



County of Cheshire

12 Court Street, Keene, NH 03431
www.co.cheshire.nh.us

November 14, 2018

Jail Inspection Reports
Second 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.

November 7, 2018: 2nd Semi-Annual Inspection

At 1:04PM the Commissioners resumed the public meeting for the purpose of conducting the semi-annual Department of Corrections inspection pursuant to RSA 30-B: 12 the findings will be reported to the Director of Administration of the New Hampshire Department of Justice.

At 1:15PM Captain Matt Willis began the tour of the facilities with the Commissioners, Commissioner Elect Englund and staff, who entered the visitation lobby. He reviewed how the video visitation works and fielded some questions from the Commissioners and staff.

At 1:18PM the group entered the booking area and Willis described the function of the booking area and answered questions about how the booking department is run.

At 1:21PM The group entered the building Sally Port and discussed the armory that is available if needed.

At 1:26PM the group entered F block where female inmates are housed and the Commissioners and staff spoke at length to the inmates. A common thread of the conversations was around the drug treatment programs and medications that available to inmates. Some of the inmates expressed a strong opinion that both Methadone and Suboxone should be available for addiction treatments. Presently only Suboxone is available under tightly controlled conditions.

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 – 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 1:41PM the group entered the Medical Department and spoke with the medical staff about services that the inmates use and the use of Suboxone at the facility.

At 1:46PM the Reception & Diagnostic (R&D) Unit was entered and Captain Willis reviewed how incoming inmates are classified and assigned housing.

At 1:55PM the D Block unit was entered and the Commissioners and Commissioner Elect talked with a number of inmates. No negative comments were noted.

At 2:06PM the Kitchen facility was inspected and everything was noted to be in working order and the unit was very clean.

At 2:15PM the Commissioners, Commissioner Elect and staff entered Meeting Room B to interview inmates and staff selected at random.

The first female inmate (J. B.) was escorted into the meeting room and in response to questions by the Commissioners said that the only thing she wanted to comment on was that the inmates are allowed only very limited personal care items and no soaps or hair care products can be kept in their cells. She said that it was her only issue and that she was doing okay and keeping busy as she is assigned to work in the Laundry area and likes having something to do every day. The Commissioners thanked her for her input and she was escorted from the meeting room.

At 2:21 The second female inmate (E. H.) entered the room and in response to questions from the Commissioners and staff, she said that she is serving out a six-month sentence and is scheduled to be released on December 20th. She said that she was transferred to Sullivan County jail and then transferred back to Cheshire and preferred to be here. She said that has bi-polar disorder and that she has had a difficult time getting her medications and that she has been extremely “stressed out” until about a week ago when the medications were administered and she is now doing much better. She said that she is from the local area but plans to return to her home in California when she is released and doesn’t plan on returning as she has lived in California for about five years and not had any problems with law enforcement.

In response to a question concerning programs that are available to inmates she said that it was her opinion that there weren’t enough programs available to meet the demand of the inmates needs and that she is only aware of two AA programs and two writing courses that were offered.

She then said that the counselling that she has been undergoing is very good and that two of the counselors she has been meeting with have been excellent in helping her get ready to leave the facility.

The Commissioners thanked E. H. for her comments and she was escorted back to her holding block.

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At 2:31PM the first male Correctional Officer entered the meeting room. He said that he didn't have any complaints about his job and that he enjoyed the work. He said that he is still in training and will be taking his certification tests soon. Responding to a question from the Commissioners about any problems that he has encountered with the inmates, he stated that the only time he has experienced a problem was with two inmates who refused to work and that both issues were worked out with the inmates.

The Commissioners thanked him for his comments and he exited the room.

At 2:36PM the second male Correctional Officer entered the room and responded to a question concerning his length of time at the facility. He said that he has been at the jail for about five months and is still in training and really likes his job. He stated that the mentor program that he participated in really helped him to understand many aspects of the job and that it was extremely helpful to him to work side-by-side with a senior Correctional Officer. Responding to questions about his most difficult interactions with inmates he said that he was involved in placing three inmates in the segregation unit for aggressive behavior but otherwise has not had any problems with the inmates that he supervises.

At 2:41PM the interviews ended and the Commissioners returned to the public meeting room.

At 2:44PM there being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Weed moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion to adjourn was seconded by Commissioner Graves 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

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