

Coroner's Facility Tour – October 24, 2017

A tour of the Stanislaus County Coroner's Facility was completed by members of the 2017 - 2018 SCCGJ. As mandated by state law, the coroner's division investigates certain deaths. The purpose of the tour was to give SCCGJ a thorough overview of the facility and its operations.

Jury member comments were as follows:

- Facility was well maintained with emphasis on keeping it clean from contamination.
- The rooms for storage of the deceased were clean, organized, and climate controlled.
- Rooms used for performing autopsies were highly organized and clean.
- The staff leading the tour showed deep respect for the deceased and surviving family members.

The overall consensus of SCCGJ members on the tour was that the Coroner's Facility - Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department (SCSD) is professionally staffed and well maintained.

Modesto Police Department Tour – November 28, 2017

Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury (SCCGJ) members toured the Modesto Police Department (MPD) on November 28, 2017. Police Chief Galen Carroll and Lieutenants R. DeAlba and S. Stanfield provided information on the Operations Division of the MPD. The Operations Division is the largest of the three divisions within the MPD. This division provides the core police services, utilizing technology and community engagement. The Operations Division is divided into four Area Commands. Officers and sergeants are assigned to each area. Lt. DeAlba oversees the Northwest and Central Areas, and Lt. Stanfield is assigned to the Northeast and South Areas.

The real-time crime center was included in the tour. All on-duty officers can be located on a large electronic map of the city. Additionally, another large electronic display depicts all officer assignments, locations, and crimes being investigated. Each call is prioritized and recorded. As part of the tour, SCCGJ members viewed the room for recharging and storing the body cameras. Lt. Stanfield stated most officers would not go on patrol without a camera. At the end of the tour SCCGJ members were shown the Homeless Engagement and Response Team (HEART) van used by a combined team from MPD and Modesto Fire Department. This is a joint effort to help the homeless in the city. A demonstration of the MPD drone ended the tour.

Stanislaus County Juvenile Hall Tour – January 9, 2018

The SCCGJ toured the entire Stanislaus County Juvenile Hall (SCJH).

Juvenile Hall for Stanislaus County is a maximum security detention complex for individuals who have committed offences prior to their eighteenth birthday. While detained SCJH provides

each individual a comprehensive program that includes education, counseling, recreation, health, and religious activities.

Grand jury member comments of the tour follow:

- The classrooms at the facility during the tour were occupied with detainees doing school work under the guidance of an instructor. Such study allows the participants to continue their education.
- The kitchen area was clean and organized. Detainees who work in the kitchen learn skills on how to prepare meals as well as desserts. The skills they develop can be transferred to the outside workforce.
- The medical center staff explained how detainees are given public hygiene education and made aware of public health dangers.
- The gymnasium area was very clean, and the staff explained that detainees earn their sports privileges based on their behavior.
- The tour included review of the workshop area where detainees learn how to use basic construction tools.
- An area outside of the building facilities was observed where detainees were developing planting beds to grow vegetables and herbs for use in the kitchen.
- The facility has a library stocked with books that allow detainees the opportunity to expand their knowledge.

At the time of the grand jury tour, the facility housed sixty-one individuals which is well below the maximum population. While the grand jury was on the tour, staff was engaged with the juveniles and professional while performing their duties.

Stanislaus Regional 9-1-1 Dispatch Center – December 12, 2017

On December 12, 2017 members of the SCCGJ toured the Stanislaus Regional 9-1-1 Dispatch Center. The Dispatch Center handled over 600,000 9-1-1 emergency and non-emergency calls in fiscal year 2016 - 2017. The largest number of responses (186,202) was for the MPD followed by (130,613) for the SCSD and contract cities.

Fifty-six employees of the Dispatch Center handle calls for fourteen fire districts, Stanislaus County Probation Department, and the contract cities of Hughson, Patterson, Riverbank, and Waterford. Dispatchers are highly trained and have the ability to determine the priority of service calls, monitor the location of all emergency service providers, and monitor the status of emergency situations in real-time. They also have the ability and authority to direct those services as needed.

Stanislaus County Public Safety Center – October 10, 2017

The SCCGJ met with the Hackett Road Jail Commander and several of his staff to tour the sheriff's jail facilities located on Hackett Rd. These buildings consist of three main structures: Public Safety Center (PSC), Minimum Housing Unit (MHU) consisting of Units 1 and 2, Maximum Security Unit, and the Intake, Release, Transportation (IRT) facility. Male and female arrestees are booked at the IRT and housed in the PSC. Almost one-half mile of hallway connects these facilities.

The PSC and MHU are the oldest of these facilities yet were built with the more current contemporary jail construction and custodial management philosophy. During this tour SCCGJ observed both male and female inmates in their cells, walking freely within their pods and exercise yards. Other pods were under normal lockdown. These facilities have a maximum capacity of 534 beds and were clean and well-managed.

SCCGJ also toured the newly completed 552-bed expansion of the PSC. This facility consists of 480 maximum security beds and a 72-bed medical and mental health extension. The safety cells are constructed with padded floor and walls to protect psychotic inmates or those who may cause injury to themselves. Jail Commander stated that more inmates will be housed at this facility as more deputies and medical staff are hired. The SCSD is expecting full occupancy in 2019.

These jail facilities were funded with California State AB900 grants of which California paid 90% and Stanislaus County paid 10%.

Stanislaus County Men's Jail – October 23, 2017

The SCCGJ visited the Men's Jail (CJ) located at 12th and H St. in downtown Modesto. SCCGJ met with the sheriff's CJ commander and a small staff. This is the department's oldest jail, a three-story structure built in 1954. Due to a large expansion on Hackett Road adding more than a thousand beds, the sheriff's department has been reducing inmate population at CJ the last six months. Currently less than 100 inmates are housed during the day, down from almost 400 in 2017. Only unsentenced male inmates currently attending court are housed at this facility on the first floor making this a Monday – Friday operation. Floors two and three are unused. Arrestees are now booked and housed on Hackett Road as are sentenced inmates. The sheriff's department continues to utilize this facility due to a short underground tunnel used to walk inmates between CJ and the superior court thereby reducing security concerns.

The SCSD has renamed this facility The Stanislaus County Court Holding Facility. Despite the age of this facility, the SCSD does a remarkable job of maintenance and repair. The SCCGJ observed no serious maintenance issues that required immediate attention.

Election Observations – November 7, 2017

As a guardian of public trust in local government, the SCCGJ observed the balloting system in the county for the November 7, 2017 election.

The jury members received a step-by-step explanation of the balloting process from the Stanislaus County Registrar of Voters. Members were impressed by the extensive knowledge and professionalism of the staff.

All processing of ballots, including mail-in ballots, is done at the registrar's office downtown Modesto. This balloting system was observed by jury members. The county staff work long hours to make sure all ballots are processed correctly and on time.

SCCGJ members also observed the following polling sites within Stanislaus County:

- Burchell Nursery – 12000 State Hwy 120, Oakdale, CA.
- Family Life Church – 200 North Ave., Turlock, CA.
- Good Shepherd Lutheran Church – 640 N. Minaret, Turlock, CA.
- Oakdale Community Church – 311 N. Eighth Ave., Oakdale, CA.
- St. Frances of Rome Catholic Church – 2827 Topeka St., Riverbank, CA.
- St. Francis Episcopal Church – 915 E. Main St., Turlock, CA.
- Turlock Silvercrest Residence – 865 Lander Ave., Turlock, CA.

Jury members stayed thirty to forty-five minutes at each polling location. The poll workers were careful to follow protocol, punctuality, accuracy, and privacy. Volunteers vary in age and experience. Some workers were high school students receiving extra credit for government class. Other workers had been volunteering for more than twenty years. The poll workers were friendly and aided voters when needed.

Some general observations:

- Cardboard boxes used for dropping off mail-in ballots were not sealed and could be opened at any time.
- Voter turnout was low.
- Poll stations were staffed and opened at 7:00 A.M.
- The oath was taken after all volunteers arrived.
- The Braille machine was available.
- Each voter was greeted and given instructions.

A report of the observations was given to the Registrar of Voters.