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Szakos Aims to Decrease Inmate Population

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The Albemarle-Charlottesville Regional Jail Board has a new chair. Kristin Szakos has taken on the new role and with it comes a renewed effort to decrease the number of people who spend time behind bars before space becomes a problem.

The population inside the jail continues to grow; there are 524 inmates right now with a rated capacity of only 329. In a few years the jail will reach its capacity, causing major problems. There are two ways to address potential overcrowding issues: one is adding onto the current jail and the other is reducing the number of people in it.



Szakos takes over with the goal of reducing the population of the Albemarle-Charlottesville Regional Jail.

Szakos would rather reduce the population than build. She says the key challenge is to make sure there is a support network in place for people once they leave the jail.

"We're also looking, as a second chance city, at being a leader of trying to find employment opportunities, create employment opportunities for people," said Szakos. "People with jobs are less likely to get in trouble."

Szakos says adding onto the jail will cost millions of dollars and that is why she is focusing on planning now by trying to put programs into place. She also says early intervention with children and teens is also extremely important.

On the Charlottesville side, Szakos says city hall is always open to giving people a second chance when it comes to employment.

Reported by Henry Graff

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