

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CHAMPAIGN COUNTY JAIL

1980 The 55,000 square foot Downtown Jail is built at 204 E. Main St. in Urbana. Initial capacity is 75 people. In 1984, capacity increases to 131.

1996 The 57,000 square foot Satellite Jail is built at 502 S. Lierman Ave. Capacity: 182 people.

2011-2012 Sheriff Department wants an increase in jail capacity. County board hires consultant (ILPP) at \$145,000 to make recommendations to improve the criminal justice system.

2012-2013 Community group, No More Jails (now BPNJ) launches campaign to oppose jail construction and promote alternatives to incarceration. They mobilize allies, conduct door-to-door surveys, hold public forums, regularly attend board meetings, and more.

June 2013 The Champaign County Community Justice Task Force final report to the board makes 10 recommendations to decrease incarceration rates and address serious needs in the county such as behavioral health, pretrial, reentry, and more.

Sept. 2013 The ILPP report concludes that some physical changes to the jail be made and outlines recommended changes in policing, jails, courts and judiciary be done to decrease incarceration rates (nearly all recommendations have been ignored).

Nov. 2013 In response to the reports from ILPP and CJTF, as well as public pressure, the county board refuses to allocate any funding for jail construction in their 2014 budget. Instead they allocate funding for reentry, pretrial services and the public defender's office. The chief judge and state's attorney refuse to implement pre-trial services and return the funds allocated for that purpose to the county board.

2014 The County Board hires jail consultants (Kimme et al) for \$150,000 to assess the jails and provide plans for new designs, special units, and consolidation of law enforcement offices.

2015 The hired jail consultants present the County Board with a \$32 million plan to construct a 55,900 square foot addition on the satellite jail, new Sheriff's offices, and additional renovations. Build Programs Not Jails actively opposed this plan for several reasons. The board decided to shelve the plan for lack of funds.

Dec. 1, 2015 Toya Frazier, a 45 year old Black woman dies in solitary confinement. Surveillance video showed that she was unresponsive for 90 minutes until guards attempted CPR. Ms. Frazier was in the jail for non-violent offenses. Her family is currently pursuing a wrongful death settlement with the county.

2015-2016 The county's Facilities Committee begins a review of all county facilities including deferred maintenance and ADA requirements which includes the downtown jail.

Feb. 2016 The newly established Racial Justice Task Force holds first meeting with the charge to address racial disparity in the jail population and criminal justice system. The RJTF was won by pressure put on the county by Build Programs Not Jails, Black Lives Matter C-U, North End Breakfast Club, NAACP, and other community groups.

Mar. 27, 2016 Paul Clifton, a 59 year old Black man from Urbana collapses in jail from an asthma attack and died at Carle hospital shortly afterwards. He was arrested on a warrant for driving on a suspended license. He died the next morning.

June 10, 2016 Veronica Horstead, a 48 year old Black woman from Champaign dies in her cell from apparent "natural causes". She was booked in the jail on a non-violent offense.

July 2016 New County Administrator, Rick Snider, proposes a \$.25 "public facilities" sales tax to fund the demolition of the downtown jail, a 40,000 square foot addition to the satellite jail, and modifications of the sheriff's offices at an estimated cost upwards of \$18 million.

Aug. 2016 The Champaign County Nursing Home Board agrees to drop their initial proposal for a property tax referendum to cover deferred maintenance and needed improvements to instead be folded into the "public facilities" sales tax proposal.

Aug. 18, 2016 The County Board approves placing a referendum on the November 8th ballot for a .25% sales tax for "public facilities" purposes, with expectation of \$50 million over 12 years. The use of the proceeds will be open to future county boards but the current proposal designates 36% for the jails. Overall, more than 60% is designated for law enforcement facilities.

Nov. 8, 2016 Build Programs Not Jails, with widespread community support, successful defeat the sales tax referendum and unveil their vision for a more just community.

For more detailed information and links to the reports mentioned,
please visit our website at:

PROGRAMSNOTJAILS.WORDPRESS.COM