

BERKS COUNTY PRISON BOARD MINUTES

JUNE 26, 2019

The Berks County Prison Board met in a regular session on Wednesday, June 26, 2019 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 9:05 A.M.

The following members were in attendance:

Commissioner Kevin Barnhardt
Commissioner Christian Leinbach
Controller Sandra Graffius
Judge Scott Lash (via telephone)

The following members were absent:

Commissioner Mark Scott
Sheriff Eric Weaknecht
District Attorney John Adams

The following County staff also attended:

Solicitor Christine Sadler
Human Resources Director Jessica Weaknecht
Chief Administrative Officer Ronald Seaman

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The March 27, 2019 meeting minutes were approved as presented. The April and May meetings were cancelled due to lack of quorum.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

JAIL SENIOR STAFF REPORTS

PCCD GRANTS: Deputy Warden Stephanie Smith stated that PCCD confirmed the Jail was awarded for the Vivitrol grant, however they had not received the official award letter. The program was scheduled to begin July 1, 2019.

INMATE POPULATION: Chief Deputy Warden Jeffrey Smith stated the inmate population was 1,032. Of the population reported, 108 inmates were residing at the Community Reentry Center and 3 juveniles were being held in Chester County.

STAFFING: Chief Deputy Smith updated the Board on the status of the staffing; there were eleven correctional officer vacancies. Five cadets were enrolled in the academy and tentatively scheduled to graduate July 18, 2019. The next academy was scheduled July 31, 2019 and the next correctional officer testing was scheduled August 20, 2019.

CHAPTER 95 INSPECTION: Chief Deputy Smith announced that the Jail received confirmation from the Department of Corrections of compliance with the Title 37, Chapter 95 inspection that was conducted June 13, 2019.

BERKS COUNTY PRISON BOARD MINUTES
JUNE 26, 2019

2

Commissioner Barnhardt read a portion of the letter written to Warden Quigley from Thomas Greishaw, Director of the Office of County Inspections and Services:

“I would like to commend you and your staff for the ongoing efforts to improve the Berks County Jail System. The progress in operation, organization and enhanced services for the inmates have been notable over the past five years; particularly, the practices and services introduced to address the increasing need to treat those with mental illness, and measures to advance the safety of the facility.”

SOLICITOR’S REPORT

None.

COMMENTS FROM THE JAIL BOARD

STAFF CONSIDERATIONS: Commissioner Leinbach spoke about the results from the CGL assessment and an internal study that indicates the Berks County Prison is understaffed. He stated 6 additional correctional officer positions were up for vote at the June 27, 2019 Salary Board meeting. Commissioner Leinbach emphasized that these positions would fill existing posts only, not create new posts. He noted this was the first of 3 additional staff considerations.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

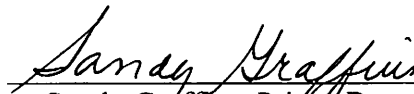
The Board moved to Executive session at 9:10 A.M. until 9:20 A.M. for personnel and litigation topics. No action was taken.

PRESENTATION

INMATE RECOGNITION AWARD: Two inmates were escorted into the room before the Board. Chief Deputy Smith described the incident that took place on Friday, June 21, 2019; an alert to all supervisors signaled a problem in a specific unit. Staff contacted the unit and an inmate answered, stating the officer was down and possibly experiencing a seizure. The other inmate repeatedly kicked the door connected to the next unit to get the attention of another officer. When the unresponsive officer was found, he was disoriented and needed additional medical attention. Chief Deputy Smith expressed his gratitude for the inmate’s response to the situation. The Board acknowledged, commended and presented a certificate of recognition to the two inmates for their life saving efforts and show of good character.

ADJOURNMENT

The Board adjourned at 9:27 A.M. The next Prison Board meeting will be held July 31, 2019 in the Commissioners’ Board Room on the 13th Floor of the Berks County Services Center.


Sandy Graffius, Prison Board Secretary