

Hello Supervisor Haschak,

I am writing today as a concerned resident of Laytonville, a retired clinical social worker, and a member of the Juvenile Justice Commission of Mendocino County.

These are very difficult times. The coronavirus is a serious health threat to all of us, with additional impacts on families who are already stressed by financial insecurities and the loss of many routines that help them maintain a level of organization and safety.

Our county Juvenile Hall has recently survived severe economic challenges as well as significant changes in personnel. The pros and cons of keeping the Hall open vs contracting with another county such as Sonoma were considered in depth. The decision was made to maintain our Hall as the most reasonable fiscal arrangement, and also as the best way to serve the needs of this population. The Hall is currently fully staffed and stable for the first time in over two years. This team is committed to working with the youth in their custody, most of whom have experienced multiple traumas in their short lives. The staff is dedicated to helping these young people heal from their histories and make better choices as they move forward. The leadership continues to engage evidence-based practices that support safer and more effective functioning for the youth and their families. They also continue to consider alternative uses for the facility that might be economically feasible and programmatically valuable.

It makes no sense to undo the gains they have managed to put in place.

Thank you for your consideration.

Libbe Madsen

June 20, 2020