

Minutes of the Monthly  
Meeting of the  
Lancaster County Prison Board  
August 15, 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 Dennis Stuckey, Commissioner Craig Lehman, Assistant District Attorney Christine Wilson, and Controller Brian Hurter.

Others Present: Cheryl Steberger, Robert Wolfe, Joseph Shiffer, Cody Scheid, Tammy Moyer, Charlie Douts, Tom Zeager, Larry George, Charlette Stout, Christina Fluegel, Matthew Wagner, Terri Miller-Landon, Gretchen Medrow, Kim Wolfe, Stacie Dixon, Toni Warfel, Kent Kroehler, Eric Cawajal, Neil Ward, Gretchen Gaudio, Linda Kegerreis, Lindsey Ober, Kelly Rhoades, Kelly Ehrich, Miguel Flores, Gail Scott, Carter Walker, and Diana Rivera.

President Judge Dennis Reinaker, 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, August 15, 2019 at 8:45 a.m. to discuss labor negotiations, litigation, and personnel matters related to the discipline, suspension, and termination of employees. Specifically under litigation, the Board discussed the Gatewood, Lausell, Stickily, and Vasquez cases.

Commissioner Stuckey moved to approve the minutes of the June 20, 2019 Prison Board Meeting. Controller Hurter seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Cheryl Steberger, Warden; Robert Wolfe, Deputy Warden for 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 they received the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) audit that was conducted in June. She stated that the Prison is in compliance with the PREA standards for jails and prisons.

Warden Steberger reported that the population as of this morning is 783. She reported that the average population at the Prison in June 2018 was 936 and was 783 in June 2019. She also reported the average population in July 2018 was 866 and July 2019 was 760. Warden Steberger reported that a housing unit that opened in 1991 that can hold up to 92 inmates was closed due to the population being so low.

Warden Steberger introduced the new Administrative Assistant, Kim Wolfe, to those in attendance. She stated that Ms. Wolfe has worked at the Prison for 18 years and looks forward to continuing working with her in her new role.

Robert Wolfe, Deputy Warden for Operations, reported on staff training on the body scanner: three staff trained as administrators, nine staff trained as trainers, and a total of 58 staff trained to use the body scanner. He reported Sergeant Coleman is certified as range instructor, four staff attended an active shooter seminar, two staff attended the Department of Corrections (DOC) conflict course, and three staff were certified as instructors for suicide prevention.

Joseph Shiffer, Deputy Warden for Inmate Services, reported that a Stepping Up Technical Assistance audit was held at the Prison. He stated that they received some suggestions to look at additional assessments at intake including mental health and drug and alcohol assessments.

Deputy Warden Shiffer thanked Toni Warfel for coordinating the shutdown of 2-1 housing unit. He stated that Ms. Warfel organized the majority of the transfers out of 2-1 into various other housing areas.

Deputy Warden Shiffer introduced the new Drug & Alcohol Specialist, Gretchen Medrow, to those in attendance.

Deputy Warden Shiffer provided an update on vivitrol shots. He stated that the expanded vivitrol grant was approved and final approval was received at the end of July. He stated through that process they continue to provide vivitrol shots to inmates. Any new inmate that signs up for the program will now receive two shots. Deputy Warden Shiffer stated that the goal is to continue to decrease recidivism by giving inmates two shots of vivitrol along with counseling and therapy while in Prison.

Deputy Warden Shiffer reported pre-release classes will start on September 3, 2019.

Deputy Warden Shiffer reported that they are going to convert the professional visitation area at the Prison to classrooms for re-entry or mental health initiatives.

Deputy Warden Shiffer invited Matthew Wagner to provide an update on the reentry services program at the Prison. Mr. Wagner reported that they continue to work on the post-release portion of the reentry program. He stated that Solicitor Christine Hausner has been assisting them with completing a draft version of the contract, which is out to the provider for review.

Tammy Moyer, Director of Administration, reported that the 2020 budget has been submitted to Budget Services and they will be preparing for budget hearings next month.

Ms. Moyer reported that the Policy and Procedure Committee will be changing their meetings to once a month as there are only a few policies pending. She stated that 95 policies have been created or revised in the last three and a half years.

Ms. Moyer reported that on July 19, 2019 the Prison broke their population record. She stated there were 735 inmates which is a 20-year low.

Ms. Moyer reported that the bi-annual reports of the Inmate Welfare and Commissary Accounts, prepared by the Controller's Office, are posted online.

Ms. Moyer reported that the e-messaging system went into effect on July 31, 2019. She stated that since July 31<sup>st</sup> there have been 246 incoming messages and 82 outgoing messages. She stated that the mail clerk reviews all the messages just like paper letters. Ms. Moyer stated that a benefit of the system is that certain words are flagged. She stated that through the e-messaging system they were able to intervene when an inmate's family member threatened suicide. She stated that the message included the word "gun" which the system flagged. Ms. Moyer stated that they were able to contact city police and have them do a wellness check on the family member.

Ms. Moyer reported that they are awaiting final reports for the financial, work release, and records department audits done by the Controller's Office. Controller Hurter stated that once the audits are complete, they will be posted online.

Charlie Douts, Director of Facilities Management, reported that CGL has one vacant plumbing position and they are currently interviewing candidates.

Mr. Douts reported that they are catching up with maintenance on the cells and the backlog has been significantly reduced.

Mr. Douts reported that the first elevator refurbishment is complete, and work on the second elevator should be completed in mid-September. He reported that Major Aberts is working with the vendor on the final plans for the control room upgrades.

Mr. Douts reported that a list of Prison capital projects has been submitted with the 2020 budget to be reviewed and considered for funding for next year.

Larry George, Commissioner's Office, on behalf of Julie Holtry, Behavioral Health & Developmental Services (BH/DS), provided an update on the Suicide Prevention Committee. He reported that the Committee, which was initiated four and a half years ago in the wake of several completed suicides at the Prison, served as a problem-solving "think tank" from which several reforms and programs were established.

He stated that the Committee reconvened on July 29, 2019 for a review of the Committees' objectives and whether the need for such a forum still exists. Mr. George stated that despite all of the positive changes which have combined to reduce the

incidence of Prison suicides, it is imperative to never become complacent with regards to prevention efforts. Of the various forensic initiatives considered, the Committee's primary concern was regarding the monthly cross-systems review process, Team Mental Illness Substance Abuse (MISA), which has not realized its optimal functioning due to inconsistent participation from the District Attorney's Office. The Committee concluded that the establishment of improved cross-systems' communication and the different forums that now prompt daily interagency collaboration, diminish the need for a mechanism as formal as the Suicide Prevention Committee. Moving forward, the Committee will only reconvene should the need arise.

Commissioner Parsons reported that the last PrisonStat meeting was held on July 16, 2019 at 1:30 p.m. in the Public Meeting Room at the Lancaster County Administrative Office Building.

In business from guests, Miguel Flores, stated that he thinks that room and board is too high regarding work release inmates. He stated that if an inmate is starting from scratch it would be hard to save money off 30% of his/her paycheck. Mr. Flores stated that he thinks \$50 a week should be more than enough for fines and costs. He suggested reducing fines and costs, room and board, and holding some of that money until the inmate is released to help that person get back on their feet. Mr. Flores stated from his own experience it is difficult for an inmate to get back into the community and start over.

Commissioner Parsons commented that he appreciates the constructive feedback and requested Matthew Wagner to meet with Mr. Flores and go over that feedback to help inmates who are being released from the Prison.

Commissioner Lehman commented that the work release program had some infrastructure needs several years ago and to fully address those infrastructure needs it would have cost a significant amount of money; some money was put into work release at that time but that work did not address the full need. Commissioner Lehman stated that if these folks are not a public safety risk, then why are we having work release the way that we do. He stated that he thinks the only people who need to be in jail are those that are a public safety risk or a flight risk. Commissioner Lehman stated that those who don't fall into those categories could be dealt with in a less impactful setting, whether that be electronic monitoring, house arrest, or some other cost-effective means.

Kent Kroehler, Have A Heart, thanked Warden Steberger and Deputy Warden Shiffer for their cooperation with Have A Heart on doing tours at the Prison. He stated that there have been five tours during the Spring and Summer.

Mr. Kroehler commented regarding Miguel Flores' comment. He stated that he urges the County Commissioners to look at "Ban the Box" on job applications as it is a detriment to getting a job.

Mr. Kroehler stated that he asked the Commissioners at the last Prison Board meeting held in June to have some discussion on what is holding them back from discussing building a new prison in August.

Commissioner Lehman commented that the first step is identifying a location for a new jail. However, if land acquisition is necessary, which he believes that it is, that information should not be disclosed to the public until there is a land acquisition agreement in place. To do otherwise could negatively impact the County's ability to acquire land and potentially increase the cost to taxpayers.

Mr. Kroehler asked what impact the Prison's population and staffing has on the Prison's budget over the last four to five years. He stated that inmates are costing more per day and the population is lower, yet the budget continues to rise. Commissioner Parsons stated that he believes there are overall savings when dealing with less people. He stated that the reason the Prison budget keeps rising is because they have not reduced staff at the Prison, but the ramification of that is, the Prison is safer. Commissioner Parsons stated instead of one correctional officer on the block with 90 inmates there are two or more. He stated that they are doing things in a safer and better way resulting in less litigation and less suicides. He stated that the secondary effects throughout the system are where we are saving money, but we will not see that in the Prison budget because costs go up every year for the union contract and we have not reduced personnel.

Tammy Moyer commented that there is more staff training regarding the Prison budget. In addition, the Prison has purchased more equipment that they never had.

Linda Kegerreis, Justice & Mercy, commented on Miguel Flores' comment. She stated that she recently visited an inmate who had difficulty obtaining employment, so he went back to selling drugs and is in jail again. She suggested the Prison help inmates find employment before they are released, so that they don't get cycled back into the system.

Commissioner Stuckey moved to adjourn at 10:24 a.m. Commissioner Lehman seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

The next regular meeting of the Lancaster County Prison Board will be September 19, 2019, at 9:15 a.m. at the Lancaster County Prison.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian K. Hurter

Secretary