

In approximately 8 months, ground could be broken in Sparta on a new courthouse and 180 bed jail. That after Monroe County Supervisors approved all 5 facets of a new facility late Wednesday night. Circuit Judge David Rice, who's courtroom is in the basement of the current facility, says taxpayers can look forward to not sending inmates out of county....at a cost of \$8 million over the past 10 years.

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Although the price tag of a new facility was knocked down from \$28 million to \$20 million, with an additional \$5 million from the general fund, it was approved by a 21-3 vote. As for where to build, supervisors went along with county residents who recently voted on location referendum. 58% of voters said the downtown Sparta location, where the current facility sits, is where the new facility should go. That issue passed 17-7. It will take approximately 20 months to open the doors to a new courthouse and jail.