

BERKS COUNTY PRISON BOARD MINUTES

DECEMBER 13, 2017

The Berks County Prison Board met in a regular session on Wednesday, December 13, 2017 at 9:00 A.M. in the Special Operations Center at the Berks County Jail, pursuant to due notice to Board members and the public.

CALL TO ORDER:

Commissioner Kevin Barnhardt called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M.

The following members were in attendance:

Commissioner Kevin Barnhardt
Commissioner Christian Leinbach
Controller Sandy Graffius
District Attorney John Adams

The following members were absent:

Commissioner Mark Scott
Judge Scott Lash
Sheriff Eric Weaknecht

The following County staff also attended:

Solicitor Christine Sadler
Chief Administrative Officer Ronald Seaman

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The November 8, 2017 meeting minutes were approved as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

JAIL SENIOR STAFF REPORTS

Warden Janine Quigley stated the inmate population was 1,033. Of the population reported, 102 inmates were residing at the Community Reentry Center, 18 inmates were being held for Schuylkill County, 29 inmates were technical parole violators from the State and 96 inmates were considered seriously mentally ill.

The Warden spoke about participating in a panel including Dr. Edward Michalik, Executive Director of the Office of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities and two Berks County Commissioners at the Stepping Up Initiative, a national initiative to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in jails, for Pennsylvania. The Warden said she shared some of the cooperative work the Jail was doing with the District Attorney's office to an array of listeners including district attorneys, judges, jail administrators and other roles related to mental health and the jail system.

Commissioner Barnhardt commended the Warden for the work done in Berks County that had gained national level interest and was honored to have the Warden and Dr. Edward Michalik representing Berks County. The Warden added that the Stepping Up Initiative draws awareness to the situation and brings people together in the county as well as statewide. This will allow the Pennsylvania counties to collectively make a case to the state.

**BERKS COUNTY PRISON BOARD MINUTES
DECEMBER 13, 2017**

2

Commissioner Barnhardt thanked the Warden and Deputy Warden Stephanie Smith for editing the article he submitted to the Reading Eagle regarding the use of county jails as mental health facilities, so that it was relevant to Berks County residents.

Commissioner Leinbach mentioned citizens criticizing the new construction of Arcadia Mental Health Centers. He pointed out that the facility will be placed next to a hospital, in a commercially used area, not next to a housing development. He thinks the Board will need to issue a response to the citizens. Commissioner Leinbach stated that this facility is necessary and will help take pressure off of the Jail. The Warden agreed.

Chief Deputy Warden Jeffrey Smith updated the Board on the status of the staff. There were no correctional officer vacancies and one sergeant vacancy. Seven cadets in the academy were scheduled to graduate February 16, 2018. The cadets who graduate will be put on a waiting list for future openings.

Deputy Warden Kyle Russell stated that the contract amendment with ARRO Consulting, regarding improvements to the Prison's main entrance driveway, had been fully executed. Deputy Russell added that a new account clerk had started that day.

Deputy Warden Stephanie Smith reported that the Berks County Intermediate Unit would be taking over all education services for inmates, beginning January 1, 2018. The agreement with BCIU is expected to save the County \$10,000 to \$15,000 per year, over the next few years.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

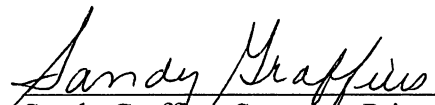
One item for Executive Session. No action.

COMMENTS FROM THE JAIL BOARD

Commissioner Leinbach requested the staffing analysis be presented at the budget meeting. He stated that the analysis is vital to understanding the discussion and debate on staffing currently and going forward. He added that it is also vital to demonstrate the positive impact of the Special Operation Group (SOG) on staff. He requested that sensitive information be redacted from the report to avoid security risks.

ADJOURNMENT

The Board adjourned at 9:14 a.m. into Executive session for personnel reasons, which adjourned at 9:34 a.m. The next Prison Board meeting will be held January 10, 2018 in the Commissioners' Board room on the 13th Floor of the Berks County Services Center.


Sandy Graffius, Secretary Prison Board