

**BERKS COUNTY PRISON BOARD MINUTES  
JULY 28, 2021**

The Berks County Prison Board met in a regular session on Wednesday, July 28, 2021 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 Sandy Graffius

The following County staff also attended:

Solicitor Christine Sadler  
Application Specialist and Trainer Heather Berger  
Executive Assistant Jessica Blauser  
Executive Assistant Mary Buerer  
Administrative Assistant Angela Frantz  
Assistant County Solicitor Elizabeth Kraft  
Deputy Director Facilities & Ops Rex Levengood  
Implementation Specialist Lori Scheider  
Deputy CAO/Director of Economic Development Pam Shupp Menet  
Administrative Assistant Traci Rhoads  
Deputy Warden Jeffrey Schearer  
Warden Jeffrey Smith  
Chief Deputy Warden Stephanie Smith  
Senior HR Generalist Kelly Stumpf  
Public Relations Officer Stephanie Weaver

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made to approve the June 30, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**JAIL SENIOR STAFF REPORTS**

INMATE POPULATION: Warden Jeffrey Smith stated the inmate population was 744. Of the population reported, 661 were male and 83 were female. There is 1 juvenile being held in Chester County and 3 juveniles being held in Lehigh County. Thirty-four inmates were sentenced to SCI. Thirty-one scheduled to leave before August 31. The remaining 3 have outstanding local cases and cannot be transferred yet.

**FACILITIES & MAINTENANCE PROJECTS:**

Warden Jeffrey Smith updated on the current maintenance projects:

Delta Unit Painting Project- Painting should be completed by the end of the week. Inmates will be moved back after completion.

A/B Visitation- Doors have arrived. Waiting on the other components to arrive. Uhrig will then be on site to complete.

End Cell & HVAC Project- NRG will be on site at the jail today. There was a delay due to bonding issues.

**2021 Capital Projects-**

The Keywatcher System is in the process of a technology upgrade. In the process of reprogramming the user's devices.

Jail driveway lights, Interior lights on Bravo unit, Conduit replacement on the roof. Waiting on the Costars application to be processed.

Berkshire Mechanical is to repair the water pumps and expansion valves on the heating/hot water. The parts are on order.

PROGRAMS: Chief Deputy Warden Stephanie Smith updated the Board on Schuylkill Valley School District. Schuylkill Valley School District is responsible for the high school diploma program that is run at the Berks County Jail. Any inmate between the ages of 18 through 21 who is incarcerated there is an obligation under the state to provide or offer a high school diploma program. Since the jail is in the Schuylkill Valley School District the program falls under their school district. The district is exploring options and have partnered with BCIU in the past. After several meetings the district is looking into some other options. The county is currently working with GTL to get pricing on a hybrid model.

Visitations for general population are going well. There is scheduling being offered to have a visit once a month for every inmate. Family members can contact the treatment department to

schedule a time slot. Traffic has been minimized to about 3 visits every hour and staff is encouraging social distancing. Lobby officers are reporting things are going well.

Since the pandemic the regular chapel services have not been happening but there are small groups and that is working well. The chaplains have been going out to the units and providing services one on one. Because of the time slots and COVID the schedule has been modified.

STAFFING: Deputy Warden-Custody Jeffrey Schearer updated the Board on the status of the staffing; there were 28 correctional officer vacancies and one Sargent vacancy. There are 9 candidates that are moving forward. The academy start day is scheduled for August 25.

The jail may expand the class size and the frequency of the training classes. There are discussions about shortening the time of the training classes and having more on-site training.

**SOLICITOR'S REPORT**

Solicitor Sadler had one item for executive session that will not require action litigation.

**COMMENTS FROM THE JAIL BOARD**

Regarding the CGL report. The reports are confidential and contain possible staffing changes. Some of the recommendations have already been implemented by the Warden and his senior staff. The report should be reviewed and then discussed at the August meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Commissioner Barnhardt to adjourn at 9:13 A.M into Executive session. The next Prison Board meeting will be held in a Microsoft Teams Meeting on August 25, 2021.

*Sandy Graffius*

---

Sandy Graffius, Prison Board Secretary