

PRISON BOARD MINUTES

January 14, 2026

Board Members Present:

**Jessica F. Aurandt, District Attorney
Edward Cernic, Jr., Controller
Thomas C. Chernisky, Commissioner
Scott W. Hunt, President Commissioner
Keith Rager, Commissioner
Don Robertson, Sheriff**

Others Present:

**Kurt Wolford, Warden
Megan Bursky, Assistant Deputy Warden
Alex M. Ashcom, Chief Clerk**

Pledge of Allegiance.

Sheriff Robertson called the Meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. in the Jury Room of the Cambria County Courthouse.

Public Comment:

Etta Albright stated that she believes that citizens should be able to sit on the Prison Board in order to help individuals transitioning back into society.

John DeBartola read an anonymous letter he received regarding the Prison and asked the Board to let him know if there was any truth to it.

Reorganization:

Motion was made by Commissioner Hunt to keep the President, Vice President, and Secretary of the Board the same, i.e., Donald Robertson, Sheriff, as President; Keith Rager, Commissioner, as Vice President; and Edward Cernic, Jr., Controller, as Secretary.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Rager and passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Commissioner Hunt to retain Kurt Wolford as Warden.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Rager and passed unanimously.

Sheriff Robertson appointed District Attorney Aurandt and Commissioner Hunt as Inspectors.

Commissioner Rager made a motion to approve holding the 2026 Prison Board Meetings on the second Wednesday of each month, at 10:30 a.m., at the Cambria County Prison.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hunt and passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Commissioner Chernisky to hold the November, 2026, Meeting on Thursday, November 12th, since Wednesday, the 11th, is Veterans' Day.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Rager and passed unanimously.

Regular Meeting:

Motion was made by Commissioner Hunt to approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on December 10, 2025.

Motion was seconded by District Attorney Aurandt and passed unanimously.

Executive Session:

An Executive Session of the Prison Board was held on January 12, 2026.

Presentation and Approval of Invoices:

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

Prison bills paid after the Meeting held December 10, 2025:

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Retirement Fund | \$39,110.03 |
| Retirement Fund | \$33,574.32 |
| Retirement Fund | \$43,124.10 |
| UPMC Health Plan and Dental | \$50,248.03 |
| UPMC Health Plan and Dental | \$50,161.31 |
| UPMC Health Plan and Dental | \$50,991.52 |
| Symetra Life Insurance | \$647.15 |
| Symetra Life Insurance | \$653.70 |
| Wells Fargo | \$150.20 |
| FNB (Visa) | \$30.00 |
| FNB (Visa) | \$28.05 |
| FNB (Visa) | \$22.67 |
| Ricoh | \$612.45 |
| United Energy | \$1,338.53 |
| Elite Outdoor Services | \$399.20 |
| Penelec | \$27,914.28 |
| Peoples | \$2,082.96 |
| Total: | \$301,088.50 |

Invoice Status Report:

| | |
|---|--------------|
| January 23, 2026, 78 Invoices Totaling | \$175,623.31 |
| Canteen Fund Bills Paid after December, 2025, Meeting | \$2,900.66 |
| Canteen Fund Bills to be Paid | \$49,180.84 |

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:

Removals/Resignations:

1. Ashlee Mulraney, remove from payroll, effective December 30, 2025.
2. Jason Chapaloney, remove from payroll, effective December 23, 2025.

New Hires:

1. Charles Burkhard, Per-Diem Chaplin, effective January 4, 2026.
2. Christina Berkhimer, Full-Time Correctional Officer I, effective January 20, 2026.
3. Michael Clawson, Full-Time Correctional Officer I, effective January 20, 2026.
4. Leroy Wheeler, III, Full-Time Correctional Officer I, effective January 20, 2026.

5. Isaac Bellomo, Full-Time Correctional Officer I, effective January 20, 2026.
6. Charles Dolanskey, Full-Time Correctional Officer I, effective January 20, 2026.
7. Carrie Martynuska, Full-Time Correctional Officer I, effective January 20, 2026.
8. Keri Beiswenger, Full-Time Correctional Officer I, effective January 20, 2026.
9. Melissa Gillin, Full-Time Correctional Officer I, effective January 20, 2026.
10. Christopher Smith, Full-Time Correctional Officer I, effective January 20, 2026.
11. Jason Link, Full-Time Correctional Officer I, effective January 20, 2026.
12. Ryan Holgash, Full-Time Correctional Officer I, effective January 20, 2026.
13. Jacob Fitzpatrick, Per-Diem Correctional Officer, effective January 20, 2026.
14. Dillon Segada, Per-Diem Correctional Officer, effective January 20, 2026.
15. John Forsythe, Per-Diem Correctional Officer, effective January 20, 2026.
16. Barbara Steiner, Per-Diem Correctional Officer, effective January 20, 2026.
17. Jason Kopnicky, Per-Diem Correctional Officer, effective January 20, 2026.

Warden Wolford Reported:

Staff:

1. Eleven (11) officers who successfully bid into the new 12-hour rotation began that schedule at the start of the year. This schedule provides staff with increased time off during the week to rest and recover, while also allowing the Facility to perform staff shifts more efficiently. The anticipated result is improved coverage and a reduction in overtime usage.
2. Updated security and cellular phone policies have been implemented to strengthen security in restricted areas of the Facility. Specific details of these policies are not appropriate for public discussion due to security considerations.
3. A staff Christmas party was held on December 6, 2025, providing employees an opportunity to spend time together and celebrate the holiday season.
4. The Prison participated in the Ebensburg Christmas Parade as part of the ongoing efforts to maintain a positive and visible presence within the community.

Major Maintenance/Facility Updates:

1. A request for bids is being issued for Facility security technology services in order to ensure competitive pricing and high-quality service for existing equipment.
2. A comprehensive audit of all mechanical equipment throughout the Facility has been completed to identify systems in need of repair or replacement. Based on this review, a long-term plan has been developed to address these needs in a phased manner, allowing the Facility to maintain reliable mechanical operations while spreading capital expenditures over multiple years to ensure fiscal responsibility.
3. Representatives from JailTracker visited the Prison on December 3, 2025, to provide a demonstration of its inmate tracking and records management software.

Training:

- 1. A job fair was held at the Cambria County Human Resources Building on December 3, 2025. As a result of ongoing recruitment efforts, there are currently seventeen (17) new hires awaiting entry into the January Academy.**
- 2. A Training Committee meeting was held on December 16, 2025, to continue evaluating and improving training standards and delivery for staff.**
- 3. Counselor Smick, who has been serving as Interim Director of Training, has completed the 2026 training agenda. His report is attached for review.**
- 4. Counselors Smick and Furnari successfully completed the state-approved Train-the-Trainer Academy, which is required for instructors teaching at the Facility.**
- 5. All documentation has been completed and approved in preparation for the launch of the new Academy on January 20, 2026.**
- 6. Counselor Smick has coordinated with Pepperball, Inc. to hold an armorer course in June of 2026.**

Prison Audit:

- 1. Inspector Zirpoli has advised that the finalized proposal for the Facility's voluntary audit will be provided in January. Once received, it will be presented to the Prison Board for review.**

Kitchen Updates:

- 1. Food Service Director Mathis, in coordination with The Nutrition Group, has continued to work toward improving the efficiency of food service operations. These efforts have resulted in measurable improvements to overall food service performance.**

Miscellaneous:

- 1. The 2026 federal census reporting for the Facility has been completed and accepted.**
- 2. Deputy Bursky identified a grant opportunity, through the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, (PCCD), that would provide continuation of funding for the current Act 80 grant. This funding would supplement existing Drug and Alcohol resources and support the Facility's active Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) Program.**
- 3. A contract has been forwarded to Bedford County regarding the housing of juvenile detainees. Upon execution by Bedford County, the Agreement will be presented to the Prison Board for review and consideration. If approved, this arrangement would provide an additional revenue source for the Prison.**
- 4. Deputy Bursky and I participated in an interview with Fox 8 to discuss Facility operations, the challenges of modern corrections, and the ongoing focus on rehabilitation efforts and staff well-being.**

Inmate Treatment:

- 1. Volunteers from Go-ReEntry visited the Facility to provide a holiday caroling program for the inmate population. This marked the first time such an event was held at the Facility, and it was positively received by the inmate population. The administration appreciates the continued partnership with Go-ReEntry and looks forward to future collaborations.**
- 2. Go-ReEntry hosted a holiday support event outside of the Facility for the families of female inmates. Incarcerated individuals were able to voluntarily sign up for the program, in order to provide support to their families during the holiday season while they remained incarcerated.**
- 3. Re-Entry staff held a meeting on December 17, 2025, to review the progression of services provided to the inmate population.**
- 4. The Re-Entry Department held its quarterly meeting on December 3, 2025. Representatives from Drug and Alcohol Services, Administration, and outside partner agencies also participated.**
- 5. Deputy Bursky participated in a Zoom meeting with Rushelle Dillon from the Pittsburgh Food Bank to discuss upcoming SNAP benefit changes and strategies to assist inmates, upon release, in navigating those changes.**

Statistical Report:

Report is attached.

December, 2025

| | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Average Daily Population for December, 2025 | 359 |
| Housing Revenue for December, 2025 | \$109,606.50 |
| Year to Date Housing Revenue | \$1,523,934.00 |

Food Service Report:

Report is attached.

Medical Report:

Report is attached.

Training:

Report is attached.

Misconduct Report:

There was no information to report.

Miscellaneous:

None.

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

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Chernisky and passed unanimously.

Adjournment:

Motion was made by Commissioner Chernisky to adjourn the meeting.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Rager and passed unanimously.

Alex M. Ashcom, Chief Clerk