

BERKS COUNTY PRISON BOARD MINUTES

JANUARY 11, 2023

The Berks County Prison Board met in a regular session on Wednesday, January 11, 2023, at 9:00 A.M. in the Commissioners Boardroom and Microsoft Teams Meeting.

CALL TO ORDER:

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

The following members were in attendance:

Commissioner Christian Leinbach
Commissioner Michael Rivera
District Attorney John Adams
Secretary Sandra Graffius
Judge Scott Lash

The following member were absent:

Sheriff Eric J. Weaknecht

The following County staff also attended:

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

PRISON BOARD RE-ORGANIZATION

Solicitor Christine Sadler took nominations for the position of Chair for Berks County Prison Board. A motion was made and seconded to approve Judge Scott Lash as the new Chair. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made to approve the December 14, 2022, meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

JAIL SENIOR STAFF REPORTS

INMATE POPULATION: Warden Jeffrey Smith stated the inmate population is 723. Forty-one inmates that are scheduled to an SCI. Thirty-six of those will be scheduled to leave between now and January 26th. Five inmates remain in custody due to other circumstances.

PROJECT UPDATES: Warden Smith updated the board with the capital projects:

- Yard paving project was completed in November – still a couple outstanding issues. Working with the vendor to resolve
- Roof Conduit repairs – halfway completed.
- Kitchen HVAC unit replacement – Had to switch vendors due to Costars issue. Now working with Burkhardt Mechanical.
- Replacement/repair of jail gutters is 95% complete and should be done by next week
- Sewage pump at FCRC – Vendor is making necessary preparations before they come onsite to complete the repair

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS AT THE JAIL: Warden Smith update the board stating the jail is working on relocating the staff that were displaced from the former CRC. Temporary accommodations have been made but working on a more permanent plan.

STAFFING: Warden Smith updated the Board on the status of the staffing:

- Thirty-seven Correctional Officer vacancies
- Four Cadets currently in the academy
- Tentative graduation – February 2023
- Next academy is starting February 22nd
- Seven candidates in the background phase from November testing
- Fifteen candidates are pending scores from the January 9th testing

PROGRAMS: Chief Deputy Warden Stephanie Smith updated the Board on programing provided by volunteers:

In September of last year, the jail was opened back up to volunteers. There was a class held that focused on religious volunteers. There were volunteers from Alcoholics Anonymous and the VA to start to provide services. Safe Berks, BCPS with Mother and Fathers Voice programing, Library Systems which provides a book club.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

County Solicitor Christine Sadler had 1 item for executive session with no action required.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Judge Scott Lash to adjourn at 9:06 A.M. And seconded by District Attorney John Adams. The next Prison Board meeting is tentatively scheduled for February 8, 2023.

Sandy Graffius

Sandy Graffius, Prison Board Secretary