

PRISON BOARD MINUTES

May 14, 2025

Board Members Present:

**Edward Cernic, Jr., Controller
Thomas C. Chernisky, Commissioner
Linda Rovder Fleming, President Judge
Scott W. Hunt, President Commissioner
Gregory J. Neugebauer, District Attorney
Keith Rager, Commissioner**

Others Present:

**Kurt Wolford, Warden
Megan Bursky, Assistant Deputy Warden
Donald Ochenrider, Major of Security and Investigations
Alex M. Ashcom, Chief Clerk**

Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Rager called the Meeting to order at 10:30 a.m., at the Cambria County Prison, Ebensburg, Pennsylvania.

Public Comment:

None.

Motion was made by District Attorney Neugebauer to approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on April 9, 2025.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Chernisky and passed unanimously.

An Executive Session was held on May 12, 2025.

The Warden requested an Executive Session.

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

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Chernisky and passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Controller Cernic to reconvene the Public Meeting at 10:55 a.m.

Motion was seconded by Judge Fleming 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 9, 2025:

Retirement Fund	\$31,224.40
Retirement Fund	\$34,911.09
UPMC Health Plan & Dental	\$47,289.54
UPMC Health Plan & Dental	\$46,005.24
Symetra Life Insurance	\$613.99
CamTran	\$855.27
Mainline Newspaper	\$498.03

Phoenix Workplace	\$45.00
Penelec	\$28,326.19
Phoenix Workplace	\$130.00
Wells Fargo	\$445.30
Ricoh	\$209.00
United Energy	\$1,292.04
Kyle Brawley	\$140.00
Jeff Callihan	\$900.00
Mainline Newspaper	\$295.34
Total:	\$193,180.43

Invoice Status Report:

May 9, 2025, 81 Invoices Totaling	\$586,670.38
Canteen Fund Bills Paid after April, 2025, Meeting	\$3,040.67
Canteen Fund Bills to be Paid	\$53,601.90

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

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Chernisky and passed unanimously.

Warden's Report:

Personnel:

Transfers:

- 1. Kurt Wolford, transferred from Captain of Security to Warden, effective April 12, 2025.**
- 2. Craig Descavish, removed as Interim Warden, effective April 12, 2025.**
- 3. George Rozum, transferred from Second Deputy Warden to Chief Deputy Warden, effective April 14, 2025.**
- 4. Megan Bursky, transferred from Corrections Counselor to Assistant Deputy Warden, effective April 14, 2025.**
- 5. Donald Ochenrider, transferred from Captain to Major of Security and Investigations, effective April 14, 2025.**
- 6. Brian Latoche, transferred from Booking Captain to Major of Booking and Admissions, effective April 14, 2025.**
- 7. Kolbe Brothers, transferred from Per-Diem Correctional Officer I to Full-Time Correctional Officer I, effective May 25, 2025.**

Retitles:

- 1. First Deputy Warden to Chief Deputy Warden of Operations, effective April 12, 2025.**
- 2. Second Deputy Warden to Assistant Deputy Warden of Finance and Facility Services, effective April 12, 2025.**
- 3. Captain of Security to Major of Security and Investigations, effective April 12, 2025.**

Removal/Resignation:

- 1. Derick Kurtz, removed as Full-Time Correctional Officer I, effective April 9, 2025.**

New Cadets (will be starting on May 12, 2025):

1. **Bradley Mahan, Per-Diem Correctional Officer.**
2. **Camden Stewart, Per-Diem Correctional Officer.**
3. **Austin Malenich, Per-Diem Correctional Officer.**
4. **Nicolas Pacconi, Per-Diem Correctional Officer.**
5. **Robert Harriman, Per-Diem Correctional Officer.**
6. **Ernest Miller, Per-Diem Correctional Officer.**
7. **Kaleb Popson, Per-Diem Correctional Officer.**
8. **Roy Mohr, Per-Diem Correctional Officer.**
9. **Jason Dunbar, Per-Diem Correctional Officer.**
10. **Tristan Albert, Per-Diem Correctional Officer.**

Counselor:

1. **Carmelo Furnari, hired as Correctional Counselor to replace open position left by Assistant Deputy Warden Bursky.**

Lieutenant:

1. **Interviews for the open Lieutenant position will be held the week of May 12, 2025. The Prison currently has a total of eight (8) applicants for the position, more interest than it usually receives for a Lieutenant position.**

Food Service Director:

1. **Second interviews were conducted for applicants along with Nutrition.**

Warden Wolford reported:

1. **Major Maintenance/Facilities Updates:**

a. **The thaw box in the kitchen failed and requires repair. Two (2) quotes have been received, and the Prison is currently working to obtain a third for comparison.**

b. **The heat pumps in the gym are down. Administration is in the process of gathering repair quotes.**

c. **The staff dining area was painted for the first time since the Facility opened. An initial quote of \$1,800.00 was reduced significantly after sourcing alternative pricing, with the job being completed for approximately \$250.00 worth of supplies. This update provides staff with a more welcoming and comfortable break area.**

2. **Training:**

a. **Basic Training Academy No. 25-002 is scheduled to begin on May 12, 2025.**

b. **The first-ever Training Committee has been established. This group includes a Supervisor, a senior Officer, an Officer with mid-level**

seniority, a junior Officer, and a Counselor. The Committee will collaboratively work on hiring and provide support throughout the Training Academy. The first Committee will consist of Captain Perino, Lieutenant Houston, Lieutenant Varner, Counselor Smick, Officer Briel, Officer Gergely, Officer Davis, Officer Pershing, Officer Geist, Officer Sinclair, and Officer Rito. Each one of these members will rotate amongst one another to make up the Committee discussed above.

c. Director Greathouse and Counselor Smick attended a job fair at the 1st Summit Arena at the Cambria County War Memorial, on May 6, 2025.

d. Pre-employment tours were conducted on May 11, 2025, and May 16, 2025, in order to give applicants a chance to see what working in a Prison is like prior to going through the Academy.

3. Staff:

a. The first Swearing-In Ceremony for cadets was held on April 15, 2025.

b. The first Swearing-In Ceremony for Administrative Staff took place at the Courthouse on April 17, 2025.

c. Shift Commanders have transitioned to a twelve (12) hour rotating schedule. This change allows for more family time on weekends and increases operational efficiency through added schedule overlap.

d. Corrections Officer Week was honored from May 4, 2025, through May 11, 2025. The Prison restructured its annual awards process by introducing a nomination system to recognize a broader range of outstanding officers. An Awards Ceremony was held in the gymnasium to celebrate recipients and nominees.

e. A retiree breakfast was held at the Prison on May 9, 2025, in order to show appreciation to those individuals that made a career with the Cambria County Prison and to introduce new staff to individuals who previously served at the Prison.

f. Staff uniforms have been upgraded to a more professional style, reflecting the commitment to professionalism, both on and off duty. The new uniforms feature Velcro patches, name plates, and badges, allowing for reuse and long-term cost savings.

g. A Facebook page was created for the Facility to highlight positive initiatives and commend staff achievements.

h. The entire Administrative Team, including the Warden, Deputy Wardens, Majors, and Director of Training, now conducts weekly inspections of all Facility areas.

4. Inmate Treatment:

a. A meeting was held with Fred Oliveros, Cambria County Drug & Alcohol Administrator, to strengthen collaboration. On May 7, 2025, his team visited the Facility to conduct needs assessments on inmates with children. A follow-up visit is scheduled for May 14, 2025, to assess inmates with substance use disorders.

b. A collaborative meeting with Ashley Tronzo, from the Cambria County Re-Entry Program, took place with the first re-entry class conducted at the Facility on May 6, 2025. Ten (10) inmates attended, and this Program will continue, as referrals increase.

c. The Prison was represented at the Health and Welfare Council, on May 7, 2025, as part of the ongoing collaboration with community partners. These efforts aim to support both the inmate population and staff well-being.

d. Staff attended the Day Reporting Center graduation in support of inmates' efforts to improve their lives and break the cycle of recidivism.

5. Kitchen Updates:

a. A complete inventory of the kitchen was conducted to assess current stock levels. An operational overhaul is now underway, with the primary objective being to reduce the food service budget. On May 8, 2025, the Administrative Team met with representatives from the Nutrition Group to discuss strategies for improving food service efficiency. The following procedures were agreed upon:

i. A representative from the Nutrition Group will be onsite for the first two (2) weeks to train the new Food Service Director. Training will cover all kitchen operations, including ordering, cleaning, and organization. After the initial training, the representative will conduct daily follow-up calls with the Director to ensure proper procedures are maintained. In addition, the representative will visit the Facility one (1) to two (2) times per week for the first few months to monitor compliance and performance. They will also be present for all stock inventories during this period.

ii. During the initial two (2) weeks, the Nutrition Group representative will adjust the kitchen menu to use existing overstock and establish an appropriate level of emergency stock.

iii. The Nutrition Group will implement a free digital inventory management program for all kitchen stock. This system will enable monthly inventory reports to be emailed to Prison Administration and the Prison Board, ensuring transparency and accountability.

iv. Cost-per-meal data will be digitized and distributed via email each month to the Prison Board and Prison Administration.

v. All invoices will be digitally tracked to monitor monthly spending. These reports will also be emailed monthly to relevant stakeholders.

vi. A food waste log will be introduced to record the amount of food discarded each month, helping to identify opportunities for cost savings.

vii. A comprehensive cleaning regimen will be implemented to maintain the highest standards of kitchen cleanliness and organization.

viii. Additional scratch-made recipes will be incorporated to further reduce meal costs.

ix. A complete inventory of the kitchen was conducted by the Warden and kitchen staff. Expired stock was removed, and an inventory of the stock was created.

Statistical Report:

Report is attached.

April, 2025

Average Daily Population for April, 2025	339
Housing Revenue for April, 2025	Not reported
Year to Date Revenue as of April, 2025	Not reported

Food Service Report:

During the month of April, the Prison attempted to reduce spending in the kitchen in order to get the cost of trays down. However, due to locating \$4,736.61 worth of expired goods that had to be discarded, there was a substantial increase in the cost per tray.

Medical Report:

Attached.

Training:

The following staff training was completed during the month of April, 2025:

- 1. Officer Tremarki completed forty (40) hours of training in Central Booking Operations.**
- 2. Officer Black completed eight (8) hours of training in Prison Laundry Operations.**
- 3. The new cadet class had shadow weeks from April 1, 2025, through April 11, 2025.**

Other Events:

- 1. There was a tour held on April 29, 2025, for Penn Cambria School District, and pre-employment tours were held on April 11, 2025, and April 16, 2025.**
- 2. There was a Sheriff's intern at the Facility on April 22, 2025, and an IUP intern completed 44.5 hours of time at the Prison.**
- 3. Open interviews were held at the Human Services Building on April 8, 2025.**
- 4. New cadets were sworn in on April 15, 2025, and new administration was sworn in on April 17, 2025.**

Misconduct Report:

There was no information to report.

Miscellaneous:

None.

Motion was made by District Attorney Neugebauer to approve the Warden's Report.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hunt and passed unanimously.

Adjournment:

Motion was made by District Attorney Neugebauer to adjourn the meeting.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hunt and passed unanimously.

Alex M. Ashcom, Chief Clerk