

# PRISON BOARD MINUTES

May 13, 2020

**Board Members Present:**

Thomas C. Chernisky, President Commissioner  
William J. Smith, Commissioner  
Scott W. Hunt, Commissioner  
Gregory J. Neugebauer, District Attorney  
Edward Cernic, Jr., Controller  
Don Robertson, Chief Deputy Sheriff

**Others Present:**

William Valko, Court Administrator  
Chris Smith, Warden  
William Patterson, First Deputy Warden  
Craig Descavish, Second Deputy Warden

Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Motion was made by Commissioner Chernisky to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on April 8, 2020.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Smith and passed unanimously.

**Public Comment:**

None.

A moment of silence was held in recognition of Sheriff Kolar's passing.

Controller Cernic made a motion to appoint Commissioner Smith President of the Prison Board.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Chernisky and passed unanimously.

**Presentation and Approval of Invoices:**

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

**Prison bills paid after the Meeting held April 8, 2020:**

Retirement Fund	\$22,131.63
Retirement Fund	\$24,870.13
Retirement Fund	\$21,152.46
UPMC Health Plan	\$96,221.78
UPMC Dental	\$113.82
UPMC Dental	\$102.98
Symetra Life Insurance	\$476.06
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GC Pivotal	\$65.81
Phoenix Rehab	\$490.00
Pro Disposal	\$495.00
Ricoh	\$209.00
Penelec	\$19,036.83
Direct Energy	\$91.00
Ricoh	\$467.15

Ray Oil & Gas	\$786.39
People's	\$1,186.99
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$190,276.07</b>

**Invoice Status Report:**

<b>May 9, 2020, 81 Invoices Totaling</b>	<b>\$190,943.08</b>
<b>Canteen Fund bills paid after April 2020 Meeting</b>	<b>\$55,108.90</b>
<b>Canteen Fund Bills to be Paid</b>	<b>\$9,164.10</b>

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

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hunt and passed unanimously.

**Warden's Report:**

The Warden requested an Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter.

Motion was made by Commissioner Chernisky to convene an Executive Session at 10:35 a.m.

Motion was seconded by District Attorney Neugebauer and passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Commissioner Hunt to reconvene the public meeting at 10:43 a.m.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Chernisky and passed unanimously.

**Personnel:**

- 1. Brian Litzinger, remove Full-Time Lieutenant, effective May 7, 2020.**
- 2. Joshua McNulty, remove Per-Diem Correctional Officer, effective May 8, 2020.**
- 3. Hikeen Frost, remove Per-Diem Correctional Officer, effective May 8, 2020.**
- 4. Matthew Conti, remove Full-Time Correctional Officer I, effective May 4, 2020.**

**Operations:**

**Warden Smith reported:**

- 1. As the Warden mentioned at the last Board Meeting, the Prison recently celebrated National Corrections Employee Week. The winners of this year's annual awards were: Supervisor of the Year – Lieutenant Mark Anderson; Correctional Officer of the Year – Officer Lee Erickson; and Employee of the Year – Counselor Dave Thomas. All three (3) of these individuals do a great job, and the awards were well deserved. The Warden thanked the Board Members who stopped at the Facility during the week.**
- 2. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to plague prisons across the country, dealing with this issue continues to be a daily occurrence. The Prison continues to be very aggressive with mitigation and prevention efforts to prevent any spread throughout the Facility. To date, there have been no positive cases within the Prison, and staff continues to implement**

all necessary and recommended precautions, including testing and isolating any ill or symptomatic prisoners. In addition, any employees showing signs of illness are also being refused entry into the Institution until cleared by a medical professional. Last week, in conjunction with Cambria County EMA and Hazmat, the Facility was “fogged,” or disinfected, including all inmate housing units, hallways, classrooms, staff areas, lobby, etc. According to Cambria County EMA, the disinfectant holds up for about three (3) to four (4) weeks. The Prison is currently working with EMA to purchase its own fogger so it is able to continue this process monthly, using Prison staff so as not to burden EMA officials.

3. This month, the Facility received donations of masks from two (2) community members, Ms. Theresa Fodor and Ms. Linda Capp. The Warden thanked them and recognized them for their donations.

4. With a lot of the normal operations at the Facility being paused due to Covid-19, the Prison has used this opportunity to both get ahead of schedule on and to expand staff training. Over the last several weeks, staff have been receiving training on the body scanner, firearms, firearm retention, social media, emergency procedures, key and tool control, and disciplinary unit procedures.

5. The annual review and revision of the Officer’s Post Order Manual was completed this past month. This Manual is a detailed explanation of the daily scheduled and non-scheduled duties and responsibilities of every officer post within the Facility. A hard copy of the revised Manual was distributed to all staff.

**Statistical Report:**

Report is attached.

**April, 2020**

Average Daily Population for April, 2020	328
Housing Revenue for April, 2020	\$114,380.00
Year to Date Revenue as of April, 2020	\$503,370.00

**Food Service Report:**

None.

**Medical Report:**

Report is attached.

**Training:**

1. From April 7, 2020, through April 8, 2020, Officer Devon Nagle received sixteen (16) hours of training in Max Control Operations.

2. From April 7, 2020, through April 9, 2020, Officer Kenneth Wertz received twenty-four (24) hours of training as a Floater Officer.

3. From April 13, 2020, through April 14, 2020, Officer Leanna Reese received sixteen (16) hours of training in Max Control Operations.

4. From April 15, 2020, through April 16, 2020, Officer Devon Nagle received sixteen (16) hours of training in Max Control Operations.

5. On April 14, 2020, Officer Kenneth Wertz received eight (8) hours of training in Mailroom Operations.
6. From April 15, 2020, through April 16, 2020, Officer Brandon Shaw received sixteen (16) hours of training in Floor Control Operations.
7. From April 20, 2020, through April 24, 2020, Officer Taylor Frederick received sixteen (16) hours training in Floor Control Operations and twenty-four (24) hours training in Central Control Operations.
8. On April 20, 2020, Officer Devon Nagle received eight (8) hours of training in Mailroom Operations.
9. On April 22, 2020, Officer Leanna Reese received eight (8) hours of training in Mailroom Operations.

Throughout the Month of April, fifty (50) correctional officers received the following training: Firearms Use & Recertification, eight (8) hours; Social Media Implications/Emergency Cell Door Operations/Disciplinary Housing Unit Operations/Key & Tool Control, eight (8) hours; and Body Scanner Recertification, eight (8) hours.

On April 10, 2020, thirteen (13) new Cambria County Prison Cadets graduated from the Prison's Basic Training Academy. These cadets will serve as the new Per-Diem Correctional Officer compliment.

**Misconduct Report:**

There was no information to report.

**Miscellaneous:**

District Attorney Neugebauer advised, with Court activity increasing, the Prison should expect an increase in average daily population.

Controller Cernic questioned PrimeCare's invoicing with the lower population. The Warden is to contact PrimeCare about renegotiating the contract. Controller Cernic asked that Prison staff review all expenses and collect revenue due from the inmates.

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

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hunt and passed unanimously.

**Communications:**

Commissioner Smith read a letter from Portage Area High School thanking the Prison for allowing the class to visit the Facility.

Commissioner Smith also stated that Senator Casey had a conference call today to discuss pending legislation to fund local governmental expenses related to COVID-19.

**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.**

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**Michael Gelles, IV, Chief Clerk**