and Human Services. Admittedly, the Jail healthcare budget is a large amount of money but department heads are tasked everyday with making a decision about the best ways to provide services. At times, decisions we make may require more or less than the norm but there might be a lot of reasons to justify those positions. Additionally, if the County contracted with an "outside objective" source every time issues like this arose, the cost of doing business would certainly increase.

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Grand Jury Recommendation #2:

That this designee initiate a Request for Information (RFI) and Request for Proposal (RFP) process to explore the possibility of contracting the delivery of healthcare to inmates of the Marin County Jail. Allow HHS to be a competitor in the RFI and RFP process. Requirements to maintain a current benefit and compensation levels should not be mandated in the RFI and RFP process.

Sheriff's Department's Reply to Recommendation #2:

The recommendation requires further analysis. (See above response.)

Grand Jury Recommendation #3:

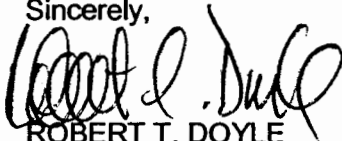
That the Sheriff's Office hire the organization that best responds to the RFI and RFP process to provide delivery of healthcare to inmates of the Marin County Jail.

Sheriff's Department's Reply to Recommendation #3:

The recommendation requires further analysis.

The County is committed to providing quality medical and mental healthcare to Jail inmates at a reasonable cost. Depending on how you define reasonable costs, depends on where you fall out on this issue, Health and Human Services versus private provider. From my personal experience, I believe Marin County provides a very high level of care to Jail inmates. No doubt, privatizing that care would save money but that probably would mean providing minimum services required by the California Board of Corrections.

Sincerely,


ROBERT T. DOYLE
SHERIFF

cc: Members, Board of Supervisors
Mark Riesenfeld, County Administrator
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
Marin County Grand Jury