



State of North Carolina
General Court of Justice
Judicial District 30B

BRADLEY B. LETTS
SENIOR RESIDENT SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE

285 N. MAIN ST., SUITE 3300
WAYNESVILLE, NC 28786

PHONE: (828) 454-6512
FAX: (828) 454-6490

January 6, 2015

Greetings:

I want to begin by thanking Sheriff Hall and Major Queen for convening the first Jackson County Courthouse Security stakeholder meeting last night on January 5, 2015. I appreciate the attendance of all those present and their willingness to engage constructively in the much needed dialog surrounding the security needs for the Jackson County Justice Center.

As requested by Major Queen here are my comments:

- There shall be one (1) entrance to the Justice Center;
- The entrance will be manned at all times by the Sherriff's Department;
- The main entrance shall employ the use of screening devices for weapons which are properly maintained, regularly calibrated and tested, and compliant with all health and safety standards;
- No other entrances shall be accessible during regular working hours for the public or staff (excluding law enforcement); and
- A separate, unmanned but secured entrance shall be established. This entrance will be accessible for all staff in the Justice Center regardless of department but shall only operate during non-working hours, weekends and holidays.

These minimum requirements shall be implemented. There may be additional matters and protocols established based upon input and suggestions from others which arise from our discussions.

I look forward to the implementation of the above minimum security measures during this coming year. Hopefully at our next meeting on February 4, at 3:30PM, we can continue this productive exchange of ideas for the betterment of our community here in Jackson County.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Bradley B. Letts in cursive script.
Bradley B. Letts



Jackson County Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Chip L. Hall

399 Grindstaff Cove Road
Sylva, NC 28779
www.sheriff.jacksonnc.org

Office (828) 586-8901
Fax (828) 631-1113

Justice Center Law Enforcement/Security Enhancement Personnel

In Brief

- Creation of a Detention Captain position
- Reclassify the duties of the Bailiff/Courts Lieutenant to primarily focus on the duties associated with court security and courtroom safety
- Creation of two new Deputies assigned to work the metal detectors and bag scanner for the proposed primary entrance
- Change the current 80% bailiff position to 100%
- Creation of one new detention officer to address security needs in the Justice Center at the primary entrance
- Create an overtime budget of \$80,000 to address shift shortages

Justification

The following proposal has been made available to assist in compliance with Superior Court Judge Bradley Letts' letter requesting additional security at the Jackson County Justice Center. As a result of the letter, considerations were made for the physical security of the Justice Center as related to the court facilities. A recent security assessment conducted by the NCSA for the Justice Center made recommendations and those were given considerable considerations. Additional considerations were made for security related to county offices, county employees, state offices, state employees, and the general public visiting these sites were made as well. After careful review of each of these considerations, a review of current Sheriff's Office staffing, a review of current Court Officer duties and certifications, and the new proposed physical security measures for the Justice Center, the Sheriff finds the need for additional personnel. These new positions will be a

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necessity for proactive security enforcement to most effectively provide the security needed for the Jackson County Justice Center.

Inadequate allocation of new personnel to operate security is the primary concern of the Sheriff. Current staffing will not allow for the additional security features to be maintained in the Justice Center as proposed. Proper staffing and supervision of this project is imperative. Court Officers assigned to the metal detectors have multiple and additional other assignments when court is not in session. The current courtroom security team should not be decreased. Additional duties of the existing bailiffs include the state mandated checks of the offenders included in the sexual offender registry as well as prisoner and involuntary commitment transports. One of the existing detention officers used for operating the metal detector is primarily assigned to operate the inmate work crew. Furthermore, the courts are continuing to increase in frequency requiring their presence in the courtroom itself. Reassignment of any of these bailiffs or officers is not possible but they may be available to assist when court is not in session and other responsibilities are completed.

As a result, the Sheriff's Office recommends an additional two sworn deputy sheriffs be added as well as increasing the current bailiff to 100% instead of 80%. Also, another armed detention officer to be included to help operate the primary entrance. This should adequately cover the proposed order while providing the best possible on-site security coverage. These officers will be posted at the main entrance to conduct physical screenings of persons entering the Justice Center during all hours of operation. They will also provide on-site security assigned to patrol the floors as well as the parking lots of the Justice Center in addition to monitoring security cameras in real time as time permits. Given the number of days added to screen all entrants into the Justice Center, the added number of hours to maintain metal detectors, and special after hours events, three personnel will be necessary to cover these tasks and still take into consideration sick days, vacation days,

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training days, compensatory time, etc. With the increased personnel and responsibilities, direct and daily supervision of the courthouse security will be needed. The Sheriff will direct this supervision to the Lieutenant of the Bailiffs. This Bailiff Lieutenant currently assists in supervision of electronics and personnel in the detention center. The replacement of the Lieutenant would best be served as a newly created Captain assigned to oversee the entire operations associated with the management of the detention center.

A further request to uniform the two new deputies as well as the new detention officer would be needed. Additionally, the Sheriff's Office purchases new vehicles on a yearly basis. Over the past four years, our yearly purchases have been cut down to only 5 vehicles per year. For years the Sheriff's Office was allowed to purchase 7 new vehicles per year. If our yearly allocation can return to 7 vehicles we can accommodate all new positions from new purchases and existing vehicles.

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Salary and Benefits based on entry level only

SH53*1	-CAPTAIN
SALARY	\$42,603.95
ER FICA	\$2,641.44
LOC	\$3,156.95
HOSP	\$9,202.96
ERMED	\$617.76
WC	\$128.66
UNEMPL	\$214.00
TOTAL	\$58,565.73

SH46*1 (100%) - DEPUTY SHERIFF	
SALARY	\$30,227.83
ER FICA	\$1,874.13
LOC	\$2,239.88
HOSP	\$9,202.96
ERMED	\$438.30
WC	\$91.29
UNEMPL	\$214.00
SUBTOTAL	\$44,288.39
X2	\$88,576.78

	-DETETNION COURT OFFICER
SH46*1	
SALARY	\$30,277.83
ER FICA	\$1,877.23
LOC	\$2,140.64
HOSP	\$9,202.96
ERMED	\$439.03
WC	\$91.44
UNEMPL	\$214.00
TOTAL	\$44,243.13

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DIFFERENCE 80% TO 100% BAILIFF

SALARY	\$6,045.57
ER FICA	\$374.83
LOC	\$447.98
HOSP	\$0.00
ERMED	\$87.66
WC	\$18.26
UNEMPL	\$0.00

TOTAL	
DIFFERENCE	\$6,974.29

Personal Equipment per person pricing

Ballistic Vest	\$694.00
Uniform Long Sleeve Shirts x3	\$153.00
Uniform Short Sleeve Shirts x3	\$168.00
Uniform Pants x5	\$327.50
Winter Coat	\$215.00
Rain Coat	\$ 88.00
Badge x2	\$130.00
Boots	\$135.00
Duty Gear, Holster and Belt, etc.	\$462.65
Traffic Vest	\$ 51.00
Name Plate	\$ 13.00
Handcuffs x2	\$ 60.00
Handgun	\$450.00
Rifle	\$900.00
Handgun	\$500.00
Training Clothing	\$ 81.50
Total	\$4428.65 x 3= \$13,285.95

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Patrol Vehicle per person pricing

State Contract Police Vehicle	\$23,638.00
Bar Light	\$ 1,199.00
Hideaway LED	\$ 57.00
Rear Dual Avenger x2	\$ 364.00
Dash Avenger	\$ 182.00
Mag Light	\$ 79.00
Vehicle Partition Screen	\$ 355.00
Lower Extension Panel	\$ 40.00
Window Barriers	\$ 149.00
Carson Siren/Switch Combo	\$ 349.00
100 Watt Siren	\$ 193.20
Siren Bracket	\$ 21.00
Console	\$ 345.12
Armrest	\$ 105.00
Microphone Clip x2	\$ 29.10
Push Bumper	\$ 206.55
VHF Radio	\$ 695.00
UHF Radio	\$ 695.00
Antennas	\$ 65.58
Coax Kits	\$ 20.67
DTE Cables	\$ 84.35
Custom Install Kit	\$ 175.00
Fuse	\$ 10.00
Labor	\$ 1,820.00
Stripe Kit	\$ 475.00
Total	\$32,991.57

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Sheriff Chip Hall
Jackson County Sheriff's Office

FROM: Edmond W. Caldwell, Jr.
Executive Vice President and General Counsel
North Carolina Sheriffs' Association

Keenon M. James
Deputy Director
North Carolina Sheriffs' Association

DATE: December 3, 2014

RE: Courthouse Security Committee Meeting Summary

On October 3, 2014, at 9:00 a.m., the Jackson County Courthouse Security Committee met in the roll call room at the Jackson County Sheriff's Office. Travis Robinson, Court Security Consultant for the North Carolina Sheriffs' Association, facilitated the training event and meeting which lasted until 12:00 p.m. Jackson County Sheriff Chip Hall (former Chief Deputy at the time of training) welcomed everyone and expressed his gratitude to those attending and to the North Carolina Sheriffs' Association for funding this project. In attendance were:

Tony Elders – Director, Code Enforcement, Jackson County
Chip Hall – Sheriff (former Chief Deputy at time of training),
Jackson County Sheriff's Office
Kelly Holder – Chief Probation Officer, NCDPS
Brad Letts – Senior Resident Superior Court Judge
Dallas McMillan – District Manager, Community Corrections,
NCDPS
Erin Morrison – Judicial Assistant
Shannon Queen – Major, Jackson County Sheriff's Office
Kelly Rich – Assistant Clerk of Superior Court



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Richard Walker – Chief District Court Judge
Chuck Wooten – County Manager, Jackson County

At the meeting, Travis Robinson introduced the Courthouse Security Committee to the *Courthouse Security Manual*, published by the North Carolina Sheriffs' Association with funding from the Governor's Crime Commission. This 107 page document addresses in detail the "best practices" that all courthouse complexes should adopt to maximize the security of those individuals attending court or for those visitors attending the other county offices that are located in the courthouse building. The Courthouse Security Committee engaged in extensive dialogue as the strengths and security gaps were explored that related to the specifics of the Jackson County Courthouse.

The Jackson County Courthouse has several security strategies and procedures currently in place that follow the "best practices" as outlined in the *Courthouse Security Manual*. These are:

- Exterior signage leading to the courthouse building is clear and easy for the public to find the facility.
- The exterior lighting around the courthouse is sufficient to discourage attacks and/or assaults against individuals and vehicles.
- Entry signage provides clear direction concerning weapons, contraband and cell phones in the courthouse building.
- There are separate entrances into the courtroom for the judges, in-custody defendants and the public.
- There is an excellent working relationship between the judiciary, other building occupants and sheriff's personnel, all committed to safety and security in the courthouse.
- The closed circuit television system (CCTV) is monitored during the business day by a full time staff member in the detention facility control room.
- In case of an emergency in the courthouse, sheriff's office personnel located in the same building can quickly respond.
- There are physical barriers (walls, partitions, glass) in place in the clerk's public areas. Barriers provide a security shield from the public to prevent assaults and robbery.
- Upon inspection, several of the public meeting rooms were appropriately locked and secured.

On October 2, 2014 from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m., and on October 3, 2014 from 1:00 to 4:30 p.m., Travis Robinson and Major Shannon Queen completed the Physical Security Checklist concerning the courthouse complex. Observations from the tour, discussions with the Courthouse Security Committee and feedback from the Checklist were used to form the recommendations listed in this report.

The North Carolina Sheriffs' Association courthouse security evaluation is intended to serve as a basic physical audit of each county's courthouse safety and security procedures. This audit is not comprehensive and may not contain all possible safety and security defenses. The most notable security gaps from the assessment are:

EXTERIOR

Parking

- **Current Status:**

There are a few closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras videotaping the parking lots of the courthouse.

Recommendation:

Install more CCTV cameras in the parking lots. The box monitors can be exchanged for flat screen television monitors on the walls in the detention facility control room. In addition, deputies need to sweep the parking areas of the complex several times each day as part of their routine function.

- **Current Status:**

The public is allowed to park directly in front of the courthouse building and in various parking lots around the entire complex. This is dangerous to have these vehicles so close to the building.

Recommendation:

Signage should be put in place reserving these parking areas for law enforcement or other government employees. This parking restriction should be aggressively enforced. The public should be directed to park in the lot towards the middle of the hill in front of the complex.

- **Current Status:**

There is no designated juror parking.

Recommendation:

Designate a sufficient amount of reserved numbered spaces at the rear of the complex for jurors after they are empaneled. In addition, assign a deputy the responsibility to help escort the jurors in and out of the courthouse building from their vehicles.

- **Current Status:**

There is no designated employee parking.

Recommendation:

Coordinate with the various offices within the complex to have employees accompany each other in groups if possible when they report to and leave the complex to go home. Additionally, assigned parking to the side of the complex or the rear of the building can be reserved for this purpose if the Committee sees fit.

- **Current Status:**

The judges and other elected officials currently park on several sides of the judicial complex and are exposed to the public from when they exit their vehicles until they enter the building.

Recommendation:

Allow the sitting judges to park in the fenced in area beside the sheriff's office when the remainder of the facility is fenced in on the back side of the complex and beside the jail. Whenever possible and upon request, have a uniformed deputy sheriff or bailiff escort the judges as they come and go.

Landscaping

- **Current Status:**

The bushes in the front of the complex can easily store hidden contraband and other weapons.

Recommendation:

This area is particularly vulnerable and should be visually checked for contraband. The maintenance personnel should trim the bushes to allow for easy inspection of these areas during security rounds at various intervals during the day.

BUILDING

Doors, Windows and Other Openings

- **Current Status:**

There are no exterior alarms at the courthouse building that will notify the Sheriff's Office if the doors are breached after hours.

Recommendation:

All exterior doors for the courthouse building should be equipped with an intrusion alarm activated when the building is closed.

- ***Current Status:***

Currently there isn't a single main public entrance to the courthouse building.

Recommendation:

It is highly recommended that all individuals entering the Jackson County Courthouse enter through a single main entrance and pass through a metal detector. There should be, at a minimum, two deputy sheriffs conducting security at the front entry point to the courthouse, especially before court convenes and when court resumes after the lunch break. As funding becomes available, an x-ray machine should be installed to assist in checking packages, etc.

Utility Control Points

- ***Current Status:***

Several utility control points in the rear of the courthouse complex were unsecured and accessible.

Recommendation:

All mechanical/utility areas need to be locked to prevent tampering. Installing a fence that would prohibit unauthorized individuals from accessing these areas at the back of the courthouse building is recommended. In addition, equip these control points with locking devices to ensure access by authorized personnel only.

Communications

- ***Current Status:***

The court officers cannot fully communicate with each other while court is in session.

Recommendation:

Purchase a radio headset/earpiece system for each officer so that the officers can monitor activities throughout the building silently while they are working in the courtrooms.

- ***Current Status:***

There is no emergency public address (PA) system in the courthouse building to broadcast emergency messages.

Recommendation:

The new state phone system has a **public address function**. Install this function on the phones in the courthouse building and train staff on how to use it in the event of an emergency.

Public Areas

- **Current Status:**

There is not a written security plan addressing the need for routine searches of the public areas inside and outside the facility.

Recommendation:

Develop a written security plan that includes routine, daily searches of all public waiting areas and bathrooms. In addition, routine inspections are needed around the exterior of the courthouse building to look for contraband/weapons that could be dropped near the entrance.

- **Current Status:**

The trashcans used in the courthouse building can conceal contraband, bombs or other weapons.

Recommendation:

Replace the current containers with mesh and use clear plastic bags.

Courthouse Procedures

- **Current Status:**

There is limited package, purse or backpack screening at the courthouse.

Recommendation:

When funding permits, the county should purchase one dual energy x-ray machine to help screen pocketbooks, briefcases and packages coming into the courthouse. This will also require an additional officer to perform this screening during peak entry times.

- **Current Status:**

There are no written security procedures for the courthouse that address routine functions or emergency procedures.

Recommendation:

Written standard operating procedures (SOPs) need to be established and then written for the courthouse containing medical emergency and contingency plans (high profile trials, fire alarms, bomb alerts, active shooters) as well as routine day-to-day operations. All policies should be consistent with the county's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) with a clear chain of command structure in place to be updated annually. In addition, the security plan should include routine, daily searching of all public waiting areas, meeting rooms and restrooms beside the courtroom before opening court in the morning and after the lunch break. Conduct

daily routine inspections around the exterior of the courthouse building to look for contraband/weapons that could be dropped near the entrances.

- ***Current Status:***

There is no safety training for any of the occupants in the courthouse building.

Recommendation:

Annually train all courthouse employees, judicial officials and other building occupants on emergency procedures and expectations. This is even more important in Jackson County since there are a limited number of officers in court and the officers need to stay focused on immediate security concerns and not become completely distracted with a medical emergency.

- ***Current Status:***

There are no safety drills being completed for courthouse employees and the public.

Recommendation:

At least once each year, perform the following safety drills: fire, evacuation, medical emergency and active shooter. Document and debrief after each exercise.

- ***Current Status:***

There are no periodic security discussions with the judges, attorneys or building occupants.

Recommendation:

Meet periodically, either formally or informally, to discuss security issues. The Jackson County Courthouse Security Committee would provide an excellent venue for this activity. After each meeting, disseminate information, perhaps in the form of meeting minutes, to all employees. Keeping everyone informed of the emergency procedures in place in this courthouse is critical.

- ***Current Status:***

There is no standard operating procedure (SOP) outlining a strategy to document security concerns or issues in the courthouse.

Recommendation:

Establish a procedure to document suspicious incidents and/or illegal activities. When these activities occur, employees should report them to the court officers who either take an incident report or document the situation by memo. Share these reports at future Courthouse Security Committee meetings and keep them on file.

- **Current Status:**
Mail is delivered to various offices in the courthouse building without being centrally screened or going through the security checkpoint.

Recommendation:

Implement incoming mail procedures to include the screening of boxes and packages at the security checkpoint prior to being distributed to the respective offices. Individuals responsible for screening and sorting the mail should have specific training on detecting suspicious packages and letters.

Courtrooms

- **Current Status:**
The lights in the courtrooms are activated by switches that can be manipulated by the public. If the lights were turned off, it could pose a serious risk to the individuals inside the courtrooms.

Recommendation:

Place a locking mechanism or cover over the switches in order to prevent any public tampering.

- **Current Status:**
There is no ballistic protection at the judge's bench area in the courtrooms.

Recommendation:

Install ballistic protection under the judge's bench area to include the clerk's work areas and witness stand.

- **Current Status:**
There are no extra restraining devices stored in the courtroom to use to take multiple defendants into custody.

Recommendation:

Store extra flexcuffs nearby to be used to detain multiple individuals.

- **Current Status:**
There is no written policy concerning who can be armed inside the Jackson County Courthouse.

Recommendation:

The Courthouse Security Committee should develop a specific written firearms policy addressing who should be allowed to be armed in the courthouse, i.e., on-duty officers, off-duty officers, judges and other court officials as authorized by law.

- **Current Status:**
There are no written emergency evacuation procedures for prisoners, judges, jurors or the public.

Recommendation:

Develop a written emergency evacuation policy for the courtroom building that includes procedures for prisoners, judges, jurors, spectators and other employees. Once the policy is adopted, drills to test its effectiveness should be implemented as indicated earlier in this report.

Judges' Chambers and Related Offices

- **Current Status:**
The judges' chambers off the courtrooms do not have duress alarms.

Recommendation:

All chambers should have duress alarms installed that notify the detention facility control room when activated.

- **Current Status:**
There are judges that are armed while they occupy the bench in the courtroom.

Recommendation:

Judges permitted by law to carry a concealed weapon at the bench per G.S. § 14-269.4(4b) should be briefed on safe gun handling and the bailiffs should know which judges are armed and where their firearms are located at all times. Develop a safety plan outlining the security expectations in the event there is an emergency in the courtroom.

Restricted and Secure Passageways

- **Current Status:**
There is no distinct written policy outlining who should have access to the restricted areas behind the courtroom.

Recommendation:

The Courthouse Security Committee should designate who should have key card access to the secure areas behind the courtrooms.

- **Current Status:**
The areas involved in prisoner movement are not being monitored by CCTV cameras.

Recommendation:

The Courthouse Security Committee should consider adding CCTV cameras that will monitor all the areas where prisoners are present in the courthouse so that these areas are being effectively supervised.

Temporary Holding Areas

- *Current Status:*

There are no written procedures for the emergency evacuation of the in-custody defendants from the temporary holding cell or from the courtrooms. In addition, there are no written procedures for handling a medical emergency involving a prisoner.

Recommendation:

Develop written policies outlining the emergency evacuation of in-custody defendants in the holding cell and for handling inmate medical emergencies in the courthouse and holding cell.

Attached is the full assessment completed by the Courthouse Security Committee members. Listed below are the major recommendations:

1. The courthouse complex needs additional Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras. Members of the Courthouse Security Committee should identify the best location for these additional cameras in order to view as many areas as possible to supplement the physical security rounds that officers perform during the course of the day.
2. Establish an incident reporting system whereby security incidents are reported to the bailiffs and documented and then shared with the Courthouse Security Committee at their quarterly meetings.
3. Systematic safety training needs to be conducted for all staff occupying the courthouse building to reinforce procedures for active shooters, bomb threats, hostage situations, etc. In addition, conduct an orientation training session for new employees.
4. The Courthouse Security Committee needs to assist in the development of a written policy outlining who can access the restricted areas behind the courtrooms and who will have an access key card.
5. Radios with earpieces should be purchased so that officers can hear radio traffic and respond more effectively to incidents in and around the courthouse building.
6. Develop and implement written courthouse security policies and standard operating procedures included as part of the overall courthouse security plan.

7. Prohibit the public from parking directly in front of the courthouse building. Reserve these spaces for government vehicles and law enforcement officers.
8. Every effort should be made to lock down the restricted areas in the courthouse building.
9. Duress alarms are needed in all of the courtrooms and offices that are occupied within the complex. This allows for extra coverage and the ability to contact the sheriff's office when issues or emergencies arise that need a law enforcement response.
10. The Courthouse Security Committee may want to consider adding the County Emergency Management Director to the Committee to help establish policies and procedures.
11. The county needs to ensure that they can access the new public address system implemented on the state phones located in the courtrooms.

The next step for the Courthouse Security Committee should be to review this summary, carefully look at the current gaps and begin to prioritize what items/activities need to be addressed by critical function and ease of implementation. Those items that can be changed quickly should become part of the short-term plan. Those items that require substantial funding should be included in the Committee's long-range plan.

The North Carolina Sheriffs' Association appreciates the opportunity to have been a part of this process for your county. Please contact the North Carolina Sheriffs' Association if you or any members of the Committee have any questions concerning this report.

Photos

1. This area should be returned to the control of the sheriff's office. The elevator is in a secured inmate movement area and this leads to both the inmate holding area and the sheriff's office.



2. The monitors in the detention facility control room should be changed from the box style to wall mount flat screen televisions.



3. The utility and power controls for the building should be equipped with locking devices and when funding permits, fencing should be installed for controlled access.



4. The facility should have a single main entrance where everyone that enters the complex will be screened.



5. The area behind the courthouse near the jail should have the fence extended to close in the area allowing for secured access to the parking lot and rear of jail.

