

Letter to the Editor: Restoring administration building security

by Philip W. Chapman
February 27 2017 8:16 AM



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The purpose of this letter is to respond to the recent issue of alleged break-ins at the County Administration Building. The investigation of alleged break-ins failed so far to show conclusively that any break ins occurred. As a County Board Member concerned

for people's welfare and safety, I asked a number of questions of staff which revealed the following facts. First, Madison County does not have a policy and standard operating procedure for the distribution of master keys. Secondly, given the past practices for distributing keys, (no official list was kept) there is currently no fool proof list of who has keys. In fact, it is alleged by one staff member that a previous Director of Facilities handed out 'master keys' as a professional courtesy. In my opinion, this, if true, would be a serious security breach. Thirdly, the master key system has not been updated or changed since the construction of the Administration Building in 1992.

Given the discovery of an apparent lack of security procedures practiced under the previous County Board Chairman an overhaul seems needed. I laud the current Facilities Director Rob Schmidt efforts to solve previous errors to include; (1) determining all who may currently have master keys, and, (2) in consultation with professional security experts constructing a new master system for the securing and distribution of keys. I believe the safety of staff in all departments and securing of the State's Attorney Office remains paramount. A complete re-keying for the master lock system according to professional industry standards seems long overdue.

Philip W. Chapman

Madison County Board District Three

12 Frey Boys lane

Highland, Illinois 62249

pchapman010113@gmail.com

618-402-6998

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