

**Report to Board of Supervisors on work of the
Carroll County Prison Study Committee
November 12, 2008**

- **Early in the summer of 2008 the Carroll County Board of Supervisors began investigating the option of attracting a prison facility to the county.**
- **As a result, under the leadership of Supervisor Andy Jackson, a Prison Study Committee was appointed first to do a study, involving the citizens of the county to see if there would be an interest in supporting a prison facility in Carroll County. And second, to determine if Virginia was looking to build new prisons, would they be interested in Carroll County.**
- **The Board of Supervisors appointed J. B. Gardner, Jean Crist and Billy Johnson. Supervisors Andy Jackson and David Hutchins agreed to help with the project.**

Meetings

- 1. August 12, 2008 - The first meeting of the Prison Study Committee was held and J. B. Gardner was elected Chairman, Jean Crist was elected Vice-Chairman and Billy Johnson was elected Treasurer. Prison visits were discussed as well as community meetings to receive citizen input.**
- 2. August 25, 2008 – Our second meeting was held and prison visitations were discussed. Keens Mountain Correctional Center and Pocahontas State Corrections Center were both receptive to a visit by the committee. A survey was written and approved for use by the committee to allow citizens to provide input about how they feel about asking for a prison. It was also decided that the committee should hold meetings in each community in the county to give citizens a time and place to express opinions on a prison.**
- 3. September 10, 2008 – The third meeting of the Prison Study Committee was held and it was learned that Jean Crist had set up a tour on September 23, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. at Pocahontas State Correction Center and at 2:00 p.m. for Keens Mountain Correctional Center. James Spencer, Tazewell County Administrator had agreed to meet with us and share his views on what the new prison in Tazewell had meant to his county.**
- 4. September 23, 2008 – The Prison Study Committee met at 5:45 a.m. at the Carroll County Complex and left for our meeting with James Spencer. The meeting with Mr. Spencer was very informative and helped the committee to know some of the questions that should be asked while visiting Pocahontas State Correctional Center and Keens Mountain Correctional Center. Both facilities were toured.**

**Carroll Co. Prison Study Committee
Meeting with James Spencer – County Administrator for Tazewell Co.
Visitation to Pocahontas State Correctional Center
and Keen Mt. Correctional Center
Sept. 23, 2008**

On Tuesday, September 23, 2008 at 0700, the Carroll Co. Prison Study Committee met with James Spencer, County Administrator of Tazewell County, Virginia, at Bob Evans restaurant in Bluefield, Va. Jean Crist had contacted Mr. Spencer in reference to the committee meeting with him, to find out the positives and negatives of having a prison located in Tazewell County. Mr. Spencer made the following recommendations for the committee:

- Conduct meetings with citizens in your communities to see how they feel about having a prison in their county.
- Advise the citizens of all of the good things that a prison can bring and also advise them up front of any negative things that you are made aware of.

Mr. Spencer then advised if your community members supported a prison in their county, the Prison Study Committee should approach the Carroll County Board of Supervisors and recommend that the Board contact local representatives of the State government, and have them help the Board of Supervisors notify the State of Virginia that Carroll County would like to be considered as a location for any future prisons that may be built.

Mr. Spencer advised the committee that he would gladly make himself available to address the Carroll County Board of Supervisors and the citizens of Carroll County to answer questions and to let them know that the prisons located in Tazewell County have been a big economical boost to Tazewell County.

If the Commonwealth of Virginia decides that Carroll County would be a good location for a prison and decide to build one here, Carroll County should then do the following things:

- Understand that construction on a prison could take as long as two years.
- Consider holding a Tradeshow between local business and the Department of Corrections and contractors that will be doing construction on the prison.

- Consider making a comprehensive directory of services available to prison officials and contractors who will be moving into the area. The directory should include such things as local restaurants, local hotels, local garages, local camper repair and sales locations, local construction materials providers, local health care providers, etc...
- Consider holding Job Fairs with prospective employers and employees. Inform the citizens utilizing the local community college system as to what educational qualities will be expected of employees before they are hired. Wytheville Community College will be ready to assist perspective employees with obtaining an education that will be compatible with what the Department of Corrections expects it's employee's to possess.

Tour of Pocahontas State Correctional Center (PCCS)

On Tuesday, September 23, 2008 at 0900, The Carroll County Prison Study Committee participated in a tour of the Pocahontas State Correctional Center conducted by Roger Walz, Operations Officer of the Prison. The Committee learned the following information:

- PCCS is a medium security prison located in Tazewell County.
- PCCS has bed space for 1000 prisoners, and is currently holding more than 980 prisoners.
- PCCS has been open for 1 year and represents a \$72 million dollar investment by the State of Virginia.
- A Carroll County native is the cafeteria director of this prison and advised that they are currently feeding more than 3300 meals a day at a cost of \$1.80 per prisoner per day. (.60 per meal)
- Much of the food provided to the inmates is grown or manufactured by the inmates. The prison buys from a state run central distribution system and occasionally from local vendors.
- PCCS uses 35 acres of a 800 acres parcel of land.
- PCCS has 213 Security related jobs on site.
- PCCS has 97 support staff on site. (medical, maintenance, etc...)

- PCCS recycles much of it's waste materials such as paper, cardboard, aluminum, plastic and makes 160 gallons of Bio-diesel fuel (every 24 hours) from waste oil and grease from it's kitchen facilities.
- PCCS provides state of the art medical and dental services. Inmates who need glasses are required to pay an examination fee and half of the cost of a pair of glasses.
- PCCS provides many types of counseling services for inmates such as alcohol and drug abuse, anger management.
- PCCS offers adult basic education and GED programs, and some college courses.
- PCCS offers many vocational courses such as small engine and motorcycle repair, electricity, plumbing, carpentry, floor covering, CAD, computer literacy and general maintenance.
- PCCS offer apprenticeships and work opportunities in food service, maintenance, laundry, housekeeping, and barbering education.

Tour of Keen Mountain Correctional Center (KMCC)

On Tuesday, September 23, 2008 at 2:00 p.m., The Carroll County Prison Study Committee participated in a tour of the Keen Mountain Correctional Center conducted by , Operations Officer of the Prison. The Committee learned the following information:

- KMCC is a Maximum security prison located in Buchanan County, Virginia.
- KMCC has been open since 1990 and represents a \$45 Million dollar investment by the State of Virginia.
- KMCC has bed space for 922 prisoners, and is currently holding more than 750 prisoners.

- **KMCC provides services to a wide variety of prisoners. Prisoners who are awaiting release on parole to those who are not eligible for parole. Inmates who are convicted of minor offenses to those serving many life sentences.**
- **KMCC has than 300 employees.**
- **KMCC provides many types of counseling services for inmates such as alcohol and drug abuse, anger management, mental health, Psychiatric services and parenting skills, just to name a few.**
- **KMCC offers adult basic education and GED programs, and some college courses.**
- **KMCC offers several vocational courses such as electricity, plumbing, carpentry, floor covering, and general maintenance.**
- **At KMCC, approximately 67% of the inmates have jobs within the prison. These jobs include academic tutors, kitchen, laundry, housekeeping, maintenance and yard workers.**
- **At KMCC, general population inmates are out of their cells an average of 13 hours per day.**
- **KMCC inmates are allowed to visit with family and friends on weekends and holidays.**

Community Meetings

**Oct. 8 - St. Paul School - 5:00 – 6:30 - 3 Citizens / 3 Surveys
Fancy Gap - 7:00 – 8:30 - 4 Citizens / 2 Surveys**

Oct. 9 - Sylvatus - 5:30 – 7:00 - 2 Citizens / 2 Surveys

**Oct. 15 - Oakland Elementary - 5:00 – 6:30 - 3 Citizens / 5 Surveys
Gladesboro Elementary - 7:00 – 8:30 - No Citizens / No
Surveys**

**Oct. 16 - Gladeville Elementary - 5:00 – 6:30 - 2 Citizens / 2 Surveys
Laurel Elementary - 7:00 – 8:30 - 2 Citizens / 2 Surveys**

Oct. 21 - Fries Fire Dept. - 5:30 – 7:00 - 2 Citizens / 2 - Surveys

Oct. 28 - Carroll County High School - 5:30 – 7:00 - 2 Citizens / 2 Surveys

Internet Surveys - 10 – Surveys

Survey Questions

(answers were left as written)

I WOULD / WOULD NOT LIKE TO SEE A PRISON COME TO CARROLL COUNTY BECAUSE:

1. Positive Answers

- I would like to see a new prison built and established in Carroll County because it would provide new jobs to an area sorely in need of economic growth. I would hope that it would be built in an area of the county that would not detract from our natural beauty.
- I would like to see the Prison come to Carroll County.
- **NEED JOBS!**
- I would like to see a prison come to Carroll County.
- I would because it would bring more jobs to our county & we could use more jobs.
- The County needs more jobs.
- It would offer jobs that we no longer have and need.
- People in Carroll Co. need good paying jobs with benefits & retirement. With all the textile and furniture factories closing down, people in Carroll Co. must go out of the county or state to get jobs. As a retired state employee I am aware of the excellent state benefits and retirement the state job offers.
- Jobs, Long term presence.
- One reason – Jobs
- Provide employment for many people, employees would have jobs close to home, would bring money to Carroll County.
- Jobs other than minimum wage are needed

- It would bring more jobs to Carroll County and help everyone in the county
- I would like to see a prison in Carroll County because I would like to see the state jobs that it would bring. Carroll County does not have anywhere for my children to work and both had to go out of the area just to find a job. Without jobs, there will be no one living in the area. At least with prison jobs, they shouldn't be sent in China. Our # 1 export from Carroll County is our children!
- **JOBS! JOBS! JOBS!** Carroll Co. foolishly threw away an opportunity in 1995 or 1996 to have the regional jail here in the county. Close to 200 good paying jobs that will not wither away when the economy goes bad. Don't make that mistake again!
- I think that a prison in the county would benefit the county in many ways. Such as **JOBS!!!** And economically. I think we missed a perfect opportunity to have the regional jail re-locate to Dublin. The only worry that I would have is that we had the opportunity to have the regional jail and the Board at that time voted not to have it would the state be inclined to build a state prison here since we didn't want the regional jail.
- Carroll County needs to do something to create jobs with state or federal benefits. Prison jobs won't go out of the country, the community will benefit through the spending of those state or federal wages locally for gas, food or housing for the people who work here.
- We need to get more jobs relocated back into Carroll County since almost all our factories have shut down in the area.
- It would provide jobs for Carroll County people. We need more prisons so bad people will serve their entire sentence.
- Put Carroll County on the list to be considered. For Police Academy I would absolutely vote YES. This certainly is a depressed area for employment.
- I think this is a worthwhile endeavor to explore. Thank you for seeking public input.

- **Having a prison in Carroll County would bring more job opportunities to the community as well as possibly help the growth of our county. Having a prison right here at home would also make it much easier on our law enforcement officers. With a prison here, there would be no reason to have to transport to other prisons, unless there was a transfer. GOOD LUCK!!!!!!!**
- **I am in favor of anything that will bring jobs to this area. I think it is a shame to be living in such a beautiful part of Virginia, but there is nothing here for anyone. . . no jobs, no opportunities, no ways for us to make a living. I know some people who probably feel that they don't want "those kinds" of people living right around the corner from them. If they would just realize that low wages and unemployment are linked to higher crime rates. Therefore, if something isn't done for the people of Carroll County to find employment, they WILL have those kinds of people living right around the corner. . . only they won't be locked up. I do feel that a lot of consideration should be taken in deciding the location of a prison in Carroll County.**

2. Negative Answers

- **It might lower property values.**

I THINK A PRISON WOULD BE BAD / GOOD FOR CARROLL COUNTY BECAUSE:

1. Positive Answers

- Although it seems scary to consider possible prison escapes, I believe a prison facility would be good for Carroll County because of the potential for new jobs and economic growth.
- Great! The jobs are needed and there are plenty of criminals around.
- The Economy! Jobs!!
- Good for Jobs
- The people of Carroll County need the opportunity to find work.
- We need the job opportunity that a prison can offer.
- It would bring in more jobs which we are in need of.
- Economic opportunities.
- Jobs, income, tax revenues.
- Be good for jobs for our area & tax revenue.
- It would bring jobs & more places to store prisoners so prisons don't get overcrowded.
- Carroll County needs good, long term jobs with good pay, good benefits!
- Jobs
- Savings in transportation.
- It is the best thing for everyone.

- It is my opinion that the people of the county are in need of jobs to make them feel better. I can say that the citizens of this county are the hardest working, caring and proudest people that I know and when you take their jobs away from them it makes them feel bad and maybe for a better term, second class and no one likes to feel that way including myself. So I hope the Board along with the prison study committee will unite and work very hard to make this a reality for our people, because I can and do not know of a better group of citizens in the United States that deserve this more. So all of you work to make our citizens feel proud again.
- Yes, I have a perfect place to put it. On the south side of the Blue Ridge Parkway on the side of the mountain. Most of the people that own property there are from the Carolina and it shouldn't bother them since they're not up but once or twice during the year. Then if there are any escapes they'll have the mountain w/cliffs and fog to deal with. If not there, at one of the I 77's exits would seem to be the next good choice.

2. Negative Answers

- I like the idea of creating jobs that will be stable. I would not like for it to be located in an area that could create problems for neighborhoods. I know that escapes are rare, but it's still something that I would be concerned with.

**OTHER CITIZEN STATEMENTS THAT WERE ON THE FORMS
AND NEED TO BE CONSIDERED:**

- I do not think a Grand Ole Opry would be sensible. If all the illegals in prisons were deported we wouldn't need so many prisons, but I don't think that will happen soon. For a really hard core criminal element I would vote NO. Otherwise, I would probably vote YES. I hope you have the opportunity to tour Bland Correctional Center in Bland County. They have a working farm supplying food to other prisons in the state & a dog training program. It sounds impressive!
- **Where will it be located? How many jobs will be created? What type of prisons would it be, minimum security, maximum security etc.?**

After conducting community meetings and reading all of the results of the internet survey that were submitted by the citizens of Carroll County, It is the recommendation of the Carroll County Prison Study Committee that the Carroll County Board of Supervisors go forward with a request to the elected officials in Richmond and Washington with a request that Carroll County be added to their list as a location for any future prisons that may be built.

John B. Gardner – Chairman