



KEWAUNEE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

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Welcome:

Greetings and thank you for visiting our Jail Facility Planning link. We will be utilizing this link along with other resources to provide the most current information to our community as we begin the journey of planning for the eventual replacement of our current jail facility. We welcome and encourage any feedback you have as you view the various videos, documents and reports which we hope will provide both background and vision as it relates to our local justice system and the jail's role as an effective tool in keeping our community safe.

History:

Let's start with a little history, the current Kewaunee County Jail was built in 1968 as a replacement to what is now the Kewaunee County Jail Museum. The jail is located at 620 Juneau Street in the City of Kewaunee sharing its site with the Kewaunee County Courthouse which is convenient for those times when inmates currently staying at the jail need to be brought in front of the court for the many hearings which occurs throughout any given case.

The jail was built to house 22 inmates with an additional 3 short term housing beds which we refer to as receiving cells. There are 4 beds in our main cell area which we currently use to hold those in the highest classification category. There are 2 additional cells with 2 beds each which allow us to house females when necessary and also assist in facilitating further classification needs which we must comply per state statute.

The remaining portion of the jail is comprised of the Huber Dorm. This area is an open area cell which holds 14 inmates who are considered the lowest risk and are for the most part work release inmates who have been given the opportunity by the courts to serve their time with work release privileges.

In addition to these areas of the jail, we also have the Food Services areas which include both the kitchen as well as food storage along with our communications center. Until recently all Sheriff's Department Operations were contained within the Safety Building which may have worked when our law enforcement family was only a few members but we have grown with our community and in 2009 all Sheriff's Department operations not related to the Jail and Communications Center were moved into the lower level of the Courthouse.

While this has allowed us some additional elbow room, it did nothing to address the ongoing needs of the jail itself. Many remember an effort to build a new Jail along with a Justice Center in the mid nineties which was not successful and we hope to use the lessons learned from that process to better educate and involve the members of our community and incorporate that feedback into each and every phase of this current process.

Capacity:

As stated earlier, the current capacity for the Kewaunee county jail is 22. Over the past decade we have been averaging a daily population of 31 which has been offset by the use of both technology and policy. In the form of technology, we make use of electronic monitoring which is an option to those who have been sentenced with Huber privileges. This is paid for by the inmate who is placed on monitoring and assists us in alleviating overcrowding. When possible we also make use of videoconferencing for those inmates who are either in our facility with ongoing court hearings in other counties or those serving a sentence in another facility who may have court in our county. The use of videoconferencing alleviates both overcrowding as well as the need for transportation services. We must however be sensitive to the fact that in many cases those ordered into court have a constitutional right to be physically present during their hearing and we must facilitate that right.

In the form of Policy, we work very close with our partners throughout the justice system in an effort to find options and alternatives to incarceration. These practices continue to improve and will be incorporated into any new plans to minimize the overall project scope.

Programming Services:

A lot has changed in the world of corrections since 1968. We have seen an increase in violent behavior as well as dependency on alcohol and drugs on the part of those whose care we are entrusted with. We also have seen a significant increase in mental health issues which must be dealt with throughout our criminal justice process but specifically must be attended to when these individuals are in our care. No longer are jails merely a housing facility; we must make use of the many services which can help to reduce all of these issues in an effort to stem the tide of recidivism or in other words create an environment by which we reduce the numbers of individuals which we incarcerate repeatedly throughout their lives.

This not only includes services such as Alcohol and Drug counseling along with mental health counseling but job training and post high school educational opportunities as well. These services are no longer an option but rather a mandate which we have been given leniency in our failure to provide only because of the acknowledgement that we lack the facility for such services.

Classification:

One of the biggest challenges we face in our current facility is our limitations to meet state classification requirements. These classifications range in nature from male to female, sentence to pre sentenced, probation holds versus general population, high risk versus low risk, medical classifications, mental health classifications and separating those who may have shared involvement in current or previous cases to maintain investigative or judicial process integrity.

While there are many considerations in regards to classification, the greatest one is that of officer safety along with the safety of our inmates. In the past few years new regulations have come down through the federal government as it relates to how we hold individuals and our reporting of any incidents which may occur within our facility. The Prison Rape Elimination Act or PREA has had significant impact to all facilities across the nation. While it references state prisons in its title, it pertains to local jail facilities as well and we must be keenly aware of its requirements and our adherence to them.

Technology:

Just as in all aspects of our personal lives; technology has had a huge impact on law enforcement, the courts and yes even the correctional world. The use of technology spans the spectrum from surveillance methods to booking processes which include photographs, prints and other vital information about each and every individual who enters into our facility. The ability for inmates to access services through the use of technology provides us with many opportunities in an updated facility that will allow us to focus less on higher cost, staff dependant procedures to low cost automated procedures ultimately saving tax payer money while providing greater service to the inmate. These could include access to educational or treatment services or even virtual visiting with family and friends.

Another technology related issue with our current facility involves our communications center. In 1968 there were two deputies assigned to the safety building. One would focus on the jail and its operations and the other would answer phone calls which would periodically come in for service. The communications component of our operations has probably seen the most changes over the years with the advent of 911, electronic record management systems, numerous electronic interfaces with state and federal agencies, monitoring all of the security cameras for the courthouse and of course the communication stations themselves which have come to resemble something out of NASA. The issue here is the limited square footage of the dispatch center as many times the primary and secondary dispatcher literally has to step over each other to navigate during critical calls and struggle to effectively hear callers when both dispatchers are talking through different calls for service.

Conclusion:

We are very fortunate to have a facility which has served our needs for so many years, but just like any other facility it reaches a point where its effective use becomes depleted. This is the case with our current jail facility. Structurally speaking there are issues which range from antiquated locking systems and doors to lack of central environmental controls and outdated and failing security components. We owe a great deal of gratitude to those who had the vision at the time to build it, and to those who have kept it an effective part of our community justice system for so many years working within its limitations to serve as a deterrent tool while mitigating the potential liabilities. It is not uncommon to hear stories of jurisdictions who have been sued due to improper facility or policy application in the housing of inmates. I have always said that what we lack in facility we more than make up for in the quality of the men and women who work inside it and the efficient and professional way in which we provide this vital service to our community. We owe it to both those who work in the jail as well as those who are in our care to provide the best possible environment for effective application of justice and rehabilitation.

While we realize the financial impact a capital improvement project of this scope will have we feel compelled to bring the matter to the forefront. Fortunately we are not looking to execute this project in the near future but rather to take the time to plan and exchange feedback from the

community as well as to refine our current practices for the best possible implementation in any new environment so that when we are able to move to the next step we do so together as a community. Our goal is a community facility which we can all be proud of and which will serve our county for many decades to come.