

Minutes of the Monthly
Meeting of the
Lancaster County Prison Board
April 18, 2019

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Joshua Parsons at 9:15 a.m. in the Public Meeting Room at the Lancaster County Administrative Office Building.

Members Present: Commissioner Joshua Parsons, Commissioner Craig Lehman, Commissioner Dennis Stuckey, President Judge Dennis Reinaker (left at 9:55 a.m.), Assistant District Attorney Christine Wilson, Lieutenant Deputy Sheriff Michael Armer, and Controller Brian Hurter.

Others Present: Cheryl Steberger, William Aberts, Joseph Shiffer, Ashley Garcia, Cody Scheid, Tammy Moyer, Charlie Douts, Harry Klinger, Tom Zeager, Helen Zeager, Karaliz Ortiz, John Crawley, Parker Beatty, Toni Warfel, Erica Carvajal, Ben Lefever, Charles Stevens, Eric Kennel, Kelly Rhoads, Neil Ward, Todd Haskins, Lindsey Ober, Debbie Stanback, Kent Kroehler, Todd Brown, Julie Holtry, Carter Walker, and Diana Rivera.

District Attorney Craig Stedman and Sheriff Christopher Leppler were unable to attend the meeting.

Commissioner Parsons stated that the Prison Board met in executive session on Thursday, April 18, 2019 at 8:45 a.m. to discuss labor negotiations, litigation, and personnel matters related to the discipline, suspension, and termination of employees.

Commissioner Stuckey moved to approve the minutes of the March 21, 2019 Prison Board Meeting. Controller Hurter seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Cheryl Steberger, Warden; William Aberts, Major/Security Operations; Joseph Shiffer, Deputy Warden for Inmate Services; Tammy Moyer, Director of Administration; and Charlie Douts, Director of Facilities Management; gave reports on their areas of responsibility. All of these reports, including operations and statistical information, are posted on the County's website.

Cheryl Steberger, Warden, reported that currently the Prison has zero grievances with the union members.

Warden Steberger reported that the population as of this morning is 798. She reported that the average population was 853 in March 2018 and 800 in March 2019.

Warden Steberger reported that on March 28, 2019 during the 4pm-12am shift, an inmate collapsed in one of the housing units and became unresponsive. She stated that lifesaving operations were initiated by both the security and medical staff. The inmate was transported to Lancaster General Hospital where the Coroner declared the inmate deceased shortly after his arrival. Warden Steberger reported that the Lancaster City Police are still conducting a full investigation into the death of the inmate.

Warden Steberger reported that Deputy Warden Wolfe was unable to attend the meeting as he is at the Prison with the vendor for the body scanner. She stated that Deputy Warden Wolfe is working with the vendor to make sure the body scanner is put in the proper place and is up and running. She stated that staff training on the body scanner will begin on April 29, 2019 and the policy is being reviewed by the Solicitor's Office.

Joseph Shiffer, Deputy Warden for Inmate Services, reported that on April 10, 2019 there was an all-day training on Motivational Interviewing for the staff by Marilyn Stein, MGS Consulting.

Deputy Warden Shiffer introduced the new Bilingual Specialist, Karaliz Ortiz-Torres, and Work Release Specialist, Joe Roschel.

Deputy Warden Shiffer thanked Tom Zeager, Justice & Mercy, for the Easter chocolate crosses provided for Chocolate Cross Day at the Prison.

Deputy Warden Shiffer provided an update to the reentry services program at the Prison. He stated that last week they met with their reentry services providers and discussed pre-release services that includes job search, case management, and plan development. He stated that a follow up meeting is scheduled to choose a post-release service provider towards the end of May.

William Aberts, Major/Security Operations, reported the Officers of the Month for March: First Shift, Officer Samantha Lewis; Second Shift, Officer Jonathan Crawley; Third Shift, Bradley Guildner. Officers Samantha Lewis and Bradley Guildner were unable to attend the meeting.

Major Aberts invited Officer Parker Beatty to the podium to announce his promotion to Sergeant. Major Aberts and Warden Steberger pinned him with his chevrons. Sergeant Beatty received a round of applause from those in attendance. Sergeant Beatty gave a short speech and thanked the Warden and staff for the opportunity.

Major Aberts gave an update on the control panel project. He stated that three staff will be going to Texas to receive training on the new control panels and in turn will train staff at the Prison. Major Aberts stated that the vendor is currently onsite beginning prep and wiring work.

Major Aberts reported that the Prison staff conducted an extensive prison-wide spring cleaning and are continuing inspections, as well as policy and procedure meetings.

Tammy Moyer, Director of Administration, reported that the Policy and Procedure Committee has completed 21 policies so far this year.

Charlie Douts, Director of Facilities Management, reported that CGL has filled the supervisor position and is currently interviewing for a vacant maintenance position. Mr. Douts reported that the new kitchen equipment was installed on April 12, 2019. He stated that the outdoor mulching and maintenance has been completed. Mr. Douts stated that Facilities is providing help as needed for the installation of the body scanner.

Mr. Douts reported that the upgrades to the first elevator are 75% complete and the second elevator completion is expected in July.

Julie Holtry, Behavioral Health & Developmental Services (BH/DS), provided an update on the Transition to Community (TTC) Program. She reported that there has been one additional inmate released to the TTC program since the last Prison Board meeting. She stated that a total of 11 individuals have been released to the TTC program since January 1, 2019.

Ms. Holtry reported that the Behavioral Health Hospital will start admitting inmates from Lancaster County Prison on May 8, 2019. She stated that when the Prison sends the necessary information to the hospital, they will have a response in one hour as to whether or not they will be able to accept the inmate.

Commissioner Parsons reported that the next PrisonStat meeting is scheduled for April 22, 2019 at 1:30 p.m. in the Public Meeting Room at the Lancaster County Administrative Office Building.

In new business, Tammy Moyer requested approval on revisions to the Inmate General Welfare Fund policy and the Store Account policy, which had no revisions. She stated it was approved to use the funds from the Inmate General Welfare Fund for inmate medical expenses when needed and it has been added to the policy under Section III, Approve Expenditures, L. She stated that discussion needs to be held regarding what to do with the cap balance. Ms. Moyer stated that the draft policy increases the Inmate General Welfare Fund cap balance to \$500,000, so any monies over that amount will then be put into the General Fund at the end of the year. She stated that the policy could increase the cap to \$500,000 or some other amount, be kept the way it was in last year's policy which was \$250,000, or eliminated altogether. Following discussion, members of the Board thought it was appropriate to increase the cap balance in the policy to \$500,000.

Tom Zeager commented on the Commissary Account. He stated that he thinks it is wrong to overcharge inmates for commissary items and suggested to stop making money from the poor.

Commissioner Lehman noted that cost of a local inmate telephone call was recently reduced by 19% as part of the new inmate telephone system contract.

Commissioner Parsons commented that there is a cost to the County taxpayers to have people incarcerated and if the inmates want extras beyond meals every day and necessities there are some costs to that just like when they are not in prison. He stated that if Mr. Zeager has proposals about specific prices that he thinks are unfair or improper, he may address them with the Warden.

Kent Kroehler, Have A Heart, commented that charging the inmates is a form of punishment. He stated that we send people to prison as punishment and not to be punished. He stated that this is saving taxpayers a segment of money by extracting it from the inmates who are poor.

Following discussion regarding the Store Account policy, Commissioner Stuckey moved to approve. Commissioner Lehman seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Following a question and answer discussion from those in attendance regarding the Inmate General Welfare Fund policy, Commissioner Lehman moved to approve. Commissioner Stuckey seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

In business from guests, Tom Zeager, asked for an update on building a new prison. Commissioner Lehman commented that the next step to building a new jail is to identify a location and he is hopeful that it will happen in the not so distant future. Commissioner Parsons stated that paying down the County's debt has been his focus so that there is potential capacity at some point in the future to do major capital projects. Commissioner Lehman commented that he would argue that the County is in the strongest financial position since he has been on the Board. He stated that when the debt service begins to decline in 2021 there is going to be a historic opportunity that is going to free up existing resources that will allow the Board to begin to have a serious conversation about building a new jail. Commissioner Lehman stated that his concern is that if they don't use that opportunity it will be more difficult to discuss building a new jail because those resources will probably be used for other things. He stated that he thinks the year 2020 or 2021 is the year that they will have to get serious about it.

Neil Ward, Have A Heart, commented that he would like to see more initiative on planning a new prison. He also commented that he thinks it is a great decision to have the re-entry services in-house for the families and community. Mr. Ward thanked the Prison staff and the Commissioners for getting a body scanner in the facility.

Commissioner Lehman commented on the inmate population and building a new jail. He stated that the County should and has managed the inmate population efficiently before building a new jail because we don't want to build a facility any larger than necessary. He stated that because the County has been able to reduce the inmate population to the lowest level in 20 years, we now have the ability to have a serious conversation about building a new jail that is appropriately sized, operationally efficient, and done in a fiscally responsible and fiscally conservative way.

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Commissioner Stuckey commented on zero grievances. He stated that they commended the Prison administration but also wanted to thank the Correctional Officers for their work on having no grievances.

Commissioner Stuckey moved to adjourn at 10:18 a.m. Commissioner Lehman seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

The next regular meeting of the Lancaster County Prison Board will be May 16, 2019, at 9:15 a.m. in the Public Meeting Room at the Lancaster County Administrative Office Building.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian K. Hurter
Secretary