

# **BERKS COUNTY PRISON BOARD MINUTES**

## **MARCH 8, 2023**

The Berks County Prison Board met in a regular session on Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at 9:00 A.M. at the County of Berks Jail and Microsoft Teams Meeting.

### **CALL TO ORDER:**

Judge Scott Lash called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M.

The following members were in attendance:

Commissioner Christian Leinbach  
Commissioner Michael Rivera  
Secretary Sandra Graffius  
Judge Scott Lash

The following member were absent:

District Attorney John Adams  
Sheriff Eric J. Weaknecht

The following County staff also attended:

Solicitor Christine Sadler  
Warden Jeffrey Smith  
Chief Deputy Warden Stephanie Smith

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made to approve the February 8, 2023, meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

### **JAIL SENIOR STAFF REPORTS**

**INMATE POPULATION:** Warden Jeffrey Smith stated the inmate population is 709. Six inmates that are scheduled to an SCI and will transported in April. Fourteen inmates were transported yesterday.

**PROJECT UPDATES:** Warden Smith updated the board that the current projects:

- Sewer pumps and controls at the FCRC should start next week
- Transfer switch and breaker replacement at the FCRC – parts are due in June
- Several projects are waiting to be started once the warm weather breaks

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS AT THE JAIL: Warden Smith update the board on current state of affairs:

- FCRC update
  - Berks Fire and Water is still onsite at the FCRC for clean-up and remediation efforts
  - All contracted staff, Adult Probation, and the Training department has been relocated to the BCRC building

STAFFING: Warden Smith updated the Board on the status of the staffing:

- Thirty-three Correctional Officer vacancies
- Eight Cadets currently in the academy- will graduate on or around May 12
- Conducted another round of physical agility and written testing on Monday
- Seven candidates are pending the written exam results-they will then be scheduled for interviews
- Next testing date will be in April

Commissioner Leinbach Spoke regarding the Governor's budget address yesterday and the emphasis on mental health and reading the CCAP review, Commissioner Leinbach was wondering if there may be any positive dollars that could impact the jail and mental health. Todd Haskins from Prime Care did not see any effects currently. Warden Smith will be researching into this more.

PROGRAMS: Chief Deputy Warden Stephanie Smith updated the Board on programing. At the last Prison Board meeting Commissioner Leinbach asked for updates on the D roster calculations as well as the currently incarcerated inmates that are eligible for work release. In February there were 18 individuals who were fully sentenced and became eligible for work release. As of Monday, there are 87 inmates on D roster.

PRIME CARE UPDATE: Todd Haskins, Chief Operating officer from PrimeCare Medical provided a fiscal update for 2022. The population and intakes have decreased compared to last year. From 3500 to 3300. The biggest decrease in 2022 was hospital stays. External transports increased by 26%. Even though the population decreased the number of appointments were at 502,790 appointments for 2022. There was 1,000,069 does of medication. New intakes that require detox are increasing. There was 979 in 2022 which calculates to 28 % of the population coming in requires some type of detox. Category C patients have decreased by 1%. Category D patients, (SMI) increased. Chronic illness rates decreased except for HIV or Hepatitis C cases. Fifteen thousand Covid tests were given.

Increasing pay rates is the biggest challenge. Commissioner Leinbach spoke about the challenges the county has with wage and inflation pressures.

**SOLICITOR'S REPORT**

County Solicitor Christine Sadler had 1 item for executive session with no action required.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Judge Scott Lash to adjourn at 9:12 A.M. The next Prison Board meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 12, 2023.

*Sandy Graffius*  
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Sandy Graffius, Prison Board Secretary