

BERKS COUNTY PRISON BOARD MINUTES

MARCH 13, 2024

The Berks County Prison Board met in a regular session on Wednesday, March 13, 2024, 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:

District Attorney John Adams
Judge Scott Lash
Commissioner Christian Leinbach
Commissioner Michael Rivera
Commissioner Dante Santoni, Jr.
Secretary Joe Rudderow

The following member were absent:

Sheriff Eric J. Weaknecht

The following County staff also attended:

Deputy Warden of Operations, John Gradiska
Solicitor Christine Sadler
Warden Jeffrey Smith
Deputy Warden of Treatment, Stephanie Smith

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made to approve the February 14, 2024, meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

JAIL SENIOR STAFF REPORTS

INMATE POPULATION: Warden Jeffrey Smith stated the inmate population is 711. There are 7 juveniles at Wayne County and 1 juvenile at Lehigh County.

Year to date the average population is 748 inmates. There are 722 total commitments and 750 discharges.

There are 40 inmates sentenced to an SCI. Thirty-seven are ready to be transported between now and March 27th. Three inmates are awaiting a transport date.

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

- 24 Correctional Officer vacancies
- 6 Sergeant vacancies
- 12 candidates in the academy with a tentative graduation date of April 15th
- 7 candidates in the background phase
- Another academy is starting April 24th
- Correctional Officer testing will be held on April 16th.

PROGRAMS: Deputy Warden Smith updated the Board on the mental health roster. There are currently 95 D roster inmates in custody. This makes up 13% of the total population. There were 6 inmates eligible for work release in the month of February. There is an average of 33 trustee classified inmates. There were 12 new trustee inmates approved in February.

PROJECT UPDATES: Deputy Warden Gradiska updated the board on the current projects:

- Recreation yard project is being worked on with Purchasing.
- Mansion exterior will be painted, and the windows are being replaced.
- Paving project will be widening, sealing, and coating the driveway.
- LMN door project is being worked on with Kelly Brothers.
- Demolition of the former CRC is completed; the restoration phase has begun.

PRIME CARE MEDICAL ANNUAL STATISTICAL SUMMARY

Todd Haskins CEO of Prime care gave the annual report to the Board. Prime care has had a partnership with the County of Berks for 35 years. Prime Care provides the medical, mental health, MAT and dental services to the jail. Prime Cares hiring process has been formalized. There is a comprehensive electronic health record being used at the Jail. The system schedules appointments automatically for the inmates based on the answers to their questions. Prime Care offers tuition reimbursement for their employees and several employees continue to take advantage of that. Allowing the employees to grow with the company. Mr. Haskins reported that the Drug, Alcohol and mental health population continues to worsen.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

County Solicitor Christine Sadler has nothing to report in regular session.

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COMMENTS FROM THE JAIL BOARD

Commissioner Rivera requested statistical information from Todd for an upcoming visit.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Judge Lash to adjourn at 9:20 A.M. The next Prison Board meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 10, 2024.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Rudderow', is written over a horizontal line.

Joseph Rudderow, Prison Board Secretary