



# County of Cheshire

33 West Street, Keene, NH 03431

Website: [www.co.cheshire.nh.us](http://www.co.cheshire.nh.us)

December 22, 2014

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.

At 10:12AM *the first semi-annual inspection of the DOC for 2014* began on May 21, 2014 and this information is contained with the approved minutes of that meeting. This is a record of these inspections/discussions is contained in the Minutes of the County Commissioners meetings which were approved on May 28, 2014.

When preparing the enclosed second semi-annual report minutes it was realized that due to an administrative oversight the minutes for the first semi-annual report were not dispatched in a timely manner earlier this year. Please accept our apologies for the delay.

10:12AM the Commissioners began the semi-annual jail inspection with Superintendent Van Wickler.

The Commissioners began their jail inspection by meeting with the Superintendent. They discussed military staff where leave creates some staffing and overtime pressures but in general, the jail is fully staffed. There are a total of 57 officers and all but 6 officers are certified. They discussed the relatively new video visitation system that allows people to conduct inmate visits from home using

#### Area Code 603

♦ **County Commissioners** 352-8215/Fax 355-3026 ♦ **Registry of Deeds** 352-0403/Fax 352-7678 ♦ **Finance Department** 355-0154/Fax 355-3000 - 33 West 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 - 265 Washington 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

computer-based scheduling. This has been very popular and is easy to use in terms of making an appointment, etc.

They discussed succession planning of the leadership positions given the length of service of many higher level posts. The Superintendent assured the Commissioners that he has a well-honed cross-training and career advancement program. They discussed the excellent relationship that the County has with the Federal authorities.

They interviewed the Federal Liaison Transportation Officer who was recently promoted to Captain. They discussed the transports as well as vehicle maintenance. The jail currently has seven (7) vehicles; some of which are used by other county departments for county business.

They reviewed the video visitation process and discussed the current policy regarding contact visitation, which is very limited for reasons of security. The jail books more than 1,700 persons each year as opposed to the state prison that books about 500 persons per year. They discussed early release and electronic monitoring (EM), which now has thirty-five (35) offenders on EM.

They inspected the Booking Area and interviewed staff. They inspected the video arraignment room and the Property Room. They noted that clothing of incoming offenders is laundered and packed away until release in order that the person has clean clothes upon departure. They also learned of the shoe-dryer used to dry the shoes of offenders as many times incoming offenders have wet boots/shoes which can rot and become covered with mildew over time. They were told that last year's (2013) Pumpkin Fest set a record of twenty-five (25) arrests.

They inspected F Block and inquired about the food and medical services, the female recreation area and noted the adoption cat provided by the humane society that is cared for by the inmates. They inspected the Medical Services department and interviewed two nurses. They discussed the medication order/administration process. They received information on the new pharmaceutical services provider (Westwood Pharmaceuticals).

They inspected the Dietary department and kitchen and reviewed food preparation and quality. They discussed the menus and staffing patterns with the Food Service Director.

They inspected the Laundry room and reviewed procedures related to the inmates that operate the laundry.

They met with Inmate Programs staff and discussed the number of volunteers, the GED program. They noted that the number of offenders on electronic monitoring has doubled with twenty (20) pre-trial and fourteen (14) sentenced offenders on EM.

They inspected the Maintenance areas and interviewed maintenance staff. They discussed the geothermal system in detail.

They inspected D Block and witnessed the lock-down associated with shift change. They learned about the six (6) principles of inmate management. They inspected K Block and were mindful of how quiet it was.

The inspection tour ended at 2:45 PM

We trust that this report will comply 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 say in each of these reports, 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**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John Pratt', written in a cursive style.

John Pratt, Chairman