

# PRISON BOARD MINUTES

September 11, 2019

**Board Members Present:**

Robert Kolar, Sheriff  
Thomas C. Chernisky, President Commissioner  
William J. Smith, Commissioner  
Mark J. Wissinger, Commissioner  
Kelly Callihan, District Attorney  
Dana Descavish, Second Deputy to  
Edward Cernic, Jr., Controller

**Others Present:**

Michael Gelles, IV, Chief Clerk  
William Valko, Court Administrator  
Christian Smith, Warden  
William Patterson, Second Deputy to the Warden  
Craig Descavish, Second Deputy to the Warden

Pledge of Allegiance.

Sheriff Kolar called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m., in the Jury Room of the Cambria County Courthouse, Ebensburg.

Motion was made by Commissioner Smith to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on August 14, 2019.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Wissinger and passed unanimously.

Warden Smith requested an Executive Session.

Motion was made by Commissioner Smith to convene an Executive Session at 10:37 a.m.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Wissinger and passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Commissioner Smith to reconvene the public meeting at 10:48 a.m.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Wissinger and passed unanimously.

**Public Comment:**

None.

**Presentation and Approval of Invoices:**

Dana Descavish presented the following bills and Invoice Status Report for approval:

**Prison bills paid after the Meeting held August 14, 2019:**

Retirement Fund	\$21,666.03
Retirement Fund	\$21,136.74
UPMC Health Plan	\$94,663.66
GC Pivotal	\$71.31
Ricoh	\$264.00
Penelec	\$22,070.77

<b>Ricoh</b>	<b>\$468.87</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$160,341.38</b>

**Invoice Status Report:**

<b>September 9, 2019, 52 Invoices Totaling</b>	<b>\$193,002.24</b>
<b>Canteen Fund bills paid after August 2019, Meeting</b>	<b>\$23,171.42</b>
<b>Canteen Fund Bills to be Paid</b>	<b>\$12,000.15</b>

**Motion was made by Commissioner Wissinger to approve these bills and the Invoice Status Report.**

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

**Warden's Report:**

**Personnel:**

- 1. William Ray, remove Full-Time Correctional Officer I, effective September 14, 2019.**
- 2. Hire the following as Per-Diem Correctional Officers, effective September 16, 2019. (Employment is contingent on successful completion of the pre-employment screenings.)**

<b>Shayne Eckels</b>	<b>Taylor Frederick</b>	<b>Tahton Gorman</b>
<b>Christopher Heltzel</b>	<b>Coty Lichtenfels</b>	<b>Isaac Martin</b>
<b>Chanta McNeil</b>	<b>Caleb Mistric</b>	<b>Devon Nagle</b>
<b>Leanna Reese</b>	<b>Jamie Richardson</b>	<b>Brandon Shaw</b>
<b>Maxx Thomas</b>	<b>Erik Thrower</b>	<b>Ryan Wagner</b>

**Operations:**

**Warden Smith reported:**

- 1. Last month, the Warden mentioned that there were several meetings scheduled with vendors that provide secure solutions for inmate mail to prevent contraband from entering the Facility. The meetings went well, and one vendor, Text Behind, was highly endorsed by Centre County Prison as well as a York County Commissioner (who also attended the meeting). Text Behind is able to control contraband through mail being sent to an offsite, secure location instead of being sent into the Prison. It is then scanned and printed, and the printouts are sent into the Prison directly from the company. Text Behind also provides the capability for the public to write a letter to the inmate through its website. The company then prints that letter, and the printout is sent into the Prison directly from the company. Implementing this solution would eliminate any mail sent directly from the public into the institution to an inmate, thus eliminating any chance of contraband being sent through personal mail. Text Behind has submitted a proposal. However, the Warden has requested some revisions. Once a revised proposal is received, the Warden will submit it to the Commissioners' Office for review.**
- 2. The County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania District Attorney's Association have developed an upgrade to the statewide Victims' Notification Software that is used by the Prison to notify registered victims of crime. For approximately the past ten (10) years, all counties have used software provided by the vendor Appriss. CCAP had commissioned a software company to develop a software program to be used by Pennsylvania counties. Throughout the week of August 26, 2019, all Prison administration, supervisors, and counselors**

attended a webinar training on the new software. Transition and implementation of this new software is expected to take place within the next two (2) months.

3. Last month, Warden Smith informed the Board that PennDOT was scheduled to crack seal and tar and chip the Facility's parking lot and entrance road to the Prison. Due to the weather, the project had to be delayed. However, it was completed last week. PennDOT officials estimated that this project should provide ten (10) to twelve (12) years of life to the parking lot. Through an Agility Agreement with PennDOT, there was no cost to the County for this project. Due to the fresh tar and chip, the repainting of the lines will be completed in the spring and is estimated to cost between \$3,000.00 and \$5,000.00.

4. Since the vending machines were installed in the housing units at the beginning of the summer, the sales continue to be high. Throughout the month of August, there was an average of \$5,200.00 in sales per week, with a weekly commission of \$1,300.00. At those numbers, estimated new annual revenue to the Prison will be \$67,600.00.

5. Over the last month, the Prison has completed its annual review and revision of the Officer's Post Orders Manual. With the procedural changes and technological advancements added to the Prison over the last year, there were a lot of revisions. The Facility is currently in the process of printing copies, and all staff will be issued a copy within the next few days. A copy will also be provided to Bryan Beppler, Director of Human Resources. The Warden commended Lieutenant Kurt Wolford for the extended amount of time and effort he put into reformatting and retyping the entire manual.

6. On August 29, 2019, the Prison received notification from the Department of Corrections that, due to a budget deficit, the State will be suspending the contract with the County to house state parole violators. This suspension is among a number of cost-cutting measures the Department of Corrections is enacting. The Department will continue to house the current parole violator population at the Facility until their release through attrition upon program completion. It is anticipated that all parole violators will complete their programming within the next four (4) to five (5) weeks, at which time the contract will end. In an attempt to make up for the lost revenue that this contract provides, Warden Smith has reached out to ICE officials to offer additional housing for ICE detainees. Last Friday, two (2) ICE officials visited the Prison to see exactly how many detainees the Facility could accommodate and where the additional detainees would be housed. They were shown an eighty-four (84) bed housing unit and were informed that they could utilize the entire unit, including a multi-purpose room that could be converted into an office for onsite or visiting ICE officers. Both officials agreed that the housing area offered would be a benefit to them and assist in their operations. As of today, the Warden has not received any update regarding this opportunity.

7. The PREA audit (Prison Rape Elimination Act) was completed on August 11, 2019, and August 14, 2019, and the Facility recently received the audit report. Out of forty-five (45) standards, the Prison was in full compliance with thirty-nine (39) of them and exceeded compliance in the remaining six (6) standards. The Warden has included a synopsis of the report and standards in the Board's packets, and the full report has been placed on the Prison's website. Warden Smith commended Deputy Descavish, the Prison's PREA Coordinator, and Captain George Rozum, the Prison's PREA Investigator, for their efforts in maintaining full compliance with the PREA regulations.

**Statistical Report:**

Report is attached.

**August, 2019**

Average Daily Population for August, 2019	528
Housing Revenue for August, 2019	\$248,918.00
Year to Date Revenue as of July, 2019	\$2,116,546.00

**Food Service Report:**

During the month of August, the Prison discussed safety in the workplace and proper procedures if someone is choking, how to handle a cut or burn in the workplace, and how to handle a slip and fall.

**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 Wissinger to accept the Warden's Report.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Smith and passed unanimously.

**Communications:**

Sheriff Kolar received a letter from an inmate.

**Old Business:**

None.

**New Business:**

None.

**Adjournment:**

Motion was made by Commissioner Wissinger to adjourn the meeting.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Smith and passed unanimously.

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Michael Gelles, IV, Chief Clerk