



Prison Board
Pat Fabian, President
Katie Charlton, Vice President
Tammie Gaff, Secretary

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Jason Renshaw
Chase McClister
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County Jail
COUNTY OF ARMSTRONG

July 13, 2023

ARMSTRONG COUNTY PRISON BOARD

A meeting of the Armstrong County Prison Board was called to order on Thursday, July 13th, 2023 at 8:30am. Meeting held in the Jail's conference room.

Members Present: Commissioner Fabian, Commissioner Renshaw, Judge McClister, Sheriff Pitzer, Acting Controller Gaff

Others Present: Warden Hicks, Chief Administrator Poole, Solicitor Miller, Chrissy Creel (Jail)

Absent: Commissioner Myers, District Attorney Charlton

Guests: A.J. Panian (Leader Times)

Commissioner Fabian announced that this meeting was being recorded.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 8th 2023 MINUTES

On a motion by Sheriff Pitzer, seconded by Judge McClister and carried unanimously; the minutes for June 8th, 2023 Prison Board meeting were approved.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 2023 FINANCIAL REPORT

On a motion by Sheriff Pitzer, seconded by Judge McClister and carried unanimously; the financial report for June 2023 was approved.

WARDEN'S REPORT

The Warden's Report was presented by Warden Hicks.

Warden Hicks also mentioned that the Jail is at critical staffing levels with security concerns increasing. Hicks stated that one officer just resigned and another will return at the end of this month bringing the total number of full-time officers down to 27 when the Jail should have 40. Hicks stated that due to the overall staffing shortage, along with pre-scheduled vacations, Hicks is not able to send

the full-time officers that are due to attend the D.O.C. training academy due to these staffing issues. Hicks also stated that three new trainees have started but will be three weeks until their training is complete. Hicks stated there are another two 2 scheduled to start next Monday as well. Hicks stated that there is no guarantee that these trainees will complete their training and decide to stay on. Commissioner Fabian asked Warden Hicks if this was a common issue throughout the Commonwealth. While it is an issue Hicks admitted is affecting other Wardens across the state, Hicks responded to Commissioner Fabian that it makes it no less concerning in this Jail. Hicks commended her staff by working the extra shifts (mandated or not) that they have been putting in. Hicks stated the officers are tired but have still managed to keep the public safe and also have been able to complete all other scheduled trainings. Commissioner Fabian recognized the shortage but also stated that at no time has there ever been 40 full-time corrections officers employed at one time.

On a motion by Sheriff Pitzer, seconded by Commissioner Renshaw and carried unanimously; the Warden's report for June 2023 was approved.

OLD BUSINESS

- 1. Siren tested on July 13th, 2023**
- 2. Inmate Tablets – Update** – Warden Hicks stated the tablets have arrived. Windstream was here looking at the lines. This is moving forward.
- 3. Outside Work Release – Update and Crooked Creek Park** – Warden Hicks stated that Sheriff Pitzer took several inmates to the Crooked Creek Horse Park to prepare for the upcoming rodeo and they did great.
- 4. E.D.P. – Update** – Warden Hicks stated this program is moving forward under the control of one of the Jail's Lieutenants. Since announcing, Warden Hicks has been contacted by members of the community on donating the use of a tractor to work the ground for the garden, etc. and also receiving donations of manure and plants.

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Staff Trainings** – Warden Hicks stated that there has been a change in the way the Jail does the headcounts. There are a lot more checks and balances with this headcount. Firearms training will be held for the newer officers. Hicks, as already mentioned, will be holding off on sending officers to the D.O.C. training academy due to the low staff numbers.
- 2. Solicitor Invoice** – Warden Hicks stated there is one invoice totaling \$1,087.50 for services from April 12, 2023 thru July 6, 2023.

On a motion by Sheriff Pitzer, seconded by Acting Controller Gaff and carried unanimously; to pay Solicitor Miller's invoice totaling \$1,087.50.

- 3. Armstrong County Jail Medical Service Contract** – Warden Hicks stated that the medical service contract needs approved. Solicitor Miller has already reviewed this

contract. Miller stated it mirrored the last contract with the exception of adding the clause of extending the contract automatically for one year if neither party wishes to terminate. On a motion by Commissioner Renshaw, seconded by Sheriff Pitzer and carried unanimously; to extend the Armstrong County Jail's medical service contract that has been reviewed by Solicitor Miller.

4. **Medical - Podiatrist** – Warden Hicks stated the doctors have had some concerns with the increase in foot related problems and suggested possibly bringing in a podiatrist once or twice a month. Hicks would like permission to look into this a little further and report back to the Board. The Board agreed.
5. **MOU – Armstrong & Indiana County Jails** – Warden Hicks stated that Indiana County Jail had reached out to Hicks last month to potentially house some female inmates at \$65.00 per day due to their staffing concerns. Hicks stated that our Jail currently has two female housing units open so this would not cause any more work other than the initial booking in of the inmate. There would be no extra officer or rounds needed. Hicks stated that Indiana has since resolved their staffing concerns and Indiana no longer needs to house some of their female inmates elsewhere right now but Hicks wanted to possibly get this in place for the future. Commission Renshaw stated that Hicks just stated that the Jail was at critical staffing levels and we should not even be entertaining the idea of adding more inmates right now. Hicks stated that this was discussed before the Jail had reached critical staffing levels. Commissioner Renshaw said that we should be looking into offloading some of our inmates to adjust to our staffing levels. The Board agreed to table this at this time.
6. **Jail Tractor** – Warden Hicks stated that the jail's riding lawn mower has stopped working again. Hicks stated the tractor has been repaired numerous times and that she had already seen this coming last year and she planned for this in this year's budget. Hicks has put in for a new one and received approval and it has been ordered. Commissioner Renshaw suggested the old tractor be looked at by county maintenance again to see if it can possibly be repaired and used as a backup.
7. **HVAC – System – Outside Central Freon/Fan on Chiller** – Warden Hicks stated there have been a couple work order requests put in to make repairs to the HVAC system. One is a leak of Freon near Central Control which Hicks has not gotten approval back yet and repairs still need to be made. The fan on the chiller work order has been approved and since been repaired.
8. **MDJ DeComo – Staff OT & County Savings on Release** – Warden Hicks wanted to thank Magistrate DeComo for changing the bond and relieving the Jail staff from having to stay on a female inmate that went to the hospital and was expected to be there for an extended period of time. This saved a lot of overtime.
9. **2 upcoming Job Fairs – Lenape & Armstrong HS** – Warden Hicks stated there are two job fairs coming up. One is at Lenape Vo-Tech on August 30th from 4pm-7pm. The other one will be at Armstrong Jr. Sr. High School on September 13th from 9am-12pm.

EXECUTIVE SESSION –

Commissioner Fabian called for an executive session at 9:15am for staffing issues; Motioned by Acting Controller Gaff, seconded by Sheriff Pitzer and carried unanimously.

The Board reconvened from executive session at 10:00am; Motioned by Sheriff Pitzer, seconded by Acting Controller Gaff and carried unanimously.

On a motion by Acting Controller Gaff, seconded by Commissioner Renshaw and carried unanimously; to amend the agenda to add an item.

Warden Hicks would like to add another item on New Business - **#10. – Clark Cameras.**

Commissioner Fabian called for a discussion.

On a motion by Judge McClister, seconded by Sheriff Pitzer and carried unanimously; to open for discussion on adding ten additional cameras to the current upgrade of the camera system.

Warden Hicks was approached by Clark Camera Company to add an additional 10 cameras at \$3,000.00 apiece. These cameras would resolve blind spots that the current camera system lacks. These would be paid for out of the Inmate Relief Fund (IRF).

On a motion by Judge McClister, seconded by Sheriff Pitzer and carried unanimously; to add an additional ten cameras at \$3,000.00 apiece and be paid for out of the Inmate Relief Fund.

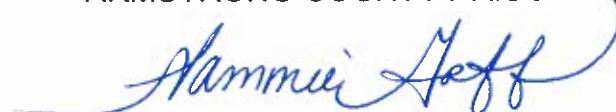
PUBLIC COMMENT – None.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, it was motioned by Sheriff Pitzer, seconded by Acting Controller Gaff and carried unanimously; the Board adjourned at 10:04am.

The next Armstrong County Prison Board meeting will be held on August 10th, 2023 at 8:30am in the Jail's conference room.

ARMSTRONG COUNTY PRISON BOARD



Acting Controller Gaff, Secretary