

PRISON BOARD MINUTES

July 9, 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
Don Robertson, Sheriff

Others Present:

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

Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Public Comment:

Etta Albright spoke regarding mental health treatment at the Prison.

Motion was made by District Attorney Neugebauer to approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on June 11, 2025.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hunt and passed. Sheriff Robertson abstained.

An Executive Session was held on July 7, 2025.

Presentation and Approval of Invoices:

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

Prison bills paid after the Meeting held June 11, 2025:

Retirement Fund	\$33,349.18
Retirement Fund	\$31,842.53
UPMC Health Plan & Dental	\$48,378.50
UPMC Health Plan & Dental	\$48,291.78
Symetra Life Insurance	\$640.59
FNB (Visa)	\$251.89
UKG Kronos	\$8,700.00
Wells Fargo	\$150.20
Mainline Newspapers	\$109.82
Penelec	\$26,862.19
Phoenix Workplace	\$177.00
Ricoh	\$391.50
United Energy	\$1,057.39
Wells Fargo	\$295.10
Total:	\$200,497.67

Invoice Status Report:

July 3, 2025, 89 Invoices Totaling	\$69,994.60
Canteen Fund Bills Paid after June, 2025, Meeting	\$1,957.15
Canteen Fund Bills to be Paid	\$32,886.62

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:

Personnel:

Debra Farrell retired after 27 years of service on July 1, 2025. The Warden thanked her for her unwavering service.

Officer Shane Davis resigned, effective July 1, 2025. The Warden thanked Officer Davis for his service at the Prison and wished him the best of luck in his new career.

Cadet Tristan Albert, remove from payroll, effective June 20, 2025.

Warden Wolford reported:

1. **Prison Audit:** The PREA audit questionnaire has been submitted. The Warden thanked Chief Deputy Warden Rozum and Captain Perino for their hard work to get this completed. The PREA audit will be completed in July, 2025.

2. **Kitchen Update:** Food Service Director Mathis, along with the Nutrition Group, has made huge strides so far in the kitchen. Staff has positive feedback about the quality of the food, and in addition, in the first couple of weeks, spending has been reduced in the kitchen. More accountability regarding inventory and spending has already been happening through the reports that Food Service Director Mathis is generating.

3. **Security (Non-Confidential):** Major Ochenrider has been conducting onsite security checks of work crews periodically every week. This practice has not happened before, and it is providing additional security and policy enforcement overall to the team. Weekly unit rounds are continuing to be conducted by all administrative staff.

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

a. The cooling tower repair was approved for \$4,300.00. McCarl's will complete the repair. This will resolve the issue with the heat throughout the Prison and Central Control. There is currently a leak in the tower that is leaking anti-freeze and is preventing the tower from cooling the water.

b. Two (2) heat pumps in the gym are down. One quote currently in is from McCarl's for \$7,000.00 per pump. The Prison is currently working on receiving an additional quote from Huckenstein in Pittsburgh.

c. The Prison received the final quote from Intertech to resolve the current issue for \$12,552.00, down from the original quote of \$24,394.00.

d. The capital request to repair the thaw box through K&D is still pending.

e. The Prison worked with the IT Department to get a Lease on the required router. Rather than buy the router outright, as was initially proposed for \$11,525.00, the Facility is going to lease the equipment for a

monthly fee. A quote from Link Systems is expected to be received on July 7, 2025.

f. New printers were installed in the Shift Commander's Office, Accounting, and Central Booking. The Prison will no longer have to pay for ink for these printers, as they are now contracted through Advanced Computer Systems.

g. The Facility is going to start the process with the IT Department to upgrade staff computers for dual-authentication as well as install new law library computers in the housing units.

h. Security-related preventative repair is needed and will be discussed in Executive Session due to security concerns.

i. Painting was completed in inmate services, staff muster, staff dining, and the Shift Commander's Office.

j. Administration met with Allegheny Supply with regard to pricing. They have lowered their price to the Prison on several products.

5. **Training:**

a. New cadets were sworn in on June 20, 2025, at the second swearing-in ceremony held at the Prison. The Warden thanked all who attended.

b. The first Training Committee meeting was held to discuss the future plans for the Committee as well as plans to provide the best training possible.

c. The Facility is beginning to review applications to start another cadet class in August.

d. The Prison is currently working on annual training in order to get all staff qualified for firearms.

6. **Staff:**

a. Officers have begun the voluntary 12-hour rotations, and the Warden has received positive feedback from those on the 12-hour schedules. The Prison will complete an analysis next month to show whether or not it is saving on overtime.

b. The Inmate Handbook has been updated for 2025.

c. A Supervisors Meeting was held on June 18, 2025, regarding operations within the Shift Commander's Office. Feedback from the Shift Commanders going to 12-hour rotations has been extremely positive.

d. Surveillance review of the Prison was completed by the Warden for 2025.

e. Department seals were created for every department within the Prison in order to promote pride and identity within each area of the Facility.

7. **Inmate Treatment:**

a. The Prison met with counselors from the Inmate Services Department to review new procedures within the department and resolve any potential issues created from the procedural change.

b. Warden Wolford, Assistant Deputy Bursky, Officers Sinclair and Ecklund, and Counselors McCoy, Smick, Sikora, and Thomas attended a Re-Entry Simulation. It was a huge success and has reinvigorated the Team’s commitment to establishing an impactful program at the Prison.

c. A Favor Support Group for males and females began on July 2, 2025, at the Prison. This has never happened before, and the Prison is excited to work with them to provide additional support to those seeking rehabilitation.

d. Re-Entry completed its first six (6) week course with the male inmates. Six (6) inmates graduated from the class. The Prison is currently working with the female inmates on another six (6) week course. The Facility will partner with them to offer birthday and Christmas celebrations for the children of inmates, for those inmates who are eligible.

e. The Prison met with GEO and the Day Reporting Center to discuss bringing staff into the Prison to deliver evidence-based programs. They are preparing a proposal detailing classes tailored to inmate needs, reflecting a structured, data-driven approach.

f. The Facility coordinated with Cambria County Agencies, Drug & Alcohol, Behavioral Health, the Day Reporting Center, Probation, and Re-Entry, to set up the County’s first ever In-Prison Re-Entry Specialist. This role is designed to address inmates’ needs and support community reintegration.

g. A meeting with Court Administrator Arrington and Hal Dues was held to assess current work crew assignments and plan an expansion of the program.

8. **Miscellaneous:**

a. A meeting was held with Keefe to discuss raising permissible item allowances for inmates and increasing vending machine stock to boost revenue.

b. A meeting was held with Nathan Downs, of Food Spot Healthy Vending Machine Company, in order to explore healthy meal options for staff dining.

c. Officers Courtney Sinclair and Anthony Shultz and the Warden participated in a patriotic walk on July 4, 2025, representing the Prison.

d. Commissioner Rager visited second shift muster on July 4, 2025.

Statistical Report:

Report is attached.

June, 2025

Average Daily Population for June, 2025	340
Housing Revenue for June, 2025	Not reported
Year to Date Revenue as of June, 2025	Not reported

Food Service Report:

Report is attached.

Medical Report:

Report is attached.

Training:

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

1. Week four (4) of in-person cadet training was held from June 2, 2025, through June 6, 2025.
2. Weeks five (5) and six (6) of cadet on-the-job shadowing were held from June 9, 2025, through June 20, 2025.
3. The first Training Committee Meeting was held on June 10, 2025. The meeting was an overall brainstorm on how the Committee will operate, ways to increase staff retention, and ways to improve staff morale. A discussion was started on revamping all training programs to ensure all employees remain current on policies and procedures.
4. A cadet ceremony was held on June 20, 2025, to swear in new correctional staff.
5. An IUP intern completed approximately 100 hours of training.

Misconduct Report:

There was no information to report.

Miscellaneous:

None.

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

Motion was seconded by Judge Fleming and passed unanimously.

Adjournment:

Motion was made by Commissioner Rager to adjourn the meeting.

Motion was seconded by District Attorney Neugebauer and passed unanimously.

Alex M. Ashcom, Chief Clerk