

# PRISON BOARD MINUTES

March 11, 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., at the Cambria County Prison.

**Public Comment:**

John DeBartola spoke regarding the need for a barber at the Prison and questioned if there was enough money in the budget to cover overtime.

Etta Albright spoke regarding public health, wellbeing, and public safety.

Motion was made by Commissioner Rager to approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on February 11, 2026.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hunt and passed unanimously.

**Executive Session:**

An Executive Session of the Prison Board was held on March 9, 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 February 11, 2026:**

Retirement Fund	\$37,299.46
Retirement Fund	\$38,518.79
UPMC Health Plan and Dental	\$48,225.23
UPMC Health Plan and Dental	\$49,072.80
Symetra Life Insurance	\$628.40
Elite Outdoor Services	\$12,183.60
Phoenix Workplace Health	\$882.00
Wells Fargo	\$740.40
FNB Visa	\$412.92
Ricoh	\$209.00
Penelec	\$29,757.09
United Energy	\$2,170.30
GC Pivotal	\$215.48
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$220,315.47</b>

**Invoice Status Report:**

March 6, 2026, 99 Invoices Totaling \$364,083.29

<b>Canteen Fund Bills Paid after February, 2026, Meeting</b>	<b>\$3,155.41</b>
<b>Canteen Fund Bills to be Paid</b>	<b>\$29,305.89</b>

**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. Assistant Deputy Megan Bursky to Chief Deputy Warden of Finance and Facility Services, effective March 16, 2026.**
- 2. Counselor Carmelo Furnari to Chief Deputy Warden of Operations, effective March 16, 2026.**
- 3. Captain John Briel to Major of Booking and Admissions, effective March 16, 2026.**
- 4. Courtney Sinclair, Full-Time Correctional Officer I to Per-Diem Correctional Officer.**

**Removals:**

- 1. Leroy Wheeler, III, Full-Time Correctional Officer I, effective January 30, 2026.**

**Warden Wolford Reported:**

**Staff:**

- 1. The Facility is currently in the process of finalizing post orders for the positions of Major, Captain, Lieutenant, and Counselor. These post orders will clearly outline the daily duties, responsibilities, and expectations associated with each role and are intended to promote consistency, accountability, and effective supervision throughout the Facility.**
- 2. Staffing levels at the Facility have significantly improved following the completion of the most recent Academy, and a reduction in overtime has already been observed. Director Smick will be reviewing applications in preparation for scheduling another Academy in the near future to continue moving the Facility toward full staffing levels for both full-time and per-diem personnel.**
- 3. On February 27, 2026, the Prison held its fourth official swearing-in ceremony for newly hired staff. These ceremonies are conducted to formally recognize the commitment employees are making to public service and to emphasize the important role corrections professionals play in the safety and operation of the community.**
- 4. During this ceremony, the Prison also swore in an Honorary Junior Corrections Officer for the first time in the Facility's history. This initiative was created as a way to recognize the dedication of the staff while also highlighting the values of service, professionalism, and community that are central to the mission of the Prison.**
- 5. The Prison completed interviews for the open Major of Booking and Admissions and Chief Deputy Warden of Operations positions. Administration is currently in the process of scheduling interviews for two (2) Counselor positions and one (1) Captain position, as it continues working to fill key roles within the Facility.**

**6. Administration attended a coordination meeting with Nicole Arrington, Court Administrator, and the local Magisterial District Judges to discuss operational needs, opportunities for improvement, and continued collaboration between the courts and the Prison. The discussion focused on enhancing efficiency in processes that impact both the Facility and outside partner agencies.**

**Major Maintenance/Facility Updates:**

**1. The Facility is currently working in coordination with PrimeCare Medical to repaint and reorganize the medical department. These improvements are intended to create a more professional environment focused on inmate care and wellbeing while also enhancing operational and security practices within the department to ensure a safe and secure setting for both staff and inmates. The Prison would also like to thank PrimeCare Medical for purchasing the paint used for the department as part of this project.**

**2. Through a technology grant received last year, the Facility purchased additional security cameras. These cameras have since been installed in previously unmonitored areas of the Prison. The addition of this equipment enhances overall video surveillance coverage and strengthens the security of the institution.**

**3. The Facility currently has Requests for Proposals (RFPs) posted for a technology vendor to service and maintain security-related technology systems as well as for barber services to provide inmate haircuts for the inmate population.**

**4. The new Kronos timekeeping system has officially gone live. Implementation of the system has been in progress for nearly two (2) years and will provide improved functionality for timekeeping, scheduling, and payroll administration.**

**Training:**

**1. The Facility is currently implementing a Field Training Officer (FTO) Program in which Lieutenants will serve as field training officers for newly hired staff following completion of the Academy. As part of this program, new employees will be reviewed and tested on a designated set of policies and procedures during their first six (6) months of employment. This initiative is intended to strengthen institutional knowledge, reinforce policy compliance, and support the continued development of newly-hired corrections officers, as the Facility transitions through a period of staff retirements.**

**2. Director Jeremy Smick is currently preparing to begin the Facility's annual training program for all staff. This year's training will place an emphasis on hands-on instruction, including training on updated lobby security procedures and reinforcing best practices related to housing unit operations. The goal of this training is to ensure staff remains well prepared to safely and professionally perform their duties throughout the Facility.**

**Prison Audit:**

**1. In February, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, (DEP), conducted an inspection of the Facility's x-ray body scanner and associated radiation safety program. Following the on-site inspection, DEP reported that the Prison was fully compliant and identified no items of noncompliance.**

2. The Facility recently completed a voluntary audit conducted by Inspector Zirpoli. This review examined numerous aspects of operations and security practices. Due to the sensitive nature of certain security-related findings, specific details cannot be discussed in a public setting. The Facility is currently implementing operational improvements based on the results of this review to further strengthen the safety and security of the institution, the inmate population, and staff.

**Miscellaneous:**

1. During the month, the Prison worked with ViaPath to establish an account for the Public Defender’s Office. This allows inmates to submit electronic requests directly to the Public Defender’s Office, a capability that was not previously available. This addition improves communication access for the inmate population and streamlines coordination between the Facility and the Public Defender’s Office.

2. The Facility is implementing a professional visitor contraband acknowledgment form for use in the lobby. All professional visitors will be required to complete the form prior to being permitted beyond the lobby area. This measure is intended to reinforce contraband policies and enhance the safety and security of both staff and inmates.

3. The Prison is currently working with ViaPath to implement electronic Public Defender application forms on the inmate tablet system. Once implemented, inmates will be able to complete and submit Public Defender applications directly through the tablet platform. The Public Defender’s Office will then receive the applications electronically. This initiative is intended to reduce paper usage and improve the efficiency of the application process for inmates seeking legal representation.

4. The Facility is also working with ViaPath to expand tablet access within the attorney-client rooms. This will allow inmates and their legal representatives to conduct video visits for legal consultation purposes. These visits will occur at no cost to the inmate or the Facility and are intended to improve access to legal communication.

**Statistical Report:**

Report is attached.

**February, 2026**

Average Daily Population for February, 2026	378
Housing Revenue for February, 2026	\$243,585.00
Year to Date Housing Revenue	\$531,825.00

**Food Service Report:**

Report is attached.

**Medical Report:**

Report is attached.

**Training:**

Report is attached.

**Misconduct Report:**

**There was no information to report.**

**Miscellaneous:**

**A Department of Custody and Community Integration Report was provided for the month of February.**

**Motion was made by Commissioner Rager to convene an Executive Session at 10:51 a.m.**

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

**Motion was made by Commissioner Rager to reconvene the Public Meeting at 11:03 a.m.**

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

**Adjournment:**

**Motion was made by Commissioner Chernisky to adjourn the meeting.**

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

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**Alex M. Ashcom, Chief Clerk**