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Camp Glenwood Should Remain An Honor Camp

Issue

Should Camp Glenwood remain an unfenced honor camp in light of the 36 walk-aways that have occurred since 2006?

Background

When a male youth is found guilty of a crime, the Juvenile Court (Court), at its discretion, determines the type of sentencing. The Court considers the offender's personal and criminal history, family background, and recommendations from the San Mateo County Probation Department (Probation). The Court has options ranging from home placement, placement in a camp, or lockup at a juvenile hall.

Probation operates two detention facilities for male youth: Juvenile Hall (Hall) and Camp Glenwood (Glenwood). The Hall, located in unincorporated San Mateo, is a detention center for youth needing a locked facility in addition to close supervision. Glenwood, which is San Mateo County's honor camp for male youth, is located in a rural setting in unincorporated La Honda. There is only one road leading into and out of this location. Log Cabin Ranch (Log Cabin), San Francisco County's juvenile facility, is an adjacent neighbor that shares the same access road. Both camps are unlocked, unfenced dormitory-type facilities. The nearest major intersection is located 6.5 miles east down a narrow winding unlit road. Glenwood is 30 miles from the Hall.

Although Log Cabin is located in San Mateo County, it is an unfenced facility run by San Francisco County. Their walk-aways are often misrepresented in the media as Glenwood walk-aways.

Glenwood is comprised of eleven buildings on the property. Since its opening in 1964, Glenwood has not undergone any significant renovation. School classrooms, kitchen, administration building, Dorms I & II, and the recreation building are all part of Glenwood's original infrastructure. Probation developed a five-year Capital Improvement Plan to protect the physical facility and avoid the probability of more extensive and expensive repairs on an urgent basis.

Glenwood, situated on 60 heavily wooded acres, is a natural habitat for mountain lion and deer. This unfenced honor facility is for male youths, sentenced by Juvenile Court, who meet the criteria defined by the Court. The average Glenwood resident is age 15 ½ years. Typically, the youth is from a low socio-economic background, with English as a second language, and is performing at several grade levels below California state education standards. At any given

time, there may be 30-60 youth residing at Glenwood, which has a maximum capacity of approximately 60 youth.

Glenwood strives to provide structure to facilitate positive life changes and successful reintegration with families and communities. The rural setting is conducive to introspection and provides a calming environment in which to develop life skills. The topography creates potential risks for these youths, but has not deterred 36 youth from walking away since July 2006.

Juveniles often walk away from Glenwood due to simple adolescent issues, such as homesickness and/or problems with personal relationships. When a youth walks away, Glenwood notifies the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office, who has jurisdiction to respond to calls, since Glenwood is located in an unincorporated area. Typically, the walk-aways are found by the Sheriff's Office and brought to the Hall within hours. The response time from the Sheriff's Office depends on the location and distance from Glenwood of an on-duty sheriff, so the response time varies. Most of the walk-aways are not found at home, but rather are usually out on the streets. The Sheriff's Office has no authority or jurisdiction over Glenwood's operation and management. The Sheriff's Office also responds to calls from San Francisco County's Log Cabin juvenile facility when a walk-away has occurred.

In 2008, one Glenwood walk-away situation resulted in a homicide a few weeks after he escaped. This youth had been in the Hall twice and then returned to Glenwood, despite Glenwood counselors' objections. Since then, Probation, the Board of Supervisors, the Juvenile Court, and the Sheriff's Office have worked together to decrease the number of walk-aways from Glenwood. Probation has addressed the walk-away situation by developing a "30-Day Assessment Plan" (Plan). Part of the plan's new policies and procedures is to screen and determine which youth may be appropriate for an honor camp.

In a letter written to the Board of Supervisors dated November 3, 2008, the San Mateo County Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Commission, which is made up of a maximum of 15 members and appointed by the Juvenile Court, stated that "a fence is not a guarantee there will be no escapes, and it could lull staff into a false sense of security resulting in more walk-aways, not less." Probation also initially discussed, with the Juvenile Court and the Board of Supervisors, fencing Glenwood at an approximate cost of \$930,000, but decided that with the implementation of new policies and procedures, fencing the premises would not be necessary. With the Plan, Probation has an improved screening process that increases the chance for the youth to succeed in the Glenwood program.

As part of the Plan, Probation introduced an informal Court review of each youth every eight weeks. Section counselors are responsible for submitting a progress report to the Court and the Probation Officer prior to the Court review. Then, the juvenile meets with the Juvenile Court Judge and Probation to discuss positive and/or negative behavior that the juvenile has engaged in since the last Court review. If needed, an individual plan of correction is discussed and implemented.

Since the homicide incident, the Sheriff's Office was asked, by Probation, to temporarily provide, for two months, security staff until Probation could develop and implement its new policies and procedures. The Sheriff's Office also conducted a security assessment of Glenwood and was satisfied with Probation's development and implementation of its new policies and procedures, by the Superior Court. Glenwood has experienced only one walk-away since the implementation of these policies and procedures.

The Sheriff's Office has also implemented a community alert system when there is a walk-away from Glenwood or from San Francisco County's Log Cabin juvenile facility. The community is contacted either via SMC Alert or land line to immediate surrounding households using the Telephone Emergency Notification System (TENS).

Per California State law, Glenwood has an authorized ratio of one counselor to fifteen juveniles. During the time that the Court suspended sending juveniles to Glenwood, while reviewing the walk-away situation, there were less youth sent to Glenwood. Therefore, the de facto ratio was more favorable with two counselors for every twelve to fifteen youth. This higher counselor-to-youth ratio provided counselors more opportunities to observe and work with these youth in smaller groups.

While Glenwood continues to serve the needs of its existing youth, it has also seen an increased number of youth with significant mental health issues, such as anger management. These youth tend to exhibit difficulty in adjusting to Glenwood's program. To help provide counseling for these youth, Glenwood has funding for one part-time mental health professional for twenty hours per week.

Probation continues to evaluate new theories in the rehabilitation of juveniles, such as the "Missouri Model," which is an example of the current best practices in juvenile justice camp and ranch programming. The model includes such strategies as a low staff to youth ratio, intensive staff training in cognitive coaching and group dynamics, and modifying space to better resemble a home environment. Additionally, the model has a heavy focus on family and group counseling.

Investigation

The 2008-2009 San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury conducted its investigation by interviewing officials from the San Mateo County Probation Department, members of the Camp Glenwood staff, the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office, and the Juvenile Court. The Grand Jury also toured Juvenile Hall and Camp Glenwood facilities.

Findings

The 2008-2009 San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury found that:

1. Camp Glenwood (Glenwood) has had few infrastructure improvements since it opened in 1964, forty-five years ago.
2. Prior to August 2008, the Sheriff's Office had responded to approximately one walk-away per month from Glenwood.
3. There has only been one walk-away from Glenwood since August 2008, when Glenwood's new policies and procedures were developed and implemented. All other walk-aways, which were reported by the media, have been from San Francisco's Log Cabin Ranch juvenile facility, not Glenwood.

Conclusions

The 2008-2009 San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury concludes that Camp Glenwood should not be fenced. The Grand Jury also concludes that:

1. The San Mateo County Probation Department's (Probation) development and implementation of its new policies and procedures and the "30-Day Assessment Plan" have been effective by reducing the number of walk-aways since the time of the homicide that resulted from a Camp Glenwood (Glenwood) walk-away in August 2008.
2. Fencing Glenwood will not prevent escapes altogether. A perimeter fence would be a negative factor because it would change Glenwood's culture from an honor camp to a fenced facility. Furthermore, with a fenced facility, the possibility of sentencing youth who have committed more serious crimes may be an issue that could compromise the purpose of this honor camp.
3. Some aspects of the physical facility, including the buildings' roof and plumbing, are past their normal life span. Probation should begin much needed repairs to prevent catastrophic failures that might suddenly and indefinitely close Glenwood. However, with the current economic conditions, San Mateo County may not have sufficient financial resources to make all of the necessary repairs in year one, but Probation can begin needed repairs with available funds.
4. The review process, utilized by Probation in partnership with the Court, maximizes a youth's chance for community integration and minimizes recidivism.
5. The increased ratio of two counselors to fifteen juveniles has reduced the number of walk-aways.
6. A significant number of juveniles have a host of mental, social, and emotional disorders. An allocation of a full-time mental health professional for forty hours per week would allow for additional juveniles to receive needed counseling.
7. The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office's community alert system has been effective, although it is still difficult to ascertain which walk-aways are from Glenwood and which are from San Francisco County's Log Cabin Ranch juvenile facility.

Recommendations

The 2008-2009 San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury recommends that the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors:

1. Continue to keep Camp Glenwood (Glenwood) as an unfenced honor camp.
2. Evaluate the capital improvement plan to consider allocating funds to repair critical areas to the facility to avoid potential catastrophic failures, which may result in long-term costly repairs.

3. Maintain a staff ratio of two counselors to fifteen juveniles.
4. Direct the County Manager to work with the San Mateo County Probation Department (Probation) to budget and allocate funds for a full-time mental health professional at Glenwood.
5. Work with the Chief Probation Officer to ensure that the “30-Day Assessment Plan” is followed. Provide a semi-annual report that includes audit assessment as to the appropriate youth who are in the camp to the Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Commission.
6. Work with the Chief Probation Officer and the San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office, on an as-needed basis, to ensure that Probation’s policies and procedures and security assessments are preventing as many walk-aways as possible.
7. Work with the Chief Probation Officer to develop an objective measure of success by tracking the juveniles after leaving Glenwood to see whether they have been incarcerated by the County or anywhere else in the United States.
8. Continue to work with the Chief Probation Officer to evaluate other models to successfully operate honor camps.



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

Office of the Sheriff

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July 14, 2009

Honorable George A. Miram
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice and Records
400 County Center; 2nd Floor
Redwood City, ca 94063-1655

Re: Grand Jury: Camp Glenwood Should Remain An Honor Camp Report

Judge Miram,

The Sheriff's Office appreciates the 2008-2009 Grand Jury's careful study of the issue concerning "*Should Camp Glenwood remain an unfenced honor camp in light of 36 walk-aways that have occurred since 2006?*" Our responses to both the conclusions and recommendations pertaining to our agency are as follows;

Conclusions:

- 7) The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office community alert system has been effective, although it is still difficult to ascertain which walk-aways are from Glenwood and which are from the San Francisco County's Log Cabin Ranch juvenile facility.

Response: The respondent agrees with the conclusion. The Sheriff's Office community alert system was established to enhance the communication abilities between both law enforcement agencies and the public with the dissemination of important community awareness information.

Protocols have been established to notify the public of any walk-aways or escapees from any adult or juvenile facility operating in San Mateo County using our SMC Alert System (San Mateo County Alerts System) and/or our TENS System (Telephone Emergency Notification System). Our responding Patrol units coordinate with the local facility representative reporting the incident in order to gather accurate information and make the appropriate alert notifications to the public. We will continue with those efforts.

Recommendations:

- 6) Work with the Chief Probation Officer and the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office, on an as-needed basis, to ensure that Probation's policies and procedures and security assessments are preventing as many walk-aways as possible.

Response: The respondent agrees with the conclusion. The Sheriff's Office enjoys a professional and collaborative working relationship with the San Mateo County Probation Department. Our County-wide Security Unit, Patrol Bureau, and Office of Emergency Services will continue to work with the new Chief Probation Officer and their staff as requested, in reviewing policies, procedures and security assessments related to their juvenile facilities.

In conclusion, the Sheriff's Office appreciates the work of the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury and we look forward to working with our criminal justice partners in providing professional law enforcement services to those we serve in San Mateo County.

Sincerely,

Greg Munks
Sheriff

AUG 04 2009


**CLERK OF BOARD
BY Marie St. Placide DEPUTY**



**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
Inter-Departmental Correspondence**

County Manager's Office

DATE: July 20, 2009
BOARD MEETING DATE: August 4, 2009
SPECIAL NOTICE/HEARING: None
VOTE REQUIRED: None

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors
FROM: David S. Boesch, County Manager 
SUBJECT: 2008-09 Grand Jury Response

RECOMMENDATION:

Accept this report containing the County's responses to the following 2008-09 Grand Jury reports:

1. Camp Glenwood Should Remain an Honor Camp,
2. San Mateo Medical Center's Medical Administration Check System, and
3. San Mateo County's Pharmaceutical Disposal Program

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION:

The County is mandated to respond to the Grand Jury within 90 days from the date that reports are filed with the County Clerk and Elected Officials are mandated to respond within 60 days. To that end, attached are the County's responses to the Grand Jury reports on Camp Glenwood and the Medical Center's Medication Administration Check System issued on May 20, 2009 and the Pharmaceutical Disposal Program, issued on May 26, 2009.

Acceptance of this report contributes to the Shared Vision 2025 outcome of a Collaborative Community by ensuring that all Grand Jury findings and recommendations are thoroughly reviewed by the appropriate County departments and that, when appropriate, process improvements are made to improve the quality and efficiency of services provided to the public and other agencies.



Camp Glenwood Should Remain an Honor Camp

Findings:

Staff is in general agreement with the Grand Jury's findings.

Recommendations:

The Grand Jury recommends that the San Mateo County Board of Supervisor's:

- 1. Continue to keep Camp Glenwood (Glenwood) as an unfenced honor camp.**

Response: Agree. This recommendation has been implemented. The Probation Department agrees that fencing Camp Glenwood or otherwise making it a secure custody environment would lead to a shift in the focus of the camp. One of the keys to the success of the camp is that there is an environment focused on treatment and counseling. Securing the grounds would limit staff efforts to guide youth toward self-control and positive decision-making. As noted in the Grand Jury Report, the department developed and implemented a protocol to assess a youth after his first 30 days to determine whether he is suitable for the camp program. The youth returns to court after the first month and staff present their assessment. The court then makes a decision about whether the youth should remain at the camp. In addition, as noted above, Probation has implemented new procedures to respond quickly in the event that a youth tries to leave the grounds. These procedures include timely notification of the Sheriff's Office and Probation field supervision officers, so that youth can be located quickly and safely.

- 2. Evaluate the capital improvement plan to consider allocating funds to repair critical areas to the facility to avoid potential catastrophic failures, which may result in long-term costly repairs.**

Response: Agree. This recommendation will be implemented. The Probation Department's Capital Improvement Plan, which was submitted in February 2008, has been granted preliminary approval for \$3.28 million over the next five years. The plan still must obtain final approval from the Board of Supervisors in the September revision process for the County's budget. Probation anticipates working with the Department of Public Works thereafter to triage critical improvements to the buildings and grounds.

3. Maintain a staff ratio of two counselors to fifteen juveniles.

Response: Agree, but this recommendation cannot be implemented at this time. While the Probation Department agrees that the 2:15 staff-youth ratio would lead to improved outcomes for youth, it will be unable to maintain the increased level of staffing due to budget constraints. However, the Department will stay in compliance with state supervision guidelines. Also, the Department reassigned two additional staff from the Juvenile Services Division to provide roaming security on the late afternoon / evening shift, the time when youth are more likely to leave the camp.

4. Direct the County Manager to work with the San Mateo County Probation Department (Probation) to budget and allocate funds for a full-time mental health professional at Glenwood.

Response: Agree. This recommendation will be implemented. The County Manager's Office and the Probation Department engage in regular collaboration on all aspects of Department operations. The Department's 2009-10 budget provides for an increase in existing mental health services; providing one full-time Marriage and Family Therapist II (MFT). The increase will be funded through the Youthful Offender Block Grant, which is provided by the state as a result of the gradual closure of Department of Juvenile Justice facilities. In addition to the full-time MFT, Youth and Family Enrichment Services, a community-based organization, already provides some youth with drug and alcohol counseling and group sessions.

5. Work with the Chief Probation Officer to ensure that the "30-Day Assessment Plan" is followed. Provide a semi-annual report that includes audit assessment as to the appropriate youth who are in the camp to the Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Commission.

Response: Agree. This recommendation has been partly implemented. As described above, the Probation Department implemented 30-day assessments of youth who are sent to Camp Glenwood. At this time, the process is working smoothly. The Chief Probation Officer will meet with the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission to determine the content and format of the audit assessment.

6. Work with the Chief Probation officer and the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office, on an as-needed basis, to ensure that Probation's policies and procedures and security assessments are preventing as many walk-aways as possible.

Response: Agree. This recommendation has been implemented. The Sheriff's Office completed a comprehensive security assessment of the camp in January 2008 and again in the summer of 2009. As required by state guidelines, the Department will work with the Sheriff's Office Countywide Security Unit to do annual assessments of all three Probation residential facilities for youth. In addition, Probation will work with Countywide Security regarding any capital improvements. In terms of policies and procedures, this fall Probation will be training all institutions staff (permanent and Extra Help) in policies and procedures, safety and security practices, and emergency procedures. This training will include policies regarding youth who leave Probation's camps unsupervised.

- 7. Work with the Chief Probation Officer to develop an objective measure of success by tracking the juveniles after leaving Glenwood to see whether they have been incarcerated by the County or anywhere else in the United States.**

Response: Partially agree. Unfortunately this recommendation cannot be implemented because of legal, technical, and logistical barriers. Youth who successfully complete Camp Glenwood are usually terminated from probation. At that point, the Department loses jurisdiction and their right to privacy returns to full force and effect. In addition, there is no nationwide or even local cross-departmental database to determine if Camp Glenwood graduates are rearrested in San Mateo County or elsewhere.

- 8. Continue to work with the Chief Probation Officer to evaluate other models to successfully operate honor camps.**

Response: Agree. This recommendation has been implemented. In the past year, staff toured Sonoma's boys camp and Santa Clara County's James Ranch. The Sonoma camp puts a heavy emphasis on vocational programming and rehabilitation. James Ranch has implemented the Missouri Model of low staff-youth ratios and a home-like environment. Probation staff plans to continue visits to other best-practice sites. Finally, this recommendation will be communicated to our Training Unit for their research into other camp "best practices".