

PRISON BOARD MINUTES

October 14, 2020

Board Members Present:

Thomas C. Chernisky, President Commissioner
William J. Smith, Commissioner
Scott W. Hunt, Commissioner
Kristine Segear, First Deputy to the Controller
Don Robertson, Acting Sheriff

Others Present:

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

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.

Motion was made by Acting Sheriff Robertson to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on September 9, 2020.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hunt and passed unanimously.

Public Comment:

None.

Presentation and Approval of Invoices:

Kristine Segear presented the following bills and Invoice Status Report for approval:

Prison bills paid after the Meeting held September 9, 2020:

Retirement Fund	\$21,127.44
Retirement Fund	\$23,611.58
Retirement Fund	\$23,268.65
UPMC Health Plan	\$91,685.94
UPMC Dental	\$108.40
UPMC Dental	\$108.40
Symetra Life Insurance	\$445.68
Symetra Life Insurance	\$445.68
CamTran	\$187.20
Ebensburg Borough	\$34,057.55
Phoenix Rehab	\$450.00
Pro Disposal	\$495.00
FNB Visa	\$947.01
Penelec	\$17,780.33
Ricoh	\$760.45
Leanna Reese	\$89.70
Direct Energy	\$556.86
Peoples	\$848.59
Pro Disposal	\$495.00
Total:	\$217,469.46

Invoice Status Report:

October 12, 2020, 123 Invoices Totaling	\$226,929.87
Canteen Fund bills paid after September 2020 Meeting	\$4,775.13
Canteen Fund Bills to be Paid	\$31,609.92

Motion was made by Commissioner Hunt to approve the bills and Invoice Status Report.

Motion was seconded by Acting Sheriff Robertson and passed unanimously.

Warden's Report:

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

Motion was made by Kristine Segear to convene an Executive Session at 10:32 a.m.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Chernisky and passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Kristine Segear to reconvene the Public Meeting at 11:07 a.m.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Chernisky and passed unanimously.

Kristine Segear made a motion recommending that the Commissioners approve a policy to mitigate staffing shortages at the Prison due to Covid-19.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Chernisky and passed unanimously.

Personnel:

- 1. Dave Port, transfer from Per-Diem Correctional Officer to Full-Time Correctional Officer I, effective October 25, 2020.**
- 2. Wallace Litzinger, transfer from Per-Diem Correctional Officer to Full-Time Correctional Officer I, effective October 25, 2020.**
- 3. Tahton Gorman, remove Per-Diem Correctional Officer, effective September 15, 2020.**
- 4. Alexia Nicholson, remove Full-Time Correctional Officer I, effective October 6, 2020.**
- 5. Rachael Hazenstab, remove Per-Diem Correctional Officer, effective September 27, 2020.**

Warden Smith reported:

- 1. With the Prison recently being hit by the pandemic, Covid-19 protocols have been in full effect. Currently, the number of employees testing positive is twenty-two (22), with eleven (11) of those being recovered. There are an additional six (6) employees off work pending test results. The number of inmates testing positive stands at sixty-two (62). Of those, forty-three (43) of them will hit their fourteen (14) day quarantine date today. Mass testing of the inmate population has been conducted weekly for the last three (3) weeks, with the latest round of tests being completed yesterday. Ninety-six (96) inmates were sent to SCI-Huntingdon on October 1, 2020, and October 2, 2020, to allow the Facility to close its**

two (2) dormitory style housing units. As of today, seventy-seven (77) inmates remain at SCI-Huntingdon. Daily sanitation, mitigation, and prevention measures continue to be the norm. N-95 respirators and face shields have been made mandatory for all Prison staff, and medical gowns are mandatory for those working in close contact to the inmates that have tested positive. Visitors remain suspended, and Judge Krumenacker's Order concerning court hearings remains in effect. No inmate work crews have been used since the end of September. Counselors, secretarial staff, support staff, and correctional officers have been moved out of their job classes and are completing the preparation of meals, doing the laundry, and cleaning the Facility. With the staffing shortages created by Covid-19, along with the additional posts needing filled, scheduling has become a challenge. However, the Officers' Union has been very willing to waive certain aspects of its contract in order to accommodate filling shifts. Everyone has stepped up to do whatever has been needed, and the Warden publicly acknowledged all of the staff for their efforts during this trying time.

2. Since the riot that occurred on October 2, 2020, an investigation has been ongoing. However, due to staffing shortages related to Covid-19, the investigation is taking longer than anticipated. Captain Rozum, the Security Captain and Lead Investigative Officer at the Facility, was required to postpone several days of investigative duties in order to cover shift supervisor responsibilities. To date, through interviewing those involved and reviewing video footage, Captain Rozum has been able to clear eleven (11) inmates who were housed in that unit but did not participate in the riot. Those inmates have since been removed from disciplinary status. The investigation will continue, and when concluded, all related information will be forwarded to the District Attorney's Office for criminal prosecution.

Statistical Report:

Report is attached.

September, 2020

Average Daily Population for September, 2020	360
Housing Revenue for September, 2020	\$152,390.00
Year to Date Revenue as of September, 2020	\$1,214,290.00

Food Service Report:

None.

Medical Report:

Report is attached.

Training:

None.

Misconduct Report:

There was no information to report.

Miscellaneous:

There was no information to report.

Motion was made by Commissioner Chernisky to accept the Warden's Report.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hunt and passed unanimously.

Communications:

None.

Old Business:

None.

New Business:

Kristine Segear brought up that quarterly meetings of the Board should be held at the Prison.

Adjournment:

Motion was made by Commissioner Hunt to adjourn the meeting.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Chernisky and passed unanimously.

Michael Gelles, IV, Chief Clerk