

Minutes of the Monthly  
Meeting of the  
Lancaster County Prison Board  
June 18, 2020

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Joshua Parsons at 9:15 a.m. in Rooms 102/104 at the Lancaster County Administrative Office Building.

Members Present: Commissioner Joshua Parsons, Commissioner Craig Lehman, President Judge David Ashworth, First Assistant District Attorney Todd Brown, Chief Deputy Christopher Riggs, and Controller Brian Hurter.

Not Present: Commissioner Ray D'Agostino, District Attorney Heather Adams, and Sheriff Christopher Leppler.

Others Present: Cheryl Steberger, Joseph Shiffer, William Aberts, Toni Warfel, Cody Scheid, Arla Brown, Larry George, Kathleen Morrison, Todd Haskins, Jonathan Crawley, Thomas Jenkins, Jonathan Fox, Kent Kroehler, Carter Walker, Ryan Washington Jr., and Diana Rivera.

Controller Hurter moved to approve the minutes of the May 21, 2020 Prison Board Meeting. Commissioner Lehman seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Cheryl Steberger, Warden; Joseph Shiffer, Deputy Warden for Inmate Services; William Aberts, Major/Security Operations; and Cody Scheid on behalf of Tammy Moyer, Director of Administration; 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 the population today at the facility is 617. She stated the average population for May 2019 was 805 and 698 in May 2020.

Warden Steberger reported that there are nine staff members who tested positive, which is the same number as last month. She stated a total of 86 staff have been tested. She stated that there are 21 inmates who tested positive, which is an additional four inmates since the last meeting. Warden Steberger reported that they have conducted 257 COVID-19 tests on the inmates and 238 antibody tests. She stated that the four inmates who tested positive will come off isolation status on June 21, 2020. Warden Steberger reported that they continue to follow the social distancing guidelines. She stated that all visitors, inmates, and staff are required to wear a mask at all times. Temperatures are taken at all entrances and hand washing is recommended to the inmates. She noted that soap is being provided to the inmates. Warden Steberger reported that any inmates transferring from other facilities are being tested when entering the Prison. She stated that there was a mass movement of the inmates, with the help of the treatment staff, to create a larger isolation area for the male inmates for

when the Courts reopen. Warden Steberger reported that there are four inmates in the female isolation unit and nine inmates in the male isolation unit.

Warden Steberger reported that she will be meeting with her team to discuss resuming programs and other functions, including visitation. She stated that she is working with Bob Devonshire in Facilities to place barriers at the front desk for when visitors come in. She stated that they will have a signature pad in place instead of having pens passed around and there will no longer be visitation cards. Warden Steberger reported that an extra hour will be added to the visitation program for the inmates. She stated that outside attorney visits will resume and block out time is back to where it originally was, where the entire tier is out, instead of a quarter or half tier. Warden Steberger reported that there have been 1,737 video conferences.

Warden Steberger stated that they are still doing the work that they were doing before the COVID-19 pandemic. She stated that suicide prevention is still a priority at the facility. She stated that they have seen an uptick in inmates with mental health issues coming into the facility and the need for them to be involved in programs and treatment. Warden Steberger stated that she is thankful for the collaboration with the county departments and her staff. She stated that her staff is working extra hours and continue to work through childcare issues and concerns for their family.

Joseph Shiffer, Deputy Warden for Inmate Services, reported that they are working on reinstating treatment groups and services that were suspended due to COVID-19. He stated that they are determining their processes and procedures on how they are going to manage groups moving forward such as size, location, and furniture to allow for social distancing. Deputy Warden Shiffer reported that the Inmate Services Specialists increased their time on the housing units to get to know the inmates and provide support. He stated that they have provided support to hundreds of inmates by communicating with their attorneys, completing door to door evaluations, and assisting in recovery services in the community. Deputy Warden Shiffer reported that Mental Illness and Substance Abuse (MISA) meetings have continued during the past three months. He stated that his team has done a tremendous job during the pandemic.

Deputy Warden Shiffer introduced Jordan Wise, Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Caseworker, and Darby Fife, Reentry Caseworker, to those in attendance.

Matthew Wagner, Reentry Program Manager, reported that they continue to provide services to the inmates even though the reentry program has stopped internally during the pandemic. He stated that they are still working to find housing for the inmates and getting them approved for scholarships to cover their first month's rent. Mr. Wagner reported that they continue to reach out to the graduates of the program to provide support they need to continue their recovery. He stated that they continue to work with the community partners to establish those relationships so they have more options for people as they are released back into the community. Mr. Wagner introduced Carrie

Kurtz, Reentry Coordinator, Community Action Partnership of Lancaster County (CAP), who will be assisting with the recovery and reentry services in the community. Jonathan Fox asked when the Reentry Coalition will resume meetings. Mr. Wagner stated that they will have a Zoom meeting on July 1, 2020.

Deputy Warden Shiffer reported that they have purchased desks for the classrooms that will allow for social distancing. He stated that he hopes things start to come together in July so they can start reentry groups. He stated that their reentry program started in September 2019 and ran through March 2020 when COVID-19 ceased all programming. Deputy Warden Shiffer reported that they served 49 inmates. He stated that they have a 9.4% recidivism rate at 90 days. Deputy Warden Shiffer stated that the low recidivism rate may have something to do with COVID-19; however, a tremendous part of that number has to do with the work that his team has been doing with following up with the inmates.

William Aberts, Major/Security Operations, reported the officers of the month for May: First Shift, Officer Carmine Tufano; Second Shift, Officer Jonathan Crawley; Third Shift, Officer Alyssa Kuhn. Officer Crawley gave a short speech and thanked the Warden and the supervisors for the opportunity. Officer Tufano and Officer Kuhn were unable to attend the meeting.

Major Aberts invited Sergeant Thomas Jenkins to the podium to announce his promotion to Captain. Major Aberts and Warden Steberger pinned him with his chevrons. Captain Thomas Jenkins received a round of applause from those in attendance.

Major Aberts reported staffing complement, allotment: 228, current: 203. He reported a new class between 9 and 12 officers will begin on July 6, 2020.

Major Aberts reported that the camera project is to be completed very soon. He stated that the administration and supervisors received training on the new camera system on June 17, 2020.

Major Aberts reported that the control panel project is expected to begin again by the end of June.

Major Aberts reported that the roof projects are expected to begin the end of June or early July.

Cody Scheid on behalf of Tammy Moyer, Director of Administration, reported that Stacy Groncki will start in the reception position on June 22, 2020.

Mr. Scheid requested that the annual review and approval of the Policies B-4 & B-5 (Inmate Welfare and Store Policy) be added to the August agenda. He stated that there are no changes in the current policies, and they are included in the statistics for review. In addition, Have A Heart has asked that age, race, and sentencing information be added to their statistics. He stated that all of that information will be on the report starting this month.

Mr. Scheid reported that they have just completed a review of their Use of Force policy to ensure that it is appropriate and aligned with Department of Correction standards. In addition, their investigator will be looking at all incidents. Mr. Scheid reported that they have formed a review panel to evaluate every use of force rising above handcuffs or OC spray. He stated that incidents where the emergency restraint chair, taser, ASP, or firearms are used will be reviewed by the panel for appropriateness and justification of force. Mr. Scheid stated that the goal is to determine if any improvements can be made to ensure the safety of staff and inmates and the operation of the Prison. The panel consists of the Warden, Deputy, Major, Captain, Director, and four Security Sergeants that are certified instructors in Use of Force.

Mr. Scheid reported that the tablet project for the inmates to be used similarly to the kiosk system that is already in place will resume at the end of June.

Commissioner Parsons read an email from Jon Singer, Have A Heart; "Some months ago I started a meeting with Tammy Moyer to prepare a report on the commissary fund for Have A Heart. I recently completed the report and could not have done it without the professionalism Tammy exhibited in assisting me. Her dedication to my inquiries, which were many, on a timely and a formative basis were outstanding. If she did not have an answer on hand, she took the initiative to find information despite having many other responsibilities to attend to. Kudos to Tammy." Commissioner Parsons stated that Mr. Singer was unable to attend the meeting today but wanted Tammy to be recognized.

Commissioner Parsons thanked the staff at the Prison and PrimeCare for keeping the focus on suicide prevention during this time despite everything going on.

Commissioner Parsons stated that we need to get back to PrisonStat at some point and when a meeting is scheduled, it will be advertised to the public.

Commissioner Parsons also thanked Have A Heart, Justice and Mercy, and other partners in the community for their partnership with the Prison and engaging in constructive ways at the meetings.

In business from guests, Kent Kroehler, Have A Heart, asked the Warden if there were any internal issues at the Prison when the protests were outside of the facility. Warden Steberger stated that there were two occasions where protesters came out to the

facility. She stated that the protests were peaceful; however, she did not appreciate them lying on the ground at the front door preventing people from leaving the building. She stated because of the large crowd of people yelling up to the inmates, the inmates started yelling back which continued after the protests. Warden Steberger stated that the noise infuriated the neighbors and frustrated the staff because they could not calm the units down. She stated that about 46 inmates in the maximum-security unit became unruly. She stated that they were throwing items outside of the cells and at staff members. Warden Steberger stated that they had to remove belongings from the cells that could be used as weapons. She stated that they rewarded inmates who did not react that way with additional block out and/or food. She thanked the inmates who did behave appropriately and the ones who did not cooperate were in lock down for four days. Warden Steberger stated that at no time was water shut off for an extended period of time. The water was shut off during the CERT activation which lasted about three and a half hours.

Mr. Kroehler asked what the normal protocols are for people who are not in the reentry program who are released. Deputy Warden Shiffer stated that inmates who are not in the reentry program may be required to have an address or treatment services plan. He stated that Matthew Wagner provides those individuals with a packet of information with resources in the community.

Mr. Kroehler asked if they had released any inmates who tested positive for COVID-19. Deputy Warden Shiffer stated that they have released inmates who tested positive for COVID-19 or who were on quarantine. He stated that they attempt to get an address for the inmate and provide them with medical information. Mr. Kroehler asked if people are being released who do not have an address. Deputy Warden Shiffer stated that there are occasions where people are released with no known address. He stated that they try to do the best they can, but it does happen where people are released without an address.

Mr. Kroehler asked if there are any people at the Prison now who were arrested protesters. Deputy Warden Shiffer stated that there was one individual who was bailed out quickly. First Assistant District Attorney Todd Brown stated that he believes there is one individual incarcerated due to the protests and being on a parole violation.

Jonathan Fox, Have A Heart, asked what funding the Prison is receiving through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Warden Steberger stated that they are not receiving any funding currently and they are waiting for a response to the wish list they provided to the Commissioners. She stated that laptops were approved by the Commissioners through the CARES Act.

Mr. Fox asked if the Prison is receiving contact tracing through Lancaster Penn Medicine. Commissioner Parsons stated that the medical aspects for the Prison are still

being handled through the County's medical provider. He stated that the testing being done at the Prison is done by PrimeCare. Mr. Fox asked for more involvement at the meetings from Todd Haskins, PrimeCare. Warden Steberger stated that PrimeCare is very involved with the Prison on a daily basis and she could not have asked for a better vendor during this time.

Mr. Fox asked what after action programming review was conducted as a result of the violation of excessive use of force incident that happened in 2018. Warden Steberger stated that she is confident in what her team is doing. She stated that they have no tolerance for that kind of behavior at the facility. She stated that she cannot prevent those incidents from occurring, but she is confident that they will not.

Mr. Kroehler asked President Judge Ashworth what criteria was used for the people who were pre-released during COVID-19. President Judge Ashworth stated that they started with the Prison identifying people who they thought were appropriate for release and made a determination with their defense counsel and the District Attorney's Office. He stated that they have tried hard to keep the Prison population as low as possible recognizing that there are some circumstances requiring incarceration. President Judge Ashworth stated that their goal was to find other ways of addressing people rather than incarcerating them. Mr. Kroehler commented that he was surprised at the low number of bails. President Judge Ashworth stated that during the initial crisis when things were almost completely shut down, they had a procedure set up so that if any attorney wanted to file a bail petition they could do so, and it was directed to him to address. He stated that bail petitions, non-custodial petitions, and walk-in petitions are addressed daily and sometimes on an hourly basis.

Mr. Kroehler asked Commissioner Parsons for an update on the decision making on the new Prison. Commissioner Parsons stated that COVID-19 has stopped every project they were working on, but they are interested in continuing to move forward with looking at the possibility of a site.

Commissioner Lehman moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:11 a.m. Controller Hurter seconded. The motion carried unanimously. The next meeting is August 20, 2020 at 9:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian K. Hurter  
Secretary