

## Special Committee to Resolve Jail Space and Site Needs Interim Report

January 8, 2009

The Special Committee to Resolve Jail Space and Site Needs has met nine times since its inaugural meeting on September 25, 2008 to resolve the jail space and site needs problem. The Committee reviewed issues related to jail overcrowding, jail conditions, jail beds and jail programs resolve jail space and site needs. The Committee noted that the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council is addressing some issues related to alternatives to incarceration. The Committee has made the following interim findings:

- ◆ The current facility is inadequate with serious physical and security deficiencies which make it very difficult to operate in a safe and humane manner.
- ◆ The jail does not have adequately sized core spaces (sally port, booking and receiving, kitchen, laundry, medical, programming, office and storage) to serve the current and future jail population.
- ◆ The secure jail does not have enough beds to serve the current jail population. There are currently 118 secure beds in the jail. The average daily secure population has ranged from a high of 174 in 2006 to 166 in 2008.
- ◆ The current rate of increase in the Secure Jail population is 3-4% per year.
- ◆ The current rate of increase in the Secure Jail population is unacceptable and would require a jail expansion that was too large.
- ◆ A target rate of increase in the Secure Jail population of 1% per year is manageable and should be the target Eau Claire County adopts for jail sizing.
- ◆ A 1% per year increase in the Secure Jail population will require a significant and ongoing investment in alternatives to incarceration to manage the population entering the justice system. Existing alternatives must be expanded and new alternatives must be developed in Eau Claire County to keep the jail population growth at 1% per year over the next 20 years. The culture of the criminal justice system must be changed to put less emphasis on secure incarceration and more emphasis on alternative programs.
- ◆ The Secure Jail should be sized to allow for proper classification of prisoners and flexibility in operation. The number of beds in the jail should be 20% greater than the number of prisoners for the target year of 2028 to allow for classification and unforeseen and uncontrollable influences on the Secure Jail population.
- ◆ A 1% increase in the average Secure Jail population and a jail classification and operational margin of 20% equates to a jail size of 266 Secure Jail beds in 20 years (2028).
- ◆ The size of the core functions of the jail should be based on 330 secure beds to allow for future jail expansion.
- ◆ The jail **site** must have the capability to expand to approximately 330 beds to allow for Secure Jail population growth beyond 2028.

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