

Minutes of the Monthly  
Meeting of the  
Lancaster County Prison Board  
September 15, 2016

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

Members Present: Commissioner Joshua Parsons, Commissioner Craig Lehman, President Judge Dennis Reinaker, Controller Brian Hurter, and Assistant District Attorney Mark Fetterman.

Others Present: Cheryl Steberger, Alex Croci, Joe Shiffer, Arla Brown, Ashley Garcia, Charlie Douts, Sue Lao, Christina Hausner, Sandy Heisey, Scott Meinzer, Robert Wolfe, Chris Pratt, Bob Still, Stacie Dixon, Jonelle Renno, Tricia Nabors, Cathy Rychalsky, A Smith, Reina Kismo, Kim Reichenbach, Larry George, Kelly Ehrich, Jonathan Fox, Trish Link, and Kathy Kunkel.

Commissioner Dennis Stuckey, District Attorney Craig Stedman, and Sheriff Mark Reese were unable to attend the meeting.

Commissioner Parsons stated that the Prison Board met in executive session on Thursday, September 15, 2016, at 8:30 a.m. to discuss labor negotiations, litigation, potential litigation, and personnel matters related to the discipline, suspension, and termination of employees. Specifically under litigation, the Board discussed the Abrante, Kanney, Peters, Christner, and Keiffer cases.

Judge Reinaker moved to approve the minutes of the August 18, 2016 Board Meeting. Controller Hurter seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Cheryl Steberger, Warden; Joseph Shiffer, Deputy Warden for Inmate Services; Tammy Moyer, Director Administrative Services; Major Robert Wolfe, Security Operations; 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.

Warden Steberger reported on a new project to extend block out time for the inmates. She stated that she has delegated Deputy Warden Croci to meet with key staff for planning. Three meetings have been held to-date. She sees this as a way to improve the overall environment and inmate morale. Warden Steberger noted that block out time is in addition to "chow time."

Warden Steberger reported that the Prison population today is 871 which is below the population count of 881 on August 12, 2016, reported at the August board meeting. She noted that the population reached a low of 859.

Warden Steberger thanked President Judge Reinaker as head of the Prison Reduction Committee as the key reason for the reduction in inmates. Warden Steberger also thanked the Records Department. She noted that when the population is reduced, there is less stress on staff and inmates.

Commissioner Parsons stated that this is an achievement in consideration that the population in March 2016 was 1,018 inmates and several years ago the Prison had its highest population at 1,308 inmates. He noted that they still have to maintain public safety and strike the right balance between inmate population and public safety. Commissioner Parsons stated that approximately 70% of the inmate population is awaiting court action and they are being moved through the system faster. He said that the new individual docket system scheduled to start in January 2017 should also help move cases through faster.

Warden Steberger reported that in addition to gym equipment in the 2-1 housing area and work release, inmate services installed gym equipment in the third floor gym. She noted that this serves as an open gym for staff to use after hours. She noted that the use of the gyms and equipment has been well received by the inmate population and staff.

Joe Shiffer, Deputy Warden for Inmate Services, reported that a New Beginnings class began September 12, 2016.

Deputy Warden Shiffer reported on the new Door to Door Prison Project. He is working jointly with the Rase Project and the Drug & Alcohol Commission to assist those inmates who are sentenced to inpatient treatment upon release. The Rase Project is a community recovery organization providing advocacy services for those in or seeking recovery from the disease of addiction. The Rase staff will be onsite to help coordinate each inmate's transfer to inpatient services. He expects the program to start in the next two weeks.

Deputy Warden Shiffer reported on the new high school equivalency testing program, HiSET, which was discussed at the August Prison Board meeting. This program was piloted at the Prison in place of the standard GED exam. Deputy Warden Shiffer noted that 7 inmates took the test and 6 passed to earn their high school equivalency diploma.

Deputy Warden Shiffer wished to thank Mark Rockafellow, interim gym director, for taking hold of his position and working hard to get the gym equipment and to get the gym program up and running.

Tammy Moyer, Director of Administrative Services, reported that there is currently one

part time publication clerk vacancy in the business office.

Ms. Moyer reported that the Controller's staff has completed the 2015 report on the receipts and expenses of the Commissary Store Account and the Inmate General Welfare Fund (IGWF). She noted that the Controller issued a report at last month's meeting from the annual examination of the financial records for 2014.

Controller Hurter stated that his staff issued a report of findings and observations that resulted from the annual examination of the financial records at the Prison for January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015. The audit tested the Commissary Store Account, Inmate Welfare Fund (IGWF), and the Capital Projects Account. In addition to the accounts that were tested, the Controller's Office also audited inmate records and the file maintenance process. He noted five findings: 1 - Unapproved Inmate General Welfare Fund expenditures according to Policy; 2 - Excess Monies Transferred for Capital Projects that went unused; 3 - A Double Accounting error on County's Financial Management Software; 4 - Unable to locate previously released Inmate folder at Prison; 5 - Numerous occasions when Inmate record information was inconstant between data sources. Controller Hurter stated that the report includes 9 recommendations to help correct the findings that were noted. He noted that findings 1 and 2 were also noted in the 2014 audit report which was dated August 5, 2016 and presented at the August 18, 2016 Prison Board Meeting. He plans to post both the 2014 and 2015 audit reports on the Controller's website and to continue the audits on an annual basis.

Major Robert Wolfe, Security Operations, gave the training report for the month of August. He stated that in addition to basic and other training, shift line-up and briefing trainings were held to review policies and procedures. During the month of August there were a total of 2,412 hours of training provided for staff in the following areas: New Correctional Officer Basic Classroom and On the Job Training, Orientation Training for Non-Security Staff, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Training, Fire Emergency Response Team (FERT) Training, K-9 Unit Training, and outside group trainings.

Major Wolfe reported the Officers of the Month for August: Second Shift Officer, Thomas Anderson, and Third Shift Officer, Officer Kristopher Musselman. He and Warden Steberger congratulated Correctional Officer Musselman who was in attendance. He received a round of applause from those in attendance.

Charlie Douts, Director of Facilities Management, reported on several projects:

- Personnel
  - Five vacant full-time maintenance positions.

- Personnel (continued)
  - Two facilities non-prison employees report twice a week to assist with tool inventory and maintenance
  - Two facilities non-prison employees are providing on-call after hours response.
  - Maintenance Supervisor submitted notice of retirement October 28.
  - Working with the Chief Clerk on a staffing plan, including outsourcing to supplement workforce.
  
- Maintenance Items
  - Staff members are working overtime to address maintenance issues.
  - Continue to work on tool inventory and reduce accumulation of non-essential replacement parts/equipment stored on site, new tool storage area completed.
  - Co-Stars maintenance employee through the Heim Company assisting with preventative maintenance.
  - Preparing for Title 37 survey.
  - Boiler heat exchanger repaired completed, awaiting word on warranty.
  
- Projects
  - General Fund 2016 Maintenance Projects
    - \$50,000 - Interior corridor door replacement, Purchase Order issued, doors being manufactured.
    - \$15,000 - Law Library cage, reviewing proposal.
    - \$20,000 - Magnetic access doors, Prison determining scope.
    - Third phase of bunk replacement complete.
    - Attending monthly Prison Facility Task Force prioritization meetings.

Mr. Douts reported that he continues to work with the Chief Clerk, Purchasing Director, and the County's HR Director to supplement the County's maintenance workforce. They are looking at some outside sources that could be brought in to work with the facility staff.

Mr. Douts reported that over the years there have been issues with three sliding doors in the corridors. They have been problematic and it has been difficult to find parts. He noted that a contractor is currently working on the doors and the job should be completed by the end of the day.

Mr. Douts noted that the Prison Facility Task Force is waiting to get some numbers and bring back options on long term capital needs at the Prison for next month's meeting.

Commissioner Parsons invited Larry George, Director of Behavioral Health/ Developmental Services to give a report on the Suicide Prevention Task Force. Mr. George reported on the PrimeCare Initiative. He noted that PrimeCare has extended their hours of operation of Behavioral Health Staff from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Due to the number of intakes occurring during this time span it is believed the physical presence/availability of PrimeCare staff will be of assistance. PrimeCare will soon begin offering therapeutic groups for inmates.

Mr. George reported that he, Warden Steberger, and Deputy Warden Croci were part of a delegation that visited Lehigh County Prison last week for the purpose of reviewing their practices and protocols. Among the “takeaways” of the visit was attempting to replicate Lehigh’s multi-systemic team approach in identifying inmates with mental health issues and ‘tracking’ them, ensuring appropriate treatment during incarceration and sufficient referral to reentry programming upon release. The team currently consists of staff from Adult Probation and Parole, BH/DS, Prime Care, and the Prison.

Mr. George reported that the Lancaster County Commissioners are seeking bids for the “Transition to Community” program. He stated that the new initiative was prompted in part by the recent settlement of a lawsuit filed by the ACLU of Pennsylvania which sought relief for mentally ill inmates who were languishing in state prisons and county jails for months and even years, waiting to be transferred to state-run psychiatric facilities. Mr. George noted that is a state-funded program that would allow the Lancaster County Prison to transition mentally ill inmates into temporary housing and treatment in a group home setting. He noted that the RFP responses are expected back by October 13, 2016.

Finally, Mr. George provided a follow-up to last month’s report on the partnership between Lancaster General Health (LGH) and Universal Health Services to construct a 126 bed, free standing mental health facility. He noted that the County is asking LGH to accept inmates who require inpatient treatment. Mr. George reiterated that this is compatible with LGH’s insistence that the facility will reflect the identified needs of the community. He stated that they are continuing discussions with LGH.

Commissioner Parsons reported on the new initiative called PrisonStat which calls for regular public meetings where the Prison’s performance is evaluated based on various factors. The next meeting is scheduled for September 22, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. in the Public Meeting Room at the Lancaster County Administrative Office Building.

Trish Link from the IU13, on behalf of Melanie Snyder, Executive Director of the Lancaster County Re-entry Management Organization (RMO), gave a statistical report, success rates, and RMO Re-entry Services/Program results for fiscal year

2015-16. She noted that for those individuals attending the RMO intensive program, the “obtained temporary housing” rate is 18%.

Ms. Link reviewed the monthly Re-entry Report, including statistics, success rates, and RMO Re-entry Services/Program results for August 2016. She reported that 8 re-entry clients were placed in employment at an average rate of \$12.67 per hour. She noted that all 8 placements were in fulltime positions.

Ms. Link referenced Deputy Warden Shiffer’s report on the new high school equivalency testing program HiSET. She noted that 7 inmates took the test and 6 passed to earn their high school equivalency diploma. Ms. Link said they will working with the one student who did not pass to insure that he will succeed on the next test. She distributed a flyer explaining the eligibility criteria and equivalency options to obtain a high school diploma.

Trish Nabors, Director of New Choices, provided an update on the New Beginnings program at the Prison. Ms. Nabors noted that the program began its third year on July 1, 2016. She reported that in the past year, they served 45 students with six sets of two classes. Ms. Nabors introduced a new staff member, Jonelle Renno. She said that they are hoping to increase the number of classes from every other month to monthly.

Ms. Nabors stated that in addition to participants securing employment, the program includes keeping appointments, staying on medications, and improving overall mental health.

Ms. Nabors reported that she had met Sandy Asher, playwright and author, and they discussed the New Beginnings program. Ms. Asher attended some classes and listened to the women share their life experiences. She then worked with them to compile their stories. Ms. Nabors was pleased to announce that Ms. Asher wrote a play about their life stories to be performed on October 4, 2016 at the Ware Center.

Jonathan Fox, Have a Heart, thanked Deputy Warden Shiffer for his assistance to put on the Prison’s fourth concert. The concert is scheduled for September 22, 2016.

Mr. Fox asked if the grievance process within the Prison was up to standards. Warden Steberger said that the inmate grievance policy has been revised and has been fully developed over the past several years.

Commissioner Lehman moved to adjourn at 10:12 a.m. Controller Hurter seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

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The next regular meeting of the Lancaster County Prison Board will be October 20, 2016, at 9:15 a.m. in the Public Meeting Room at the Lancaster County Administrative Office Building.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian K. Hurter  
Secretary