

**BERKS COUNTY JAIL SYSTEM
PRISON BOARD MEETING MINUTES
December 11, 2024**

The Berks County Prison Board met in a regular session on Wednesday, December 11, 2024, at 9:00 A.M. at the Berks County Jail System Training Center and via Microsoft Teams.

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

The following members were in attendance:

Commissioner Michael Rivera
Commissioner Dante Santoni, Jr.
District Attorney John Adams
Controller Joe Rudderow
Sheriff Mandy P. Miller

The following member was absent:

Commissioner Christian Leinbach

The following County staff also attended:

Warden Jeffrey Smith
Deputy Warden Bradley Roberts
Deputy Warden Stephanie Smith
Deputy Warden Franco Tassone, Jr.
County Solicitor Christine Sadler
Deputy Chief Operations Officer Larry Medaglia
Chief Human Resources Officer Jessica Weaknecht

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The November 13, 2024, meeting minutes were approved as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS – No comments.

AGENDA ITEMS

The Prison Board approved the correction of October minutes to reflect the correction of the Prison Board Meeting Date to be November 13, 2024. A motion was made by Controller Rudderow and Commissioner Rivera seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, the motion carried.

The Prison Board recognized and acknowledged Sheriff Mandy P. Miller as the newest member of the Prison Board.

The Prison Board accepted the resignation of Controller Rudderow for the position of Secretary of the Prison Board. The motion was made by Commissioner Rivera and DA

John Adams seconded the motion; Controller Rudderow abstained. There being no further discussion, the motion carried. Resignation letter is attached.

DA John Adams nominated Commissioner Santoni as Prison Board Secretary and Commissioner Rivera seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, the motion carried.

Jail Senior Staff members gave the following reports:

Warden Report

Today's Population - 740 including 5 Juveniles (2 housed in Lehigh County and 3 housed in Wayne County)

Year To Date:

Average Daily Population – 748 inmates (for November)

Total Commitments – 3605

Total Discharges – 3628

Inmates sentenced to an SCI:

35 inmates are sentenced to an SCI.

20 are ready to be transported to an SCI between now and December 17th.

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

Current State of Affairs at the Jail:

Some of you know that we are working with PennDOT on an ID program for incarcerated individuals needing a state ID or driver's license. The Board of Commissioners approved the document last week, and PennDOT must now execute it. We pursued this program while working on providing individuals with access to 15-day prescriptions in the community upon release and increased access to medical assistance before their release. Tried something new with the inmate yards by obtaining corn hole for the inmates. The boards weigh about 600 pounds. The game seems to be a big hit.

Deputy Warden of Custody Report

Staffing Update:

There are currently 19 Correctional Officer vacancies and 6 Sergeant vacancies. There are 8 cadets in the academy, comprised of 1 Sergeant and 7 Correctional Officers, with a tentative graduation on January 22, 2025. There are 13 candidates for the next Academy with a tentative start date of January 29, 2025.

Deputy Warden of Treatment Report

Programming Update:

There are currently 101 D roster inmates in custody. This makes up 13% of the total population. Combined C and D active mental health roster makes up 61% of the total population. For the month of November, there were 28 inmates sentenced

and made eligible for work release on their sentencing order. There was an average Trusty population of 29 and 17 inmates were newly classified as Trusty.

Currently in population there are three individuals waiting to go to Norristown. One is waiting for competency evaluation and restoration, and two are waiting to go for treatment. There are two individuals waiting to go to Wernersville.

Last month, three individuals were admitted to Norristown for competency restoration, and they waited an average of 57 days. One individual was admitted to Norristown for treatment and waited 26 days. Currently there are 12 individuals in Norristown State Hospital: eleven for competency restoration and one for treatment.

Deputy Warden of Operations Report

Project Update:

Currently working on the gutter project at the Mansion. Waiting on bonds. Yard doors to be shipped and installed on the week of the 16th. The Promax fence project will be starting on the 16th and will take about 2 weeks. The cadets are in their 7th week of training and doing well.

Solicitor's Report:

County Solicitor Christine Sadler stated she handled two arbitrations this month with a decision expected in the next 30 days. An additional arbitration is tentatively scheduled for January 2025. The Teamsters Interest arbitration is scheduled for February 2025.

Comments from the Prison Board – No comments.

Executive Session – No executive session needed.

PUBLIC COMMENT – No comments.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Judge Lash adjourned the meeting at 9:10am.

Respectfully Submitted,



Dante Santopi, Jr., Commissioner
Prison Board Secretary