

PLACER COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENTS

Summary

The Grand Jury toured the Auburn, Rocklin, Roseville and Lincoln Police Departments.

With the completion of Lincoln's new facility, all four departments are housed in modern buildings. Of the four, only Rocklin currently lacks adequate space. The City Council would like to build a new civic center, but has not taken the steps to bring the plan to reality. Rocklin needs to move forward with a new facility.

The Grand Jury was impressed with the level of cooperation among the various police departments and, in turn, with the Placer County Sheriff' Department. All four communities rely on the Sheriff for jail facilities, although Roseville can house its arrestees for very short periods in its own small jail. Rocklin and Roseville can each take over the other's communications load in an emergency. The Sheriff's Department can handle 911 calls for the entire county if a local jurisdiction's facility malfunctions.

Although the departments are functioning well, all jurisdictions are having difficulty recruiting and retaining good personnel. This is particularly true in the fast growing areas of southern Placer County. The departments need to increase their recruitment efforts and take steps to better utilize their current forces. The Grand Jury noted that these jurisdictions must drive to Auburn to deliver arrestees to the jail; this can take a unit and its officers out of patrol service for long periods of time. The County would like to build a jail in South Placer, but cannot do this without a financial commitment from the local jurisdictions.

The Grand Jury recommends that the City of Rocklin build the Rocklin Civic Plaza and include in it a larger police facility. Also, the Grand Jury believes the County needs to meet its growing jail needs by establishing a new facility in South Placer. The City of Roseville has agreed to support a facilities fee plan that is the first step in achieving this goal. The remaining communities must also make a commitment.

Discussion

The Grand Jury toured the Auburn, Rocklin, Roseville and Lincoln Police Departments. All four departments are housed in modern buildings.

Lincoln, after many years in a very old structure, moved to its new facility in October 1999. The 13,000 square foot building was received as a gift, and has 6,500 square feet of administrative space and an upgraded 911 system. Sufficient space has been set aside for all current needs, as well as growth for the foreseeable future.

Lincoln operates a combined Police and Fire Department under the Chief of Police. As is true with the other local jurisdictions, Lincoln is having difficulty hiring and retaining

good personnel. Things are a little more complicated in Lincoln, however, as the Police Chief also has responsibility for the all-volunteer Fire Department. An evaluation will be conducted in three years to determine if the need exists to separate the two operations.

The Roseville Police Department, now well settled in its new facility, is in good position to deal with the area's rapid growth. Unlike the other cities, Roseville maintains a jail where arrestees can be held up to 96 hours before being transferred to the Sheriff's facility in Auburn or released. The jail is well run, but will need additional staff as the workload increases.

The Auburn Police Department is housed in good quarters adjacent to the City Hall. The Sheriff's Department jail and the courts are nearby, so Auburn does not need its own jail and loses little time transporting prisoners around the County.

The Rocklin Police Department is in a 15-year-old building that is too small for the Department's current needs. Additional space has been rented to house some departmental units. The Department is doing an adequate job under these adverse conditions, but a new facility is needed. One is planned for the new Rocklin Civic Plaza, but there is no scheduled start date for construction. This plan needs to be advanced.

The Grand Jury was impressed with the degree of cooperation among the various South Placer police agencies and the Sheriff's Department in Auburn. The Roseville and Rocklin communications facilities are designed so each can handle the other's load in case of a breakdown. The Sheriff's 911 center can take over if both Roseville's and Rocklin's centers fail.

Although things are currently functioning well, all jurisdictions are having difficulty recruiting and retaining good personnel. There is competition from the private sector, as well as from other law enforcement agencies. The problem is particularly difficult in South Placer.

The Grand Jury feels that the departments must step up their recruitment efforts and also find ways to use their personnel more efficiently. Except for the Auburn Police Department, the jurisdictions lose many hours transporting arrestees to the distant jail. This round trip takes units and their officers off their regular patrol beats. The problem would be lessened if a new County Jail were built in South Placer, as the County has proposed. This, however, requires cooperative funding from the impacted South Placer communities.

Finding 1

The four police departments are functioning well, although faced with increasing difficulty in recruiting and retaining competent personnel.

Recommendation 1

None

Finding 2

Rocklin has outgrown its current police facility.

Recommendation 2

The Rocklin City Council needs to build the new Rocklin Civic Plaza and include a larger police facility.

Finding 3

The County Jail in Auburn is a long way from the fast growing communities of South Placer. The County does not currently have the resources to build additional facilities in South Placer. The County has proposed a fee on new home construction to help accumulate the funds. The City of Roseville has agreed to adopt the fee, but the other communities have so far chosen not to participate.

Recommendation 3

The communities of Lincoln, Rocklin and Loomis, like Roseville, have the most to gain from new County facilities in South Placer. These communities should adopt a facilities construction fee to help bring this project to reality.

Respondents

Rocklin City Council
Lincoln City Council
Loomis Town Council

RESPONSE REQUIRED WITHIN 90 DAYS TO:

The Honorable Larry D. Gaddis
Presiding Judge, Superior Court
County of Placer
Historic Courthouse
101 Maple Street
Auburn, CA 95603