



County of Cheshire

12 Court Street, Keene, NH 03431

www.co.cheshire.nh.us

May 30, 2018

Jail Inspection Reports
First Semi-Annual Report
County of Cheshire
Director of Administration
NH Dept. of Justice
33 Capitol Street
Concord, NH 03301

**RE: Management report pursuant to RSA 30-B: 12,
Cheshire County House of Correction**

Gentlemen:

Pursuant to the above statutory requirement, the County Commissioners for Cheshire County are pleased to submit the following report on their examination into the management, condition and security of the inmates in the county correctional facility. Following is our written report to you of the findings and actions or proposed actions on such findings, as recorded within the Public Meeting Minutes of the Board of Commissioners, recorded at the time of the meetings.

May 9, 2018: 1st Semi-Annual Inspection

At 11:23AM The Commissioners adjourned to conduct the first (1st) 2018 semi-annual jail inspection as required by NH RSA 30-B: 12 and to report the findings to the Director of Administration of the New Hampshire Department of Justice.

At 11:25AM the Commissioners entered the Booking area and spoke with the Correctional Officers (C. O.'s) on duty. They reviewed the cells and booking area and then exited the booking room.

At 11:33AM The Commissioners entered the female holding pod, F Block. Commissioners Cartwright and Weed spoke with the inmates and Commissioner Graves spoke with Capt. McLaughlin about facility staffing issues.

At 11:37AM The Clinic was entered and the Commissioners spoke with the Medical Services Coordinator. It was discussed that the overall acuity level of the inmates is rising and they are experiencing more hospital visits and longer stays. The reasons are varied and many for the increase in acuity but the primary driver is the large increase in inmates who use drugs, specifically heroin and fentanyl, which in turns causes a lack of self-personal care and an increase in acuity levels of health issues.

At 11:41AM R (Receiving and Classification) and S (Segregation) Blocks were then visited and the Commissioners reviewed the operations of the blocks with staff and discussed the interactions between the CO's and the inmates.

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♦ County Commissioners 352-8215/Fax 355-3026 ♦ Registry of Deeds 352-0403/Fax 352-7678 ♦ Finance Department 355-0154/Fax 355-3000 - 12 Court Street, Keene, NH 03431 ♦ County Sheriff 352-4238/Fax 355-3020 ♦ County Attorney 352-0056/Fax 355-3012 - 12 Court Street, Keene, NH 03431 ♦ Alternative Sentencing/Mental Health Court 355-0160/Fax 355-0159 - 33 West St. Keene N.H. ♦ Department of Corrections 825 Marlboro Street, Keene, 03431 - 903-1600/Fax 352-4044 ♦ Maplewood Nursing Home & Assisted Living 399-4912/Fax 399-7005 - TTY Access 1-800-735-2964 ♦ Facilities 399-7300/Fax 399-7357 ♦ Human Resources 399-7317/399-7378/Fax 399-4429 - 201 River Rd, Westmoreland, NH 03467



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At 11:50AM the Laundry area was quickly reviewed however no staff were on duty.

At 11:53AM the Commissioners entered the Kitchen and spoke with the head cook on duty concerning meals and kitchen equipment.

At 11:57AM D Block was entered and the Commissioners spoke with a number of inmates. A conversation concerning the use of the recreation space for each Pod occurred and the security reasons for not having an outside fence yard were covered.

At 12:08AM the Maintenance department was visited and the use of the steam equipment was discussed. The outside maintenance contracts for equipment was covered and the Geo-thermal system monitoring system that is being installed was discussed.

The Commissioners then entered one of the facility conference rooms for the purpose of interviewing inmates and staff.

At 12:23PM the first inmate entered the room and discussed their experience with the facility saying that they are very pleased with their treatment and the physical conditions that they are living in are much better than the State prison where they were transferred from. They said that the treatment by the CO's was "fantastic". They said that the statement should be taken as high praise as they have a pending lawsuit against the State for poor care / treatment at the State Prison and it is one of the reasons that they were transferred to the Cheshire facility.

They said that it has been recommended by the Prison that they take the Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT) training available at Cheshire. (MRT is a systematic treatment strategy that seeks to decrease recidivism among juvenile and adult criminal offenders by increasing moral reasoning).

The first inmate exited the room and the second inmate entered shortly thereafter.

The inmate said that they are a Federal inmate and they have been in numerous jails and prisons over the years and that Cheshire is the nicest and cleanest facility that they have been in and the food is quite good.

The Commissioners asked a number of questions concerning any things that could be changed or improved. They said that the only thing they would like to change is when being escorted to the clinic a CO has to stay in the exam room with them while they speak with the medical personnel. They don't want the CO's present when discussing their medical issues.

They said that they were arrested and charged with identity theft and that they are guilty. A plea deal is being worked but they expect to be in the facility for at least 18 to 24 months before their actual sentencing. They said that in their opinion the facility is doing a "great job".

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The inmate was then escorted from the interview room.

At 12:40PM the first CO entered the interview room and was introduced to the Commissioners. They said that they have been working at the facility for about 2 years and that they love the work and how the facility is run. They said that this is the first job that they have had where they feel that someone "has their back" and is happy with their situation and with their colleagues and the facility.

At 12:47PM the second CO met with the Commissioners and said that they have been working at the facility for 3 years and have enjoyed the work. They said in response to a question from the Commissioners that they believed that the overall staff turnover has dropped in the last year and in their opinion the union that was formed last year has had a positive effect.

They discussed the shift work that they experienced when they first came to the job and talked about how much they liked being attached to 1st shift on a permanent basis. The CO then exited the interview room.

At 12:58 PM there being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Weed moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion to adjourn was then seconded by Commissioner Cartwright and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

We trust that this report complies with the intent of the statute requiring inspection of correctional facilities by the County Commissioners. Please feel free to contact this office or the Superintendent of the County House of Correction, Richard Van Wickler, if you have any questions regarding this report.

As we have said in each of our reports over these many years, we continue to be proud of our facility, its management and the dedicated service of the correctional officers and support staff.

Sincerely yours,

THE CHESHIRE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Peter Graves, Chairman

Area Code 603

STATE OF NY
DEPT OF JUSTICE

2018 MAY 31 AM 10:59