

## “BETTER KNOW A JAIL” MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Professor Andrea Armstrong and Professor Nishi Kumar

**FROM:** Cassidy Smith

**RE:** “Better Know a Jail” Memo

**DATE:** November 7, 2022

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### Red River Parish Jail

#### Introduction

Red River Parish is about 389 square miles, which is located in northwest Louisiana and is named for the Red River, which is actually a part of the Mississippi River watershed.<sup>1</sup> Red River was founded March 2, 1871 and is located in the Parish Seat of Coshatta.<sup>2</sup> The parish is composed of three villages of Edgefield, Hall Summit, and Martin.<sup>3</sup> The unincorporated communities are Grand Bayou and Lake End.<sup>4</sup> As of the latest census from July 2021, Red River Parish currently has around 7,564 residents.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, the race and Hispanic origin percentage shows that 58.1% of the population of Red River Parish is white, not Hispanic or Latino.<sup>6</sup> The education level of Red River Parish has a majority of residents who have graduated high school and only 13.1% have completed higher education earning a bachelor’s degree or higher.<sup>7</sup> Red River Parish includes the Louisiana Department of Corrections - Ware Youth Center and Red River Parish Jail.<sup>8</sup>

#### Jail Characteristics

The Red River Parish Jail houses pretrial detainees and those waiting for their sentences.<sup>9</sup> The jail is located at 615 East Carroll Drive, Coshatta, Louisiana.<sup>10</sup> The facility has a maximum capacity of holding 198 inmates, but has a maximum capacity of 237 in cases of emergency.<sup>11</sup> The facility is operated on day-to-day activities by one commander, five sergeants, nine officers, and transport personnel.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, the facility is used by the Louisiana Department of Corrections to house probation violators and offers detention facilities for the Coshatta city-wide area.<sup>13</sup> The website of the facility is located at the following website link: <https://www.icrimewatch.net/index.php?AgencyID=54410>. However, the jail can also be reached

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.louisiana.gov/local-louisiana/red-river-parish>

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/redriverparishlouisiana,LA/PST045221>

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.incarcerationtransparency.org/?page\\_id=249](https://www.incarcerationtransparency.org/?page_id=249)

<sup>9</sup> <https://macomb-sheriff.com/louisiana/county-jail/red-river-parish-jail/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://doc.louisiana.gov/location/red-river-parish/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://macomb-sheriff.com/louisiana/county-jail/red-river-parish-jail/>

<sup>12</sup> *Id.*

<sup>13</sup> *Id.*

at 318-932-5754, 318-932-4221 or send a fax. Red River Parish Jail is a direct supervision correctional facility and is fully accredited by the Louisiana Corrections Accreditation Commission and the National Commission on Correctional Health Care.<sup>14</sup> Audits are performed by independent auditors and legislative auditors, which is discussed in the budget financial statements from the sheriff's office below.<sup>15</sup>

The jail website allows the user to search for sex offenders in their area.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, the website lists all published offenders registered with their agency and to receive an email alert whenever a published offender registers within the selected radius of a desired address.<sup>17</sup> The Sheriff's Office also includes safety tips on the website, which include tips and advice on protecting children from sex offenders.<sup>18</sup> The main goal the website provides for parents of young children is to have an open communication between parents and their children.<sup>19</sup>

Additionally, according to the public records request, information from Warden Joey Wiggins showed that during the entire year of 2021, 281 males and 91 females were admitted to the jail. Also, during 2021, 46 inmates were the daily population of Red River Parish Jail. There were zero held for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and none for U.S. Marshals Service during 2021. However, there were 17 inmates for all other holds including state and federal prison, Bureau of Indian Affairs, or other holds for other jail jurisdictions.

As of Monday, November 7, 2022, at 9 PM (CST), the jail roster shows that there are about 42 offenders in custody.<sup>20</sup> Of those 42 offenders, two are female and the other forty are male.<sup>21</sup> Additionally, the ages range from twenty-years-old through sixty-years old. Of the 42 offenders, 24 were black and 18 were white.<sup>22</sup>

Furthermore, visitation hours are Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m. through 9:00 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday 7:30 a.m. through 2:30 p.m.<sup>23</sup> Some of the rules for visiting an inmate include having a valid identification, the visitor should not have a previous felony, and any underage person must come with a legal guardian.<sup>24</sup> Inmates are allowed to have phone privileges from 7:00

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<sup>14</sup> <https://cityofsomerton.com/louisiana/county-jail/red-river-parish-jail/>

<sup>15</sup> [https://app.la.la.gov/PublicReports.nsf/0/764353B8CFD7E0D186258670007B2FDC/\\$FILE/00022884.pdf](https://app.la.la.gov/PublicReports.nsf/0/764353B8CFD7E0D186258670007B2FDC/$FILE/00022884.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.icrimewatch.net/index.php?AgencyID=54410>

<sup>17</sup> *Id.*

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

<sup>19</sup> *Id.*

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.redriver.lavns.org/roster.aspx>

<sup>21</sup> *Id.*

<sup>22</sup> *Id.*

<sup>23</sup> <https://macomb-sheriff.com/louisiana/county-jail/red-river-parish-jail/>

<sup>24</sup> *Id.*

a.m. through 7:30 p.m. and the jail also allows for collect calls.<sup>25</sup> However, each phone call is limited to a maximum of thirty minutes during normal hours and ten minutes during rush hours.<sup>26</sup>

In regard to the budget, the Red River Sheriff published financial statements that ended on June 30, 2020. The report shows that the Sheriff's total net position increased \$123,487 or 0.45% over the prior year's net position to \$27,403,525.<sup>27</sup> The total expenses for the year were \$7,247,966, an increase of \$255,330 or 3.65% over 2019 expenses of \$6,992,636.<sup>28</sup> During the 2020 year, the Sheriff's governmental fund expenditures were \$462,853 less than the \$7.4 million generated in ad valorem taxes, sales tax, charges for services and operating grants for governmental programs.<sup>29</sup> The General Fund's increase in fund balance was \$462,853. The General Fund ended the year with a \$31 million fund balance.<sup>30</sup>

Specifically, the jail fund includes a beginning balance of \$69,893, according to the 2019 report.<sup>31</sup> However, after revenues and transfers in sales tax funds, the fund proposal includes total revenues of \$369,893.<sup>32</sup> The maintenance to the building costs about \$50,000 and feeding and housing the prisoners costs around \$70,000.<sup>33</sup> Also, the jail physician's salary comes to a total proposed salary of \$9,600 for the year.<sup>34</sup> The jail nursing salary comes to about \$12,000 and the jail supplies include about \$25,000.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, the total amount of expenditures comes to \$284,750, which leaves an ending balance of \$85,143.<sup>36</sup>

### **Public Records Request and Inmate Mortality Since 2014**

There have been zero deaths since 2014. However, in 2021, Red River Parish Jail had one death, which was as a result of an acute hypoxemic respiratory failure secondary to COVID-19 complicated by rhabdomyolysis and acute kidney failure. However, the deceased inmate did not pass away in the local jail but passed away at the Ochsner LSU Shreveport and had been a patient at that hospital for some time, according to the Red River Coroner's Office.

The one death reported from the Public Records Request included the death of an inmate who was a fifty-one-year-old black male, named Michael Lockett, who was in the midst of his pre-trial proceedings while in custody. He died September 21, 2021, and was admitted to the jail on

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<sup>25</sup> *Id.*

<sup>26</sup> *Id.*

<sup>27</sup> [https://app.lla.la.gov/PublicReports.nsf/0/764353B8CFD7E0D186258670007B2FDC/\\$FILE/00022884.pdf](https://app.lla.la.gov/PublicReports.nsf/0/764353B8CFD7E0D186258670007B2FDC/$FILE/00022884.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> *Id.*

<sup>29</sup> *Id.*

<sup>30</sup> *Id.*

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.incarcerationtransparency.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Red-River-Parish-Budget-2019.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> *Id.*

<sup>33</sup> *Id.*

<sup>34</sup> *Id.*

<sup>35</sup> *Id.*

<sup>36</sup> *Id.*

May 18, 2021. The complications of an acute hypoxemic respiratory failure and COVID-19 by rhabdomyolysis and acute kidney failure resulted in his death at Ochsner LSU Shreveport.

### **Jail Leadership**

The current sheriff for Red River Parish is Glen Edwards, who took office in 2012 and is on his third term. Sheriff Edwards has over 40 years of experience. Sheriff Edwards's term ends in 2023, but he plans to run again.<sup>37</sup> Additionally, Sheriff Edwards attended Northeast Louisiana University and graduated in 1988 with his major in Business Administration Management and a minor in Marketing.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, he went on to attend Northwestern University Center for Public Safety.<sup>39</sup> Sheriff Edwards was awarded the Bossier Parish Community College Criminal Justice Institute Award from the Regional Training Academy at the School of Public Staff and Command in Evanston, Illinois in 2003.<sup>40</sup> There are 75 regular deputy sheriffs and 7 part-time deputy sheriffs.<sup>41</sup> Finally, the current Warden for Red River Parish Jail is Captain Joey Wiggins.<sup>42</sup>

### **Jail News Coverage and Transparency**

The news coverage of Red River Parish Jail consists of breaking news stories from the Red River Parish Journal, which covers news, sports, and information.<sup>43</sup> The Journal consistently writes articles about charges brought on arrested persons in Red River Parish. These stories range from domestic abuse charges, desecration of graves, homicides, child abuse, theft, attempted home invasion, to burglary. There have not been any stories about a jailbreak or similar stories. However, the main news stories about Red River Parish are for the Ware Youth Center, which had a story written about it by the New York Times, which include sexual assault of the youth and negligent care.

Additionally, the news coverage for the jail does not have any critiques about the jail, but instead has news stories on the arrested people and the crimes committed. If there is a breaking story, then that story will get its own article, like a man who is jailed in the Red River Jail for damaging graves.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, the Red River Parish Sheriff's Office has its own Facebook where it posts news, safety tips, educational courses, and local announcements.<sup>45</sup> The Facebook

<sup>37</sup> [https://www.ktbs.com/news/meet-the-sheriff---glen-edwards-red-river-parish/article\\_cf8425c8-0a15-11ed-9a4f-0fdd8866e037.html](https://www.ktbs.com/news/meet-the-sheriff---glen-edwards-red-river-parish/article_cf8425c8-0a15-11ed-9a4f-0fdd8866e037.html)

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.lsa.org/red-river-parish>

<sup>39</sup> *Id.*

<sup>40</sup> *Id.*

<sup>41</sup> *Id.*

<sup>42</sup> *Id.*

<sup>43</sup> <https://redriverparishjournal.com/?s=jail>

<sup>44</sup> [https://www.ktbs.com/news/red-river-parish-man-jailed-for-damaging-graves/article\\_311b7bfa-b5fd-11ec-8bd6-37c41c32579c.html](https://www.ktbs.com/news/red-river-parish-man-jailed-for-damaging-graves/article_311b7bfa-b5fd-11ec-8bd6-37c41c32579c.html)

<sup>45</sup> [https://www.facebook.com/people/Red-River-Parish-Sheriffs-Office/100064728546761/?hc\\_ref=ARSTWEI9OPAr\\_68znlfmBwgLN78QJAXQZ4\\_XCOyCV5eH-dTJdPfwDZiVJ0IKwhGy\\_EY&fref=nf&\\_xts\\_\\_\[0\]=68.ARBZRkhpqL2Ao4naa31ihVc3qyWNubxaBICRPM6BF5nyRMtsRaLLbO2gQWtWXP2X8vIXOtFaA7X1ILujWvJJGU5FgvyFCXLCOhEaEG2oL-JA0btnjppB3npE7-4Yegls3hXu1B3wbQR3OMnFAM9kMQF86fsArzAmS-](https://www.facebook.com/people/Red-River-Parish-Sheriffs-Office/100064728546761/?hc_ref=ARSTWEI9OPAr_68znlfmBwgLN78QJAXQZ4_XCOyCV5eH-dTJdPfwDZiVJ0IKwhGy_EY&fref=nf&_xts__[0]=68.ARBZRkhpqL2Ao4naa31ihVc3qyWNubxaBICRPM6BF5nyRMtsRaLLbO2gQWtWXP2X8vIXOtFaA7X1ILujWvJJGU5FgvyFCXLCOhEaEG2oL-JA0btnjppB3npE7-4Yegls3hXu1B3wbQR3OMnFAM9kMQF86fsArzAmS-)

page is able to inform citizens quickly using a social media platform. The page has about 7,000 followers.<sup>46</sup> The Facebook page also includes posts about lost people, property, and crimes committed nearby other citizens to create a transparency of the jail and sheriff's office to the community.<sup>47</sup>

Furthermore, according to Docketbird, there are four civil cases which involve Red River Parish Jail. However, none of these cases deal with complaints on the jail conditions in the past five years. There have only been four civil cases dealing with a writ of habeas corpus and most of the applications were dismissed. Since 2003, there have only been four cases against Red River Parish Jail and no cases which were filed for conditions at the jail.

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<sup>46</sup> *Id.*

<sup>47</sup> *Id.*