



CUMBERLAND COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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Dear Mark,

I am replying to your letter dated August 13, 2013, regarding the impact statement of flat funding for our jail budget. It is my understanding that the Board of Corrections (BOC) has determined that with no new funds this year, it will be flat funding our current budget. The question is what amount is “flat lined”, the FY 2013 budget that was approved in 2012 or the money that we actually received from the BOC during the FY 2013 budget year? This answer is necessary as there is a dramatic difference between the two scenarios in what we would receive this year as a “flat lined” budget.

My impact statement is going to assume that we will be “flat lined” based on our approved FY2103 budget, which is the better of “two evils”. If this is the case, we estimate that we would have to find approximately \$200,000.00 in cuts to our budget, which was approved last year. This is the result of COLA increases that took effect this year as the result of collective bargaining with the National Corrections Employees Union (NCEU).

Frankly, in order to get to the amount projected, we are going to have to eliminate positions.

Although there are few alternatives that we can take, to comply with a flat lined budget directive, the impact to the BOC “system” is substantial. Our best attempt at saving money without a huge impact on the system would be to decrease one of our large 86 bed pods down to a maximum of 59 inmates. The pod would consist of a medium security male pod, which would allow us to cut 3.5 full time equivalents (FTEs). This cut based on a starting salary for a Corrections Officer would equate to a savings of approximately \$168,000.00. However, in order to do this, I would cut the number of inmates we hold from the budgeted 468 inmates to 441 inmates, as if we add one more inmate to our pod of 59, it triggers double staffing, which I am proposing to eliminate.

Other options include closing a complete pod of 86 or closing our Community Corrections Center and going back to our mission holding inmates. I am not in favor of either of the alternatives, but if I don't have the money to pay the bills, it has become my problem and not necessarily the problem of the BOC.

As I draft this letter, it reminds me of a Southern Maine Community that several years back decided to save some money in their town budget by not funding the town EMS system. There were all kinds of “back slapping” about how great that idea was and that they could contract with a neighboring town to provide the service. Then one day, not long after the decision was made to contract with an outside provider a sky diver had a tragic accident and the EMS provider was delayed in responding for whatever reason? It wasn’t a week after the accident when all of the finger pointing and the blaming were just about to settle in the media, when that town re-instituted their EMS system. The result was, that the wonderful idea of saving money, resulted in delayed response, which likely contributed to the death of the victim and the money the town saved didn’t seem all that important anymore.

While I understand the issue of funding, I urge the BOC not to be “penny wise and pound foolish”. The county jails are vulnerable; you know it and it has been communicated in many different ways for the last several years by Sheriff’s and consultants who have been commissioned to study this system. Something bad is going to happen and the finger pointing will begin.

Sincerely,

Kevin J. Joyce, Sheriff
Cumberland County