

BERKS COUNTY PRISON BOARD MINUTES

NOVEMBER 13, 2024

The Berks County Prison Board met in a regular session on Wednesday, November 13, 2024, at 9:00 A.M. in the Commissioners Board Room and via Microsoft Teams.

CALL TO ORDER:

Commissioner Michael Rivera called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M.

The following members were in attendance:

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

The following member were absent:

- Sheriff Eric J. Weaknecht

The following County staff also attended:

- County Solicitor Christine Sadler
- Warden Jeffrey Smith
- Deputy Warden Bradley Roberts
- Deputy Warden Stephanie Smith
- Deputy Warden Franco Tassone Jr.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made to approve the October 09, 2024, meeting minutes as presented, motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

JAIL SENIOR STAFF REPORTS

INMATE POPULATION: Warden Jeffrey Smith stated the inmate population is 751. There are 2 juveniles at Lehigh County and 5 juveniles at Wayne County.

The average daily population is 747 inmates. There are 3317 total commitments and 3337 discharges year to date. The totals for 2023 were 3995 commitments and 3993 discharges.

There are 35 inmates sentenced to an SCI. Twenty-two inmates are ready to be transported between now and November 21st. Thirteen inmates are awaiting a transport date.

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: Warden Jeffrey Smith updated the board on the current state of affairs:

- On August 27, the office of County Inspection of and Services from the Department of Corrections conducted the required Title 37, Chapter 95 inspection of the jail.
- The inspector issued the preliminary findings.
- In return, the jail addressed all concerns and suggestions and provided the necessary plan of action.
- The jail was notified on October 29th that the jail achieved full compliance for 2024.

STAFFING: Deputy Warden Bradley Roberts updated the Board on the status of the staffing:

- 19 Correctional Officer vacancies
- 5 Sergeant vacancies
- 8 Cadets currently in the academy, comprised of 1 Sergeant and 7 Correctional Officers, with a tentative graduation date of January 22nd.
- Next Correctional Officer Testing is Monday, November 25th.
- Tentative academy starting on January 29th.

PROGRAMS: Deputy Warden Stephanie Smith updated the Board on the mental health roster. There are currently 94 D roster inmates in custody. This makes up 13% of the total population. Combined C and D active mental health roster makes up 60 % of the population. Thirty-seven inmates that were fully sentenced and eligible for work release last month. The average trustee population is 23. Twenty individuals became trustees last month.

Currently in population there are 4 individuals waiting to go to Norristown. Three are waiting for competency evaluation and restoration and one is waiting to go to treatment. There are 2 individuals waiting to go to Wernersville.

The individuals that were admitted to the state hospitals last month, four individuals waited and average of 47 days to go for competency restoration. There were zero individuals waiting for treatment in Norristown. There was one individual that that was found not guilty by reason of insanity that waited to 229 days to go to Wernersville State Hospital. Currently there are 9 individuals in Norristown State Hospital who are there for competency restoration.

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

- The installation of the windows and painting of the mansion are now complete. The gutters will now be replaced the start date is pending.
- The water heaters are installed and running with no issues.
- Yard doors are being manufactured with an install date to be determined.
- Metal siding for out buildings is now complete.
- Multi-purpose room projects are complete.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

County Solicitor Christine Sadler stated there was 2 arbitrations since the last meeting. One dealt with a discipline matter and one dealt with a contract interpretation case. They are both pending briefs with a decision late December or early January. The contract is currently waiting for arbitration which is scheduled for February.

JAIL BOARD COMMENTS


None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Judge Lash to adjourn at 9:09 A.M. The next Prison Board meeting is tentatively scheduled for December 11, 2024.



**Joseph Rudderow, Controller
Prison Board Secretary**