

## DANE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



Security Services Division  
Interoffice Memorandum

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**DATE:** Wednesday, November 17, 2015

**TO:** Chief Deputy Jeff Hook

**FROM:** Captain Richelle Anhalt

**REF:** Jail Laundry

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As you know, the current laundry facilities in all three buildings are utilized on a daily basis for inmate personals, to launder soiled clothing coming in through intake and other areas of the facility, inmate worker uniforms, and others as needed to maintain operations.

In the fall of 2014, we tested the temperature of the water entering the inmate laundry in the Public Safety Building (Work Order 7747 September 4, 2014). At that time, the temperature in the PSB Basement Laundry was 113.2 degrees. While the exact water temperature in the CCB is unknown, Facilities Management (FM) advised us that the water goes out of the hot water system at a maximum of 120 degrees on the ground level and by the time it makes it to 6<sup>th</sup> floor it's below that. We were also advised that the Ferris Center would be similar.

Industry standard for water temperature for laundering is over 160 degrees. In fact our contracted laundry provider uses water temperatures at 170 degrees. The temperature of the water is important to ensure proper cleaning and disinfecting inmate laundry is accomplished. The biohazardous bags, "bug bags", and chemicals we currently use to clean soiled clothing are not functioning properly because of the low water temperature. At the time this was originally brought to FM's attention last fall, they declined to pursue rectifying the situation in large part due to the anticipated laundry project.

With no project on the horizon, it is imperative that the current laundry system deficiencies be rectified. To accomplish this, a boost is needed to bring the temperature up in all three of the jail facilities. At our request, FM priced two options, electric and natural gas. The cost of an electric water heater cost less and is less costly to install than a gas water heater, but is less efficient as it uses more energy. In addition, the overall the cost of operating an electric water heater is higher. Based on the local utility rate structure, we will pay significantly more in terms of energy costs for the electric option as the overall electric bill is based by "peak" service fees. FM provided us with an estimate of \$15,000 to boost temperatures via gas water heaters or \$7,000 via electric water heaters. An official quote is not available at this time, however, when the deficiency was noted they reached out to a private vendor for a quote for the PSB only. They had previously given us a quote for this service. As a result this estimate is based on the PSB only. We expect the cost for the Ferris Center may be less than this, but the cost for the CCB would likely be higher as the equipment would have to be located in the penthouse and piped down two floors to the 6<sup>th</sup> floor.

In addition, the Security Services Division is seeking to improve inmate living and sanitary conditions, improve operations, and increase safety and security by issuing all inmate personals (Socks, underwear, t-shirts, bras and thermal tops). Under the current system, these items are the sole property of the inmates. Inmates with local family support systems and means have the ability to have money placed on their inmate's trust account to purchase personals through commissary as we no longer allow inmate property to come into the facility through visitation to combat growing concerns of contraband introduction, particularly heroin. Therefore, inmates must order personals through our commissary vendor. This places those without means at a disadvantage, even with provisions for indigence. The laundering of these items has been and is currently handled in-house. In the City-County Building (CCB) Jail, inmate personals, in mesh bags, are collected twice weekly as required by the updates to DOC 350. It is then taken to the CCB laundry room where it is washed in the individual mesh bags independently from each other. Multiple mesh bags are not laundered together as the bags often come open or tear resulting in claims against the County. This practice is not only very inefficient, but is costly as well. The 2014 change to DOC 350, requiring twice weekly laundering of all inmate clothing, from once a week laundering, exacerbated the inefficiencies in our system.

Inmate personal laundry at the Ferris Center (FC) and the Public Safety Building (PSB) are handled differently. The PSB was originally designed as a minimum security Huber/work release facility. Today, only 19.61% of the permanent general population housing beds in the PSB are utilized for Huber/work release. The remaining 80.39% of the general population beds, house minimum and medium security inmates that do not have work release privileges and are . This distinction is necessary to highlight the inequity between the facilities. In theory, the PSB, and certainly the FC, are the least restrictive of our facilities and should allow inmates housed there the greatest amount of privileges. In term of laundry, this is not the case. These inmates, who are primarily unsentenced or have no Huber, are placed at a disadvantage by our current practice that may cause undue burden on them and their families. These inmates have access to laundering facilities in their housing units and are expected to wash all personals at their own expense.

Under this proposal Huber inmates would have access to laundering services to wash their own clothing needed to exercise Huber privileges without charge. Many of the Huber inmates that exercise Huber privileges volunteer through our volunteer program. Those that do have employment, often have low paying jobs that barely cover Huber fees. Eliminating the cost of laundering personal clothing removes yet another barrier for the inmate.

Inmates at the PSB and FC launder their clothing by utilizing card operated washers and dryers which are currently provided through a contract with another third party provider as noted below.

| <b>Location</b>      | <b>Washers</b>   | <b>Dryers</b>   |
|----------------------|--|---|
| Ferris Center        | 5 - Card Operated Washers                              | 3 Card Operated Electric Dryers   |
| PSB – Housing Units  | 16 - Card Operated Washers                             | 16 Card Operated Electric Dryers  |
| PSB Laundry          | 1 - Commercial Grade Washer (60 lbs. Minimum Capacity) | 1 - Commercial Grade Gas (30 lbs. Stack Unit – 2 Pockets 60 lbs. Capacity)  |
| City County Building | 3 - Standard Commercial Grade Washers                  | 3 – Standard Commercial Grade Electric Dryers<br>1 - 1 - Commercial Grade Gas (30 lbs. Stack Unit – 2 Pockets 60 lbs. Capacity) |

Inmates in the PSB and FC must purchase laundry cards through our commissary provider to launder their personal clothing and personals. Each washer or dryer load costs the inmate \$1. Cards can be purchased in either \$3 increments or \$10 increments, with a service fee of \$1 for each card.

Inmates are not allowed to combine clothing with another inmate’s clothing. As a result, load size is small which results in a higher consumption of both water and electricity. Our current contract provider is assessed \$1,220.12 annually as a recovery to the County for administering the laundry equipment plan. In addition, the provider furnishes \$100 each month to the Sheriff’s Office for the maintenance of an indigent laundry program. Laundry soap and fabric softener must be purchased through commissary, adding to the cost for the inmate.

This contract expired on November 10, 2015. Believing that an in-house laundry project was imminent, purchasing allowed us to extend the contract until July 31, 2016. The current provider was the only vendor that bid on the last RFP. We do not believe a new contract would be attractive to vendors should the Sheriff’s Office move forward with issuing inmate personals. We are proposing this change for a number of reasons. We have restricted inmate property coming into the facility through visitation to combat growing concerns of contraband introduction, particularly heroin. Currently, inmates must order personals through our commissary vendor with provisions for providing these items to indigent inmates as per DOC 350. In 2015 to date, we have expended \$19, 055 on low end under garments that are issued to inmates and ultimately disposed of.

We believe the plan to issue inmate personals restores parity for non-Huber, unsentenced inmates housed in the PSB; it promotes efficiency, and reduces energy and water consumption. It also assists in mitigating claims due to loss of inmate owned property. More importantly, the practice of laundering personals in mesh bags independently is eliminated thereby allowing increased load size, which promotes efficiency along with having a positive environmental impact which aligns with the County’s sustainability goals.

First and foremost, we must address the inadequate water temperatures in all three facilities. Our current water supply is not hot enough to adequately combat biohazardous materials, such as blood and bodily fluids or infestation such as scabies and superbugs such as MRSA.

We have put together a proposal for meeting our needs and are committed to the utilization of products, services and processes that encourage environmental stewardship. Equipment selection is a crucial component of this. The total budget for this project is \$180,000 if the water temperature is boosted via gas water heaters or \$154,000 if boosted via electric water heaters. A contingency was added to cover any variances due to the CCB and the cost of purchasing carts. Please see the attached spreadsheet for further budget details.

Richelle