

**BERKS COUNTY JAIL SYSTEM
PRISON BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

May 14, 2025

The Berks County Prison Board met in a regular session on Wednesday, May 14, 2025, at 9:00 A.M. at the Berks County Services Center and via Microsoft Teams.

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

NOTICE:

Public comment will be accepted in person and through the Q&A function. Please include your first name, last name and municipality for all comments. Any comments without name and municipality will not be considered. Each citizen can submit one comment. Comment length is dictated by limitations of the platform being used (Teams Q&A). In person comments will be accepted first, followed by comments submitted virtually. The meeting comment period is limited to a total of 30 minutes including both in person and virtual comments. This time period may be extended at the discretion of the Board. Please be concise. Comments that are germane to County business will be read during the meeting and should not be considered to be interactive dialog with the Board. The County Solicitor shall be the final arbiter of whether a comment is germane and should be read. Any response to public comment will be done at the discretion of the Board.

The following members were in attendance:

Judge Scott Lash
Commissioner Dante Santoni, Jr.
Sheriff Mandy P. Miller
Commissioner Christian Leinbach
Commissioner Michael Rivera joined via Teams

The following County staff were in attendance:

Warden Jeffrey Smith
Deputy Warden Bradley Roberts
Deputy Warden Stephanie Smith
County Solicitor Christine Sadler
Chief Human Resources Officer Jessica Weaknecht
Chief Clerk Amanda Bentzel
Chief Operations Officer Kevin Barnhardt

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The April 9, 2025, meeting minutes were approved as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

No comments.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Jail Senior Staff members gave the following reports:

Warden Report

Today's Population – 712 including 4 Juveniles
(1 housed in Lehigh County and 3 housed in Wayne County)

Year To Date:

Average Daily Population – 704 inmates (for April 2025) Total
Commitments – 1401
Total Discharges – 1380

Inmates Sentenced to an SCI:

22 inmates are sentenced to an SCI.

10 are ready to be transported to an SCI between now and May 28, 2025.

12 inmates are either awaiting a transport date or pending other charges.

Current state of affairs

Since the last Prison Board meeting, the jail has discharged 4 individuals who had detainers issued by ICE in the past 30 days. Currently, there are 26 individuals at the jail with an immigration detainer.

Last week was National Corrections Officers and Employees Week. A memorial service was held last Friday, and staff were honored throughout the week.

Operations Report given by Warden Smith

Project Update:

Tankless water heaters are currently being installed in units I, J, and K, with completion expected within a week. Trees at the entrance of Heister Mansion have been removed to prepare for the main driveway closure during the paving project. Remodeling of the lobby and breakroom restrooms will begin on Monday. This week, we have rolled out new vehicle pre- and post-inspection software for all transportation vehicles, which will enhance accountability and efficiency among our staff. As of May 5th, all spring in-service training sessions have been completed.

Deputy Warden

Custody Report

Staffing Update:

There are currently ten Correctional Officer vacancies and six Sergeant vacancies. We have four CO applicants in the background check phase. The next testing date is May 28, 2025. There are two Sergeant promotions on May 28, 2025, pending Commissioners' approval.

Deputy Warden of Treatment Report

Programming Update:

There are currently 85D roster individuals in custody. This makes up 12% of the total population. The combined C and D active mental health roster makes up 61% of the total population. 29 individuals were sentenced and made eligible for work release per their sentencing order. There was an average Trusty population of 31, and 23 individuals were newly classified as Trusty.

At the end of April, two individuals were waiting to go to Norristown for competency restoration, zero were waiting to go to Norristown for treatment, and one was waiting to go to Wernersville. In April, there was one admission to Norristown for competency restoration and one admission to Norristown for treatment. There was one admission to Wernersville. The individual sent to Norristown for competency restoration waited 20 days, the individual sent to Norristown for treatment waited 16 days, and the individual sent to Wernersville due to an NGRI order waited 295 days. There are currently 12 individuals at Norristown; seven are there for competency restoration and five are there for treatment.

The PennDOT ID Program received 66 referrals, processed 127 applications, received 33 products via mail and 45 vouchers.

Solicitor's Report

One item for Executive Session with no action required.

Christine mentioned that during the last meeting, there was a discussion about the ICE detainee. She clarified for the record that the Berks County Jail System's hold time for ICE detainees is 48 hours.

Comments from the Prison Board

No comments

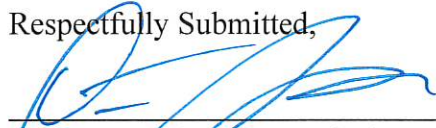
PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Judge Lash adjourned the meeting at 9:12 AM to begin the Executive Session.

Respectfully Submitted,



Dante Santoni, Jr., Commissioner
Prison Board Secretary