

# **BERKS COUNTY PRISON BOARD MINUTES**

## **FEBRUARY 9, 2022**

The Berks County Prison Board met in a regular session on Wednesday, February 9, 2022, at 9:00 A.M. in a Microsoft Teams Meeting.

### **CALL TO ORDER:**

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

The following members were in attendance:

Commissioner Christian Leinbach  
Commissioner Michael Rivera  
Commissioner Kevin Barnhardt  
Secretary Sandra Graffius  
Sheriff Eric J. Weaknecht

The following members were absent:

District Attorney John Adams  
Judge Scott Lash  
Deputy Warden-Custody Jeffrey Schearer

The following County staff also attended:

Executive Assistant Jessica Blauser  
Solicitor Christine Sadler  
Warden Jeffrey Smith  
Chief Deputy Warden Stephanie Smith

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made to approve the January 12, 2022 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

### **JAIL SENIOR STAFF REPORTS**

**INMATE POPULATION:** Warden Jeffrey Smith stated the inmate population was 740. Forty-two inmates sentenced to SCI. Nineteen are scheduled to leave by March 3, 2022. Seventeen are waiting for a transport date. Three are not ready to be issued a transfer date. There is a backup with the DOC due to the surge in Covid cases for staff and inmates that they were experiencing. The intake process was then slowed down.

**BERKS COUNTY PRISON BOARD MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 9, 2022**

**2 of 4**

**FACILITIES & MAINTENANCE PROJECTS:** Warden Jeffrey Smith updated the Prison Board that the Commissioners have approved the members of the Berks County Correctional Steering Committee and CGL is scheduling interviews with key stakeholders.

**CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS AT THE JAIL:** Warden Jeffrey Smith stated as of Monday, February 7th, the jail has increased current free video visitation from (1) 10-minute video call per week to (2) 15-minute video calls per week. This will remain in place while in-person visitation is temporarily suspended.

**STAFFING:** Warden Jeffrey Smith updated the Board on the status of the staffing; there are 32 Correctional Officer vacancies. There are 3 candidates for the next academy that will tentatively begin on February 23, 2022. The next CO testing is on March 2, 2022.

**PROGRAMS:** Chief Deputy Warden Stephanie Smith updated the Board that the jail is in the final process of implementing the Narcan distribution project for inmates being released from the facility. The MOU is listed this week for the Commissioners meeting and there are nine inmates currently interested.

Regarding the Vivitrol program early in the program there were a lot of limitations and as that as the states saw issues with implementing the program for county jails, they started to lift those restrictions. In comparing the numbers at the end of 2021 to the end of 2020. The number of inmates that were reached more than doubled. The changes that were made have really made a difference the ability to offer Vivitrol to inmates that are interested as a MAT for opioid addiction.

**SOLICITOR'S REPORT**

Solicitor Christine Sadler has no items for session and one item for executive session regarding contract negotiations and will require no action.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Commissioner Barnhardt to adjourn at 9:06 A.M. The next Prison Board meeting will be held on March 9, 2022.

*Sandy Graffius*

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Sandy Graffius, Prison Board Secretary