

# **Final Report**

**Citizen's Oversight Committee**  
**Greene County Sheriff's Department**

**August 29, 2006**

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## 1. Introduction

Jack Merritt, Sheriff of Greene County, assembled a group of Greene County citizens to review the operation of the Sheriff's Department and evaluate the last six years he has served as Sheriff. The Oversight Committee was charged with examining every aspect of the operations of the Sheriff's Department from the time Sheriff Merritt assumed office in January 2000.

When he initiated the Oversight Committee, Sheriff Merritt explained,

"The office of the Sheriff is the only law enforcement agency that does not have any type of oversight, other than the voters review every four years. I feel it will be beneficial to have someone from the outside look in and evaluate what we have done and possibly make some recommendations on what we might do in the next four years to bring the Department to an even higher degree of professionalism".

The composition of the Oversight Committee is as follows:

Michael Carlie	Professor of Criminology at Missouri State University
Ron Carrier	Chief Counsel, Southwest Region, Missouri Attorney General's Office
Robert Cirtin	Director of the Criminal Justice Program at Evangel University, and President of Robert Cirtin Investigations
Charles Cowherd	Attorney at Law, and past president of the Springfield Bar Association
Jose Dominguez	Surgeon with Ferrell-Duncan Clinic
Larry Maddox	President of the NAACP of Springfield
Dan Manna	Retired business executive
Robert McFadden	Former Warden of the U.S. Medical Center for Federal Prisoners
Sherri Murdaugh	SPHR, Manager, Human Resources Department for Springfield City Utilities

Sheriff Merritt provided the following scope and purpose:

- a. Review operational procedures of all aspects of the Greene County Sheriff's Department.
- b. Review policies and procedures.
- c. Review facilities.
- d. Establish a procedure for accomplishing this review.

The Committee's initial meeting was held on April 1, 2005, at which time the division heads within the Sheriff's Department gave presentations pertaining to the roles of their respective divisions. After that initial meeting, the Oversight Committee met on thirteen occasions to determine a strategy for achieving the goals and to determine how best to implement that strategy.

Although Sheriff Merritt voluntarily established the Oversight Committee, he made it clear to the Committee that it was an independent body from the Sheriff's Department. Sheriff Merritt occasionally attended the meetings, but only when invited by the Committee. This was to address issues for which his input was required.

Sheriff Merritt allowed the Committee to have complete access to all employees, documentation, policies and procedures, and any resource necessary to complete our purpose.

The Oversight Committee conducted the following activities as part of its study effort:

***Policy and Procedure Review*** – The Policy and Procedure Manuals for the Sheriff's Department and Jail were reviewed for adequacy and currency of content.

***Employee Survey*** – The Committee implemented a survey of all Greene County Sheriff's Department personnel to gain a perspective on employee's views as to the operation of the Department, and to assess the level of employee job satisfaction.

***Departmental Interviews*** – All Division Heads, the Director of the Jail and the Chief Deputy were interviewed by the Committee. The interview invitation asked the interviewees to be prepared to discuss their views as to any change in the level of Department professionalism during the tenure of Sheriff Merritt and how the level of professionalism could be improved in their respective Division. In addition to answering these questions, each interviewee was encouraged to share his views and any other concerns he may have as to operation of the Department. In order to encourage an open and frank dialogue, all interviews were conducted in confidence with the Committee without the Sheriff being present

The following is a list of Sheriff's Department personnel interviewed by the Committee and the position each held at the time of their interview:

Jim Arnott	Lieutenant of Detective Division
Jim Barber	Patrol Division Commander
Charles Brown	Captain, Court Security
Bill Hedrick	Director, Greene County Jail
Tom Martin	Chief Deputy
Joel Maxwell	Training Sergeant
Gary McMurtrey	Captain, Civil Division

**Interview of Sheriff Merritt** – The Committee conducted a detailed interview of Sheriff Merritt to provide him an opportunity to present his views on his accomplishments, assessment of the operation of the Sheriff’s Department and important objectives yet to be achieved.

**Review of the Kalmanoff Report** - In 2003 the Greene County Commissioners commissioned a study by the Institute for Law & Policy Planning to review the operation of the Greene County Criminal Justice System. Commissioning of the report was motivated in large part by the problem of overcrowding in the newly built County Jail. The Institute presented its findings to the Commission in a report entitled Criminal Justice System Assessment, dated May 6, 2003.

The recommendations contained in the report addressed all aspects of the County’s Criminal Justice System and contained many observations and recommendations beyond the charter of the Committee. While the entire report was reviewed, the Committee focused on the report’s implications for operation of the Sheriff’s Department.

**Interviews of Greene County Government Officials** – In addition to interviews of the Sheriff’s Department personnel, the Committee interviewed numerous executives of other components of the Greene County Criminal Justice System regarding operation of the Department, with particular focus on working relationships of the various Justice System components with the Sheriff’s Department during Sheriff Merritt’s term of office.

The following Greene County and other Municipal Government officials were interviewed:

Dan Conklin	Circuit Court Judge
David Coonrod	Presiding Commissioner
Mark Lowe	Republic Chief of Police
Tom McClain	Willard Chief of Police

Darrell Moore	Prosecuting Attorney
Mark Powell	Associate Circuit Court Judge
Lynn Rowe	Springfield Chief of Police
Miles Sweeney	Circuit Court Judge

**Patrol “ride-along” and tours the Greene County Jail** - As encouraged by Sheriff Merritt, most members of the Committee participated in "ride-along" with various patrol deputies, and toured the county Jail in order to gain a first hand view of the operation of both the law enforcement and correctional functions of the Sheriff's Department.

All of the above activities were undertaken in order to provide a final report to the Sheriff which provides an accurate reflection of the current operation of the Department and to facilitate recommendations for additional changes which, in the opinion of the Committee, would further enhance operation of the Department.

## **2. Kalmanoff Report Overview**

The Institute for Law and Policy Planning (ILPP) was retained by the Greene County Commission to conduct a comprehensive "best practice" analysis of the crowding and cost effectiveness of the Greene County Criminal Justice System (referred to in this report as the "Justice System"), the components of which included:

- a. The Greene County Sheriff's Department (enforcement, investigative, and detention operations)
- b. The Springfield Police Department;
- c. The Greene County Prosecuting Attorney's Office;
- d. The Missouri State Public Defender's Office;
- e. The 31st Judicial Circuit (including circuit, associate circuit, and municipal courts, and court clerks)
- f. The Missouri Department of Probation and Parole.

ILPP's final report (known by most as "The Kalmanoff Report" and released in May 2003) not only reviewed the existing practices of the Justice System, but also made a significant number of recommendations (many of those recommendations having no financial impact on components of the Justice System), with some addressed to individual components of the Justice System while others were addressed to all components of the Justice System. The Committee assigned itself the responsibility of

reviewing The Kalmanoff Report for the purpose of noting the findings of the analysis and recommendations pertaining directly and indirectly to the Sheriff's Department.

The Committee met with Dr. Alan Kalmanoff, Executive Director of ILPP, on September 15, 2005. Dr. Kalmanoff commented that he was surprised by the lack of progress by all components of the Justice System in implementing the recommendations of his report. While the Committee has been impressed by many of the innovative actions of the Sheriff's Department in regard to locating funding sources or financial savings, the Committee is concerned that the Sheriff's Department has failed to implement changes to its Justice Center (Jail) inmate classification system as recommended by ILPP; these changes could result in significant financial savings yet not compromise safety within the Justice Center. Dr. Kalmanoff indicated to the Committee that the classification of inmates is the biggest issue at the Justice Center. Inmates need to be classified so that low risk inmates are not occupying beds that are needed for more risky inmates. Dr. Kalmanoff suggested the use of a Sheriff's Parole program that has been used successfully by other counties. The Committee believes that the Sheriff should review the feasibility of such a program.

The Committee recognizes that a lack of response by other components of the Justice System on recommendations made in The Kalmanoff Report could have a significant impact on the operations of the Sheriff's Department. For example, it was not until June 2005 that the Justice System implemented ILPP's recommendation of a "citation-in-lieu-of-arrest" policy; that recommendation is an example of one which required action by multiple components of the Justice System. It appears that the new policy will result in a decrease in the number of inmates being held in the Justice Center, which was a major aim of The Kalmanoff Report.

The Committee feels strongly that the community is owed explanation by the components of the Justice System for the Justice System's failure to act upon each of the recommendations of The Kalmanoff Report. The Committee strongly recommends that the leaders of each component of the Justice System, including the Sheriff's Department, work together to promptly communicate and explain to the community the action or inaction taken to address each recommendation contained in The Kalmanoff Report.

### **3. Overview of the 2005 Greene County Sheriff's Department Employee Survey**

In July of 2005, the Greene County Sheriff's Department, under the advisement of the Sheriff's Oversight Committee, contracted with the Missouri State University's (Springfield, MO) Center for Social Sciences and Public Policy Research (CSSPPR) to analyze and report findings from data collected through an organizational survey questionnaire on employee attitudes, opinions and behaviors regarding their personal level of satisfaction with organizational policies and work environment. The survey questionnaire was developed and approved by the Oversight Committee.

Surveys were distributed to all Greene County Sheriff's Department employees (N=246) in July of 2005. There were no identifying marks on the surveys in order to protect the identity and confidentiality of the respondents. By August 30, 2005, 125 surveys had been completed (a 50.8% response rate), returned and delivered to CSSPPR for data analysis. An Executive Summary of Survey Findings, as prepared by the CSSPPR, is attached as Appendix 1.

In reviewing the Executive Summary, the Committee wishes to caution readers to keep the following points in mind:

1. Only 50.8% of the employees responded to the survey. As pointed out in the CSSPPR report, it is reasonable to assume that those who did not respond are more likely to be satisfied with the characteristics being measured. Accordingly, the data collected tends to measure the opinions of those motivated by some degree of dissatisfaction.
2. The survey of the Sheriff's personnel was conducted during a time of considerable change in the operation of the Greene County Jail. Among the changes was the appointment of a new Jail director who implemented a number of new policies, some of which were quite unpopular with Jail employees. Interviews conducted by the Oversight Committee suggest that the changes may have been in order, but in any event, the survey findings may reflect more an adverse reaction to change rather than the on-going operation of the Jail.
3. Any reference to "management" in the survey may relate to the respondent's immediate supervisor, and not necessarily the Sheriff or the Jail administrator.

**4. Findings of the Oversight Committee** – After a thorough review and discussion of the information gathered from the above activities, the Oversight Committee organized its findings and recommendations as follows:

- A. Tangible improvements made by Sheriff Merritt during his tenure.
  - B. Positive impressions of the Committee based on the interviews and survey data.
  - C. Areas of Continuing Concern
  - D. Suggestions by the Oversight Committee for continuing improvement in the operation of the Sheriff's Department.
  - E. General Comments of the Oversight Committee
- A. The following are viewed by the Committee as positive tangible changes

implemented by Sheriff Merritt:

- 1) **Improved service weapons** – All deputies have been equipped with new Glock semi-automatic handguns. These new weapons enhance officer safety by providing greater firepower, higher capacity and more rapid reloading. This was critically needed to offset the tactical advantage of the criminal element.
- 2) **Change of uniforms** - The patrol and Jail staff were provided newly designed uniforms to enhance the professional appearance of the officers and improve employee morale. The uniforms were designed by a committee comprised of employees within the Department.
- 3) **Revised working hours** - Patrol officer shifts were changed from five eight hour shifts to four ten hour shifts. This change was well received by the officers as it provided additional free time to work in other off-duty jobs and to spend more time with their families.
- 4) **Patrol Car Utilization** – The Sheriff authorized patrol deputies to drive their patrol cars to and from home and work. The Committee feels this is a two-fold benefit as patrol cars parked among the various neighborhoods overnight increases the sense of police presence in the community, facilitates how deputies perform their duties, and it is also viewed as a benefit among patrol deputies.
- 5) **Car Video Systems** - All patrol cars have been equipped with video systems which provide video recording of all traffic stops. Such equipment was already in use by the Springfield Police Department and has proven invaluable in documenting actions of both drivers and officers.
- 6) **Mobile Data Terminals** - Mobile data terminals have been placed in all patrol cars to enable deputies to quickly and efficiently run motor vehicle and driver checks. Mobile data terminals also enhance communication within the Department.
- 7) **Automatic External Defibrillators** – Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) have been placed in various areas within the Department and in nearly all patrol cars. Numerous Department personnel have been trained in their use.
- 8) **Increased Enforcement of Traffic Offenses** - Immediately upon taking office Sheriff Merritt emphasized the responsibility of officers to provide for routine traffic enforcement to include apprehension of those driving under the influence of alcohol or other controlled substances. This is evidenced by a sharp increase in the number of traffic citations and DWI arrests. The Committee views this as an important safety enhancement for the public.

- 9) **Revision of Duty Time Policies** - Prior to the arrival of Sheriff Merritt, Deputies were required to complete daily paperwork on their own time following the completion of their assigned shift. The Sheriff changed policy to allow staff to complete required paperwork work during duty time. Likewise, mandatory training was frequently conducted during off duty time without compensation, and was also changed to duty time by Sheriff Merritt. The Sheriff maintains the added cost was largely offset by efficiencies gained by restructuring the work shifts to 10 hour days. In any event the Committee views this as matter of fairness and equity which has contributed to increased motivation and morale of the Deputies.
- 10) **Residency Requirement** – Formerly, Deputies were required to live in Greene County as a condition of employment. This served no apparent purpose other than to have Sheriff’s Department employees eligible to vote on Greene County matters that may affect the Department. The Sheriff removed the residency requirement for deputies, thereby increasing the eligible employment base from which to draw future employees.
- 11) **Booking Fees** – Booking fees for all arrested individuals have been implemented to help offset the cost of booking Jail inmates. The fees are minimal but still provide a contribution to scarce revenues needed to operate the Jail.
- 12) **Increased Training Emphasis** - Sheriff Merritt joined the Missouri Deputy Sheriff’s Association which makes specialized training for deputies available at a very nominal cost to the Department. Deputies are encouraged to make appropriate use of such training and now do so during on-duty hours.
- 13) **Reduced the cost of meals** - By providing food service from within the Department, the cost of meals has been reduced while continuing to provide for the proper nutrition to the inmates.

B. The following are positive impressions formed by the Committee based on the interviews and survey data.

- 1) **Increased Professionalism and Employee Morale** - Based on interviews, employee surveys and other related contacts such as the “ride-alongs”, it is evident to the Committee that there has been a significant improvement of employee morale and a marked increase in professionalism within the Department during the tenure of Sheriff Merritt.
- 2) **Improved Working Relationships** – Interviews of other executives within the Greene County Justice System indicate an improvement in communications and interdepartmental working relationships that has enhanced the overall

performance and effectiveness of the Justice System.

- 3) **Improved Decision Making** – Employee interviews typically revealed a sense among employees that promotions and job assignments were based to a greater degree on qualifications and leadership qualities rather than personal relations with those making the selection.

Likewise, the Committee sensed a feeling among employees that Department leadership strongly emphasized “the right thing to do” instead of what is politically expedient or popular in making important decisions affecting employees and the efficient operation of the Department.

C. The following are Areas of Continuing Concern:

- 1) **Understaffing** - Analysis of information provided to the Committee strongly suggests that there is understaffing not only within the Sheriff’s Department but within the Greene County Criminal Justice System as a whole. For example, the population of the Jail continues to grow but the Jail has not added staff resulting in a high ratio of inmates to staff.
- 2) **Salary Disparity** - Salaries for many Department positions are significantly less than comparable positions in the area. For example, Sheriff’s Deputies have duties very similar to that of Springfield Police Officers, but the \$26,790 starting pay of a deputy is \$4764 lower. This is of great concern as the lower pay leads to excessive off-duty “moonlighting”, job dissatisfaction and increased employee turnover.
- 3) **Funding Limitations** – In addition to the problems of Understaffing and salary disparity mentioned above, numerous potential improvements and opportunities to increase the effectiveness of the Department were identified by employees frustrated by the general lack of funding to provide for continuing improvement.
- 4) **Jail Overcrowding** – Actions taken to-date to reduce the Jail population have not been successful and overcrowding remains an issue.
- 5) **Management of the Jail** - Interviews and the employee survey results indicate that lack of appropriate communications and policy issues have been the source of considerable employee dissatisfaction that detracts from the efficient operation of the facility.

D. The following are specific suggestions for improvement which the Committee believes to be within the ability of the Sheriff’s Department to address within current budget and manpower limitations:

- 1) Issues of management communications and policy issues within the Jail should be aggressively addressed. Further, a periodic survey of the Jail staff should be undertaken to assess the effectiveness of actions taken.
- 2) In order to improve upon over-crowding and utilization of Jail facilities, increased emphasis should be placed on implementing the recommendations of the Kalmanoff Report specifically as they relate to classification of inmates.
- 3) A plan should be developed to bring Department employee compensation into parity with area police agencies of similar size and responsibilities. Once developed, the plan should be presented to the County Commissioners for consideration and necessary funding.
- 4) Policy and Procedure manuals for the Department and Jail should be reviewed and edited annually so they can be more useful to the staff.
- 5) From interviews, the Committee learned there is no formal means to address citizen complaints. Some type of internal affairs function should be established to receive, investigate and respond to citizen complaints.
- 6) The Missouri Revised Statutes provide that the presiding judge of the circuit court may appoint a Board of Visitors to oversee the operation of the Jail. Copies of the statutes describing the appointment, term and duties of such a board is attached as Appendix 2. The Committee is of the view that formation of such a board is in the best interest of the community and recommends that the Sheriff pursue this topic with the presiding judge.
- 7) Make the Oversight Committee an ongoing function of the Department.
- 8) Implement training for members of the Jail staff on understanding and complying with the judges orders relating to prisoners as shown on the court's docket sheet.

## **5. General Comments.**

- a. It is the view of the Committee that the Greene County Sheriff's Department is managed in an efficient and cost effective manner within the limitation of existing budget constraints. However, the Sheriff's Department suffers from an overall lack of funding which results in considerable understaffing, the inability to implement continuous improvement activities that would enhance public safety, increase the quality of service and improve upon cost effectiveness of the Department's services.

This problem extends to other elements of our Criminal Justice System. For

example, Greene County has the highest case load per Judge of all Counties in Missouri. As a consequence of this high case load, we find that only 20% of Greene County Jail inmates are serving a sentence while the remaining 80% in our overcrowded facility await a hearing.

- b. In the wake of the failure of the two recent law enforcement sales tax initiatives, it seems imperative that a new community-wide initiative be undertaken to find a solution to the funding problem that is having such negative consequences for the Greene County Criminal Justice System.
- c. The Committee wishes to express its appreciation to the staff of the Sheriff's Department for the courtesy, cooperation and professionalism displayed by each and every member of the Department.
- d. Lastly, we wish to thank Sheriff Merritt for granting the Committee complete and comprehensive access to the policies, procedures and other Department records as well as unsupervised and unrestricted access to any and all staff of the Department for the purpose of preparing this report.

## **6. Summary and Conclusions**

- a. The Committee has found significant improvements at the Greene County Sheriff's Department under the leadership of Sheriff Merritt. It is particularly impressed by the efforts of the Sheriff to improve the professionalism of the Department and the genuine concern of the Sheriff to improve the working conditions for employees of the Department. It is apparent to the Committee that Sheriff Merritt has worked hard to gain the respect of his deputies and staff, other law enforcement officials in the area and the community at large. The efforts of Sheriff Merritt in that regard have been largely successful and he has significantly raised the image of the Department.
- b. The Committee finds that the Sheriff's Department lacks sufficient funding to properly staff the Department and to continue to attract and retain qualified law enforcement professionals. The lack of funding is not unusual for sheriff departments across Missouri and is not new in Greene County. However, the Committee commends Sheriff Merritt for finding ways to control or reduce expenses without jeopardizing the overall operation of the Department.
- c. It is evident that the greatest challenge for the Sheriff's Department is the efficient and professional operation of the Greene County Jail. The chronic overcrowding of the Jail and the expense of its operation should be of deep concern to the County Commission, the entire law enforcement system in Greene County and the citizens of this community. Sheriff Merritt deserves credit for appreciating the need for dramatic changes in the Jail operations and the Jail

“culture”. The Sheriff has made a determined effort to effect the changes that are needed. It is too early to determine if those changes will improve the function of the Jail, and the Committee recognizes that there are substantial obstacles to the Sheriff’s success, including budgetary limitations and the need for consensus with other components of the law enforcement system (including the judiciary, the state penal system and municipal police departments). The Jail holds the greatest potential for improvement during the remainder of Sheriff Merritt’s tenure in office and should receive a considerable share of his attention.

- d. The Committee is grateful for the opportunity to review the Sheriff’s Department progress during Sheriff Merritt’s tenure and for the opportunity to make recommendations for improvements. The Sheriff should be commended by the community for his willingness to initiate this review and for the “hands off” approach he has taken toward the work of the Committee. It is the hope of the Committee that the next Greene County Sheriff will benefit from this review and that he or she will demonstrate the same commitment to the professionalism and integrity of the Department as Sheriff Merritt has been over the past 6 years.

## Appendix 1

Description of the Study and Executive Summary of the Employee Survey conducted by the Center for Social Sciences and Public Policy Research, Missouri State University.

### Description of the Study

In July of 2005, the Greene County Sheriff's Department contracted with the Center for Social Sciences and Public Policy Research (CSSPPR) to analyze and report findings from data collected through an organizational survey questionnaire on employee attitudes, opinions and behaviors regarding their personal level of satisfaction with organizational policies and work environment. The survey was authorized by Sheriff Jack Merritt and managed by an independent oversight committee. The committee is composed of Dr. Michael Carlie of Missouri State University, Mr. Ron Carrier of the Missouri Attorney General's Office, Professor Robert Cirtin of Evangel University, Mr. Charles Cowherd of Husch & Eppenberger LLC, Dr. Jose Dominguez of Cox Health, Reverend Larry Maddox of the Springfield Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Mr. Robert McFadden of the U.S. Medical Center for Federal Prisoners, Mr. Dan Manna formerly of Paul Mueller Manufacturing and Ms. Sherri Murdaugh of Springfield City Utilities.

A total of 246 surveys were sent to Greene County Sheriff's Department employees in July of 2005, together with a cover letter (see Appendix A and B) and business reply envelope. The survey instrument was constructed by Ms. Murdaugh under the advisement of the oversight committee. There were no identifying marks on these documents in order to protect the identity of the respondents and confidentiality of their responses. The return envelopes were addressed to Mr. Cirtin, who delivered them to CSSPPR. By August 30, 2005, 125 had been completed, returned and delivered to CSSPPR for data analysis. The quantitative survey items were analyzed through generation of overall frequency distributions and crosstabulations with key demographic variables. Qualitative responses were transcribed and sorted into categories based on the respondent's job type and date hired. Respondent numbers were assigned and printed next to each comment to allow the reader to compare several narrative responses for any one respondent. This report contains the results of that analysis and is the property of the Greene County Sheriff's Department for proprietary use by management as they see fit.

A total of 125 completed surveys were analyzed, representing a response rate of 50.8%, which is above average for a mail survey. However, with missing data from almost half of solicited respondents, the question as to why 121 of those surveyed did not respond must be addressed to determine the degree to which the data reflect overall opinions of the organization. This question may be better answered by those familiar with the organizational culture.

Typically, it is assumed that respondents who fail to reply have little interest in the topic at hand or are otherwise satisfied with the characteristics being measured. Under these circumstances, it is reasonable to assume that the data more reflect the opinions of those with some level of dissatisfaction, and that the level of satisfaction is at least as high in the population as measured in the sample. However, because crosstabulation by job type and start date identify groups that may express stronger criticism of management, the decision to participate, as well as

responses of those that did, may be biased by concerns for the individual's future employment status. Fear of reprisals from superiors was mentioned several times in the narrative comments. This suggests that some respondents may not have fully expressed their dissatisfaction, and that overall levels of satisfaction may be lower than indicated by the results of this study.

## Executive Summary

- The highest level of satisfaction among respondents was measured in the area management. They were especially satisfied with the confidence and trust they have in their immediate supervisor and the way their supervisor listens to their concerns and considers their opinions.
- Commitment to the Greene County Sheriff's Department was also rated highly. Respondents felt strongly that they make Greene County a better place to live and that they are proud to tell people they work for the Sheriff's Department.
- The lowest levels of satisfaction among respondents were measured in the area of communication. They were especially dissatisfied with having a limited voice in developing or changing departmental policies and procedures, the inadequacy of communication between divisions and the lack of clarity in communicating policies and procedures.
- A relatively high degree of dissatisfaction in the general work environment was also apparent. Respondents expressed a moderate level of dissatisfaction in all of the general work environment indicators.
- Over one-third of respondents gave Sheriff Merritt an A for his job performance, while well over half gave him at least a B. Almost one-third, however, rated his job performance with a D or an F.
- Ratings of satisfaction varied widely between the four types of job classification. Generally, correctional officers, both commissioned and non-commissioned, tended to report lower levels of satisfaction in the various areas than non-correctional officers and administrative staff. This was especially true with regard to work environment and the Sheriff's performance.
- Correctional officers were most satisfied in the area of management and least satisfied in the area of work environment. Non-correctional officers and administrative staff were most satisfied with Sheriff Merritt's performance and the commitment they have to the department. They were least satisfied with job skills training and communications.
- Generally, respondents hired prior to 2001 expressed higher levels of satisfaction than those hired more recently. This is especially true with regard to the work environment

and the Sheriff's performance. However, the differences were not as pronounced as between correctional and non-correctional officers.

- Respondents hired prior to 2001 were most satisfied in the areas of organizational commitment and the Sheriff's performance and least satisfied in the area of communication. Those hired more recently were most satisfied with management and least satisfied with the work environment.
- Correlation analysis of the composite variables (mathematical amalgams of the variables within each broad category) shows a high degree of covariance. This indicates a strong tendency for respondents to be either satisfied or dissatisfied in the majority of indicators, while relatively few are satisfied in one area and dissatisfied in another.
- Several questions invited the respondent to submit narrative comments in the various areas of satisfaction. These comments were submitted disproportionately in certain demographic categories. Although correctional officers made up 54% of the sample, they comprised 68% of the comments. Those hired in 2001 or after were only slightly more likely to submit narrative comments than those hired prior to 2001.
- When respondents were asked if they could make just one change to improve their work environment, the most commonly cited changes were an increase in security, better departmental communication and more facilities, training, and equipment. They also asked for more authority and staffing, to allow the use of mace and tazers and the termination of the Jail director.
- Respondents were most likely to say the least satisfying aspect of their jobs was the disrespect, insensitivity and lack of concern exhibited by administration toward staff, poor communication, lack of authority and understaffing in critical areas.
- Respondents were most likely to say that making a positive impact and the camaraderie were the most satisfying aspects of their job. Five respondents were most satisfied in knowing that they are doing their jobs well. However, five respondents also indicated that not being at work at all was the most satisfying aspect.
- When asked what part of their continuing training needs more emphasis, respondents were most likely to say training regarding new policies and self-defense. More training in general was also commonly cited.
- Respondents were most likely to say that the policies and procedures manual needed to be communicated better, written more clearly, updated, changed less frequently and applied to everyone. Many also asked that it be completed and that it be written by more informed policy-makers.
- The most common suggestions to improve communication in the department were improve communication between lower staff and upper management, that suggestions

and concerns not be ignored or discouraged, that administration communicate more with staff than with inmates, to reduce the amount of false information disseminated and to schedule more staff meetings.

- When asked what changes or improvements could be made to management, there was a general consensus to terminate upper management and replace them with more informed and experienced people. Many respondents also suggested developing better communication mediums, hiring a new director of the Jail and having management treat and value all employees equally.
- Respondents thought the best changes made in the Department since Sheriff Merritt took office were acquiring better equipment, changing to new uniforms, moving to a twelve hour shift, achieving higher levels of competence, improved training and morale, allowing take home cars and the Sheriff's concern for employees.
- Respondents thought the three worst changes made in the Department since Sheriff Merritt took office were the hiring of the new Jail director, eight hour shifts, restricting the use of mace and tazers, non-responsiveness to staff concerns, reduced pay and benefits, reduced training opportunities, an overemphasis on DWI's, loss of needed personnel and neglect of the Jail.
- When asked to list three changes they would make to improve the Department if they were Sheriff, the most common responses were terminate the Jail director, go back to twelve hour shifts, improve communication, increase staffing, expand the availability of tazers and mace, appropriate better pay and benefits, foster a better relationship and give more authority to the Jail staff, increase training, promote higher morale and reduce favoritism shown toward certain employees.
- Although it was not commonly mentioned, several respondents were very concerned with the policy of allowing male staff to work in the female pods without adequate monitoring by supervisors or electronically by video cameras.
- Several respondents felt strongly that if some of these suggested changes are not implemented soon, that a serious injury or death of a staff member or inmate may occur.
- An overall consideration of the comments made by respondents suggests that the operation of the Sheriff's Department could be improved greatly by incorporating weekly staff briefings, disseminating policy changes to all staff through memos, increasing and enhancing the training program, allowing the use of mace and tazers by Jail staff, changing to twelve hour shifts, facilitating better communication and replacing the Jail director.

## Appendix 2.

### Missouri Revised Statutes

#### Chapter 221 Jails and Jailers Section 221.320 Appointment – terms

##### **Board of visitors--appointment--terms.**

221.320. In each county of the state the presiding judge of the circuit court, or such other judge or judges as may be determined by local circuit court rule, may, upon the petition of fifteen reputable citizens or upon the motion of a majority of the court en banc, appoint six persons, three of whom shall be women, and not more than three shall have the same political affiliations, who shall constitute a board of county visitors, all of whom, upon the fixed appointment, shall serve for one year and shall constitute the board of visitors for the inspection of all corrective institutions supported by such county. The members of the board shall serve without compensation and shall enjoy the same immunity from lawsuits as judicial officers.

(RSMo 1939 § 9586, A.L. 1978 H.B. 1634, A.L. 2003 S.B. 184)

Prior revisions: 1929 § 12946; 1919 § 12195; 1909 § 1329

#### Chapter 221 Jails and Jailers Section 221.340 Duties of board

##### **Duties of board.**

221.340. It shall be the duty of such board of visitors, by personal visitation or otherwise, to keep themselves fully advised of the conditions and management of all corrective institutions, supported wholly or in part by county or municipal taxation, or which are under county or municipal control, and especially the county Jails. They shall examine every department of each institution, and shall ascertain its condition as to effective and economical administration, the cleanliness, discipline and comfort of its inmates and other respects, and at least once in every three months all of said institutions shall be visited by said board or a committee of its members. In case the said board or one of its committees shall find any state of things in any institution, which in their opinion shall be injurious to the county or to the inmates of the institution, or which is contrary to good order and public policy, it shall be their duty to address a memorial to the presiding judge, sheriff, and county commission, or other officials having jurisdiction, in which memorial they shall set forth the facts observed and shall suggest such remedies as in their judgment may be necessary.

(RSMo 1939 § 9588, A.L. 2003 S.B. 184)

Prior revisions: 1929 § 12948; 1919 § 12197; 1909 § 1331