

## Yolo supervisors OK juvenile hall expansion

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In a unanimous vote, the Yolo County Board of Supervisors approved a resolution on Tuesday committing \$966,061 in county funds to expand the Juvenile Detention Facility on Gibson Road in Woodland.

The reasons behind the actions are to enhance and sustain the safety of the facility as well as simply make the facility more personable for those being held. The new facility will not only address youth in detention, but also outside of it.

In 2010, Yolo County received an award from the state Board of State and Community Corrections to build an annex to the Juvenile Detention Facility. This annex will provide needed space to conduct treatment, programs and contact visiting.

The county funds will be utilized to expand the facility to provide treatment programs, as well as visiting areas and indoor recreational space, primarily so it can make sure money promised by the state is allocated. As Chief Probation Officer Brent Cardall explained to the board, one of the reasons for the expansion is a need to focus more on families.

"I've really noticed a trend with our placement programming," Cardall said. "Placement programming is good but there is a problem with it. It has high recidivism rates because of runaways, they are really not addressing treatment with families. We really do have evidence-based practices and information that treatment with families is what works."

Cardall noted that the facility itself is "outdated" in its construction; still utilizing glass partitions for visitations, resembling a maximum security prison. The expansion will not only update the model for family visitations, it will shift the focus to families in general.

"Currently what happens is they do receive good treatment, but the families aren't aware of what they receive or what they do, so they come back in our community, back to their friends and families and they go back to their old habits," Cardall said illuminating yet another trend he has noticed in the juvenile justice system.

Advocating bringing solutions to the board instead of problems, Cardall said he is "trying to be proactive in seeking money," to help move the expansion forward. After much thought, Cardall has decided to meet the board halfway on this resolution. The Probation Department currently rents a building in the community for helping juveniles that costs the county approximately \$16,000 per month. By canceling the program operated out of this space, the county can reclaim that money to put toward the expansion.

"What I plan on doing is canceling that contract, saving that money and giving that back to the county towards this \$966,000 that we need to come up with," he said, which equates to over half the funds needed for the project.

Supervisors Matt Rexroad and Don Saylor agreed with the proposal wholeheartedly, praising Cardall's creative thinking to contribute funds to the expansion with him taking the time to explore alternative avenues to achieve results.

"We're spending a lot of money on the adult side," Supervisor Jim Provenza said. "When it is the juveniles that funnel into that system so I can't think of anything more important than effective programming and to have the facility to deliver the services and the involvement of the family, I agree is essential. It's long overdue and we appreciate your efforts."