

# PRISON BOARD MINUTES

December 8, 2021

**Board Members Present:**

Thomas C. Chernisky, President Commissioner  
William J. Smith, Commissioner  
Scott W. Hunt, Commissioner  
Edward Cernic, Jr., Controller  
Don Robertson, Acting Sheriff

**Others Present:**

William Patterson, First Deputy Warden  
Craig Descavish, Second Deputy Warden  
George Rozum, Security Captain  
William Valko, Court Administrator

Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Smith called the Meeting to order at 10:30 a.m., in the Jury Room of the Cambria County Courthouse, Ebensburg, Pennsylvania.

Motion was made by Acting Sheriff Robertson to approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on November 10, 2021.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hunt and passed unanimously.

**Public Comment:**

None.

**Presentation and Approval of Invoices:**

Controller Cernic presented the following bills and Invoice Status Report for approval:

**Prison bills paid after the Meeting held November 10, 2021:**

Retirement Fund	\$26,623.78
Retirement Fund	\$29,581.29
UPMC Health Plan	\$94,387.52
UPMC Dental	\$124.66
Symetra Life Insurance	\$450.84
CamTran	\$463.16
Ebensburg Borough	\$32,758.80
FNB (Visa)	\$1,056.82
FNB (Visa)	\$390.00
FNB (Visa)	\$237.00
Ricoh	\$559.77
Wells Fargo	\$150.20
Debra Farrell	\$39.20
Rebecca Fox	\$34.34
Kimberly Peles	\$26.88
Erin Turek	\$24.00
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania	\$45.00
Peoples	\$778.03
Ray Oil & Gas	\$822.28
Total:	\$188,553.57

**Invoice Status Report:**

<b>December 3, 2021, 92 Invoices Totaling</b>	<b>\$216,284.75</b>
<b>Canteen Fund bills paid after November, 2021, Meeting</b>	<b>\$15,557.34</b>
<b>Canteen Fund Bills to be Paid</b>	<b>\$42,457.44</b>

**Motion was made by Controller Cernic to approve the bills and the Invoice Status Report.**

**Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hunt and passed unanimously.**

**Warden's Report:**

**First Deputy Warden Patterson requested an Executive Session.**

**Motion was made by Commissioner Hunt to convene an Executive Session at 10:34 a.m.**

**Motion was seconded by Acting Sheriff Robertson and passed unanimously.**

**Motion was made by Commissioner Chernisky to reconvene the Public Meeting at 10:40 a.m.**

**Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hunt and passed unanimously.**

**Personnel:**

- 1. Jennifer Shero, remove Full-Time Correctional Officer I from payroll, effective November 24, 2021.**
- 2. Taylor Frederick, remove Full-Time Correctional Officer I from payroll, effective December 7, 2021.**

**First Deputy Warden Patterson reported:**

- 1. Over the last month, the Prison has experienced another wave of Covid-19 at the Facility. To date, there have been four hundred and eighty-three (483) positive Covid-19 cases at the Prison; one hundred and one (101) staff, eight (8) PrimeCare employees, and three hundred and seventy-four (374) inmates. This reflects an increase of eight (8) staff members and fifty-eight (58) inmates since last month's meeting. Currently, there are two (2) positive staff and thirty (30) positive inmate cases. There are six (6) housing units currently under Covid-19 protocol. All screening, testing, cleaning, social distancing, and quarantine practices remain in effect.**
- 2. Due to the age of the Prison's underground fuel tank for the generator, combined with new regulations, the tank requires some upgrades. Maintenance Supervisor Hoffman is currently working with the inspectors and Tara Keilman from the Commissioners' Office to get those updates completed.**
- 3. Last month, the Prison Roof Restoration Project was awarded to R.H. Marcon, Inc., through Omni Partners, for a cost of \$1,820,535.00, which includes a thirty (30) year warranty. The roof is original to the Facility, (installed in 1996), and is in desperate need of repairs. Conducting a restoration, in lieu of a complete removal and reinstallation, is a savings of approximately \$3 million to \$4 million. This project is slated to begin in the spring.**
- 4. The HVAC system in the add-on unit, (Housing Unit HF), that was built in 2007 is in need of replacement. This project was awarded to Marc Services at a cost of \$300,220.00. The new HVAC system will be installed at ground level outside the structure, instead of in the unit's ceiling like the**

current system, and will be a natural gas system instead of oil. This project will begin when the equipment arrives.

5. One of the water heaters that was installed during the TEN project in 2018 has failed. The three (3) year warranty began on the unit “built date” and expired in March of this year. However, the final install approvals from the Department of Labor and Industry were not received until December of 2018. Maintenance Technician Brian Risko worked diligently with Mervac, the installer, and A.O. Smith, the manufacturer, in an attempt to have the warranty extended through the December approval date. Mr. Risko was successful in his attempts, and A.O. Smith will replace the unit. If the company would not have agreed to do this, the replacement cost would have been approximately \$18,000.00, with installation estimated at \$3,000.00.

6. Once again, the Prison was able to make a major cost-saving purchase through the State Surplus. Since the early days of Covid-19, the Facility has been purchasing cloth masks for the inmates that are produced by the Department of Corrections at a cost of \$1.99 per mask. The State Surplus had two (2) pallets of masks on hand during a recent visit. The Prison purchased a total of sixteen thousand (16,000) cloth masks for a total cost of \$400.00, for a savings of \$31,440.00.

7. This month, in addition to the regular daily institutional searches, Prison staff conducted full-scale shakedowns of two (2) of the housing units. Overall, the amount of contraband found was minimal. However, during one of the shakedowns, a shank was found. Video surveillance was reviewed, and the inmate who tried to dispose of the shank during the search was pinpointed. This information was forwarded to Detective Fye for prosecution purposes.

8. During November, the Prison administrative team, along with the supervisor in charge of Prison communications, met with Art Martynuska, Director of Emergency Management Services, to review the Prison’s radio needs for the upcoming 911 change over to digital. It has been determined that the Prison will require ten (10) digital mobile radios, thirty (30) digital handheld radios, and one (1) crossover repeater so that the new digital radios are able to communicate with our old in-house radio system. By purchasing a limited number of digital radios along with the crossover repeater, instead of purchasing all new digital radios, the Facility is looking at an estimated savings of \$130,000.00.

9. On November 15, 2021, the Prison received notification from the National Commission on Correctional Healthcare that an audit has been completed of the Facility in regard to compliance with Standards for Health Services in Jails. The Prison was found to be in full compliance. The accreditation renewal will remain in effect until the next audit, which is scheduled for May of 2024.

10. The Prison Board’s annual Christmas party will be held on Saturday, December 11, 2021, at the Ebensburg Country Club. Cocktails will start at 6:00 p.m. with dinner and a DJ starting at 7:00 p.m.

**Statistical Report:**

Report is attached.

**November, 2021**

Average Daily Population for November, 2021	394
Housing Revenue for November, 2021	\$233,450.00

Year to Date Revenue as of November, 2021

\$1,678,460.00

**Food Service Report:**

During the month of October, the Prison worked with the inmate labor crew on temperature control with hot and cold foods. They also reviewed the proper ways to thaw frozen foods, minimum internal cooking temperatures, and holding hot and cold foods.

Director Callihan continues to work with the Nutrition Group on making possible changes to the menu to help with food costs as well as looking for new vendors to replace U.S. Foods.

During the month of November, there was no inmate labor crew training due to Covid-19 and quarantining protocols. Menus were changed to simplify meals.

**Medical Report:**

None.

**Training:**

None.

**Misconduct Report:**

There was no information to report.

**Miscellaneous:**

There was no information to report.

Motion was made by Controller Cernic to accept the Warden's Report.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Chernisky and passed unanimously.

**Communications:**

None.

**Old Business:**

None.

**New Business:**

None.

**Adjournment:**

Motion was made by Commissioner Chernisky to adjourn the meeting.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hunt and passed unanimously.

---

Michael Gelles, IV, Chief Clerk