

To: The Honorable Thomas C. Fincham
From: Empaneled Members of the Grand Jury
September 2022 Term
Date: March 24, 2023
Re: Report to the Presiding Judge - Platte County Jail

Twelve members of the Grand Jury, together with Assistant Prosecuting Attorneys Amanda Hanson, John Chambers, and Joseph Findley, toured the Platte County Jail (“the Jail”) on February 21, 2023. The tour began at approximately 11:30 AM and lasted until approximately 1:30 PM. The tour was led by Lieutenant Ian Johns and Captain Micah Holan.

Lieutenant Johns talked about the Jail and gave us background information during our tour. Platte County’s current Jail was built in 1998. The number of fixed bunks has expanded since it first opened, and it currently has 180 fixed bunks for inmates. The Jail housed 203 inmates on February 21, 2023. Platte County was obligated to hold all 203 of these inmates as they were charged with crimes in Platte County or a municipality of Platte County. The Jail has previously housed up to 212 inmates.

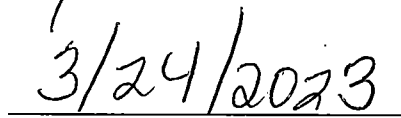
The Grand Jury’s observations of the workings of the Jail were as follows:

- The facility has been maintained and updated well over the past 25 years. However, the facilities are beginning to show age and the inmate population consistently exceeds the maximum capacity of the Jail.
- Technology of the Jail is increasingly outdated. Cameras, control buttons, and inmate communication opportunities in particular are outdated. The Jail currently has two stations capable of “video court.” The Jail aspires to create one new video court station. The Grand Jury endorses this endeavor.
- The Jail offers some work opportunities to inmates that can be helpful. These opportunities—such as working in the kitchen or the laundry area—allow inmates soft skills such as timeliness, supervision guidance, and teamwork with others. Those that work in these programs in the Jail are screened to be low-risk and not a threat to other inmates and staff. Inmate workers are awarded phone credit and extra meals for their services.
- The Grand Jury learned that the inmates have limited opportunities while in Jail and expresses a desire for an increase in transitional, educational, and rehabilitative programs in the Jail. Currently, inmates have the opportunity to work towards an accredited high school diploma. However, the Grand Jury wishes there to be more opportunities for inmates.
- Lieutenant Johns said that his goals in operating the Jail are (1) to create a safe and sanitary environment for the inmates, (2) to provide the inmates with sufficient food provided in a sanitary environment, and (3) to provide inmates with proper medical care as the need arises. He does an exceptional job with all of these goals.
- Lieutenant Johns is at ease running the Jail, and has his priorities straight. He makes sure to treat inmates with respect and do his part to ensure the criminal justice system works for

everyone. Lieutenant Johns had taken the role over from Captain Holan. The two work together to ensure that the overall goals of the Jail are met.

- The Jail is very clean and the staff takes inmate safety very seriously.
- The staff attempts to classify individuals to keep them with other inmates of similar classification levels. Over time, the profile of the inmates has changed and become—on average—more high-risk, making it difficult to effectively classify the inmates. Moreover, these high-risk inmates make it difficult to man the internal opportunities for the inmates to work; therefore, it burdens the already short-staffed Jail.
- The Jail kitchen is very clean, but the Grand Jury noticed that safe food storage was inadequate and needs to be addressed. Each inmate is fed two hot meals and a cold breakfast every day. Each meal cost under \$1.46. It is a sliding scale approach.
- The medical care provided by the Jail is insufficient. Specifically, the Jail needs to provide more nursing and mental health services.
- The Jail seems to be understaffed. Lieutenant Johns described the difficulty in keeping quality staff as other counties raise pay rates. The Jail is currently operating with the minimum required staff. The Grand Jury would support a pay increase and more recruiting events.
- The Jail employees are respectful toward the inmates.
- The Jail facility provides excellent security.
- Upon the review and observations of the Jail, it is the opinion of this Grand Jury that the Jail is over capacity, needs more space and services, and is understaffed. Furthermore, the Grand Jury is concerned that these capacity issues do not allow individuals to be incarcerated that need to be incarcerated. The Grand Jury believes that in the event there is any excess capacity, outside agencies would house inmates at the Platte County Jail.


Foreperson


Date