



County of Lackawanna

Lackawanna County
Administration Building
200 Adams Avenue
Scranton, Pennsylvania
18503

Meeting Minutes Prison Board

Wednesday, March 26, 2014

12:00 PM

Lackawanna County Prison

Call To Order

Commissioner Jim Wansacz called the meeting to order at 12:08pm.

Present 6 - Andrew Jarbola, Gary DiBileo, Jim Wansacz, Patrick O'Malley, Judge Vito Geroulo, and Mark McAndrew

Absent 1 - Corey D. O'Brien

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Jim Wansacz, seconded by Controller Gary DiBileo, to Dispense with the Reading and Approve as Prepared. The motion carried by the following vote.

Aye: 6 - Andrew Jarbola, Gary DiBileo, Jim Wansacz, Patrick O'Malley, Judge Vito Geroulo, and Mark McAndrew

Opportunity for the Public to Address the Board (Agenda Items Only)

Motions

[14-1014](#)

Motion to approve all current payables for the Community Corrections Center, Juvenile Detention Center, and the Prison.

Attachments: [Prison Payables](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Jim Wansacz, seconded by Commissioner Patrick O'Malley, that this Motion be Passed. The motion carried by the following vote.

Aye: 6 - Andrew Jarbola, Gary DiBileo, Jim Wansacz, Patrick O'Malley, Judge Vito Geroulo, and Mark McAndrew

Reports

[14-1017](#)

Controller's Report

Attachments: [Controllers 03262014 Prison Report](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Jim Wansacz, seconded by Judge Vito Geroulo, that this Report be Accepted as presented. The motion carried by the following vote.

District Attorney Andy Jarbola: Meeting concerning the magnetometer and

scanner being replaced for the Courthouse, Administration Building, Prison, Brixx Building, etc- can monies from the Canteen Fund be used for those purposes? Even only for the Brixx, as probation and inmates are in and out of the building constantly.

Commissioner Jim Wansacz: we are trying to see if all of them need to be replaced, including the Jefferson building, as they have House Arrest too, and the Brixx has Probation.

District Attorney Andy Jarbola: Don't want to burden the taxpayers with an additional expense, and the Capitol Budget, if we can use the Canteen Funds. Judge Vito Geroulo: Question the use of that money for those purposes, as it should be for the better of the inmates and there are more immediate needs that face the prisoners. We have a shortage of Counselors that is really causing problems; generating expense, the main area is where inmates are kept in jail, longer than their minimal sentences, which leads to an expense as inmates stay in jail longer, at approximately \$60 a day. Some inmates wait weeks to see a counselor.

Commissioner Jim Wansacz: Can a Counselor for the better of the inmates be hired from the Canteen Funds? Can we see if a counselor position can be reimbursed out of those funds?

District Attorney Andy Jarbola: the cost of the magnetometer is approximately \$2700.00.

Judge Vito Geroulo: I realize the need there, and if we are going to get creative about those funds, between the Cert. of Deposit and the Canteen Funds, and given the fact that the County finances are stretched thinly, we have the obligation of running an appropriate and humane prison, and balancing the budget-potential for savings right there.

The Board director Solicitor David Solfanelli to address these questions.

Aye: 6 - Andrew Jarbola, Gary DiBileo, Jim Wansacz, Patrick O'Malley, Judge Vito Geroulo, and Mark McAndrew

[14-1015](#)

Community Corrections Center Report

Attachments: [BPR - Feb 2014](#)
[Prison Bd Report - March 2014](#)
[Revenue Performance Report - Calendar Year Jan-Dec 2014](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Jim Wansacz, seconded by Commissioner Patrick O'Malley, that this Report be Accepted as presented. The motion carried by the following vote.

Judge Vito Geroulo: I am just noting the Work Release/House Arrest violations, and the WR violators appear to be continuing at a higher number, compared to the numbers we had awhile back-is that correct? And the violations, do they center primarily on the introduction of contraband into the Prison.

Brian Jeffers: Yes sir.

Judge Vito Geroulo: I would just like to reiterate my objections to the ongoing status of the WR Center being housed in the Prison. The WR building is still being used, is County operational. Being used for House Arrest.

Controller Gary DiBileo: are we experiencing a savings by have the WR here at the Prison?

Brian Jeffers: the report that I gave to the Board, in September or October, listed all the numbers, but as far as March goes, I couldn't tell you that right now.

Commissioner Jim Wansacz: I know the previous administration studied it, we

have been looking at it, even the current building that we have needs some work. I do agree with the Judge, we have to revisit the issue.

Judge Vito Geroulo: I think there is also a safety issue, from the guard's viewpoint. My understanding, the people returning to the prison come in through the side gates, and there is on guard-vulnerability of the guard. I hope it is closely monitored. The Warden can address that.

Aye: 6 - Andrew Jarbola, Gary DiBileo, Jim Wansacz, Patrick O'Malley, Judge Vito Geroulo, and Mark McAndrew

14-1016

Warden's Report

Attachments: [OT Comparison 2014](#)
[Prison Board Report Yearly Comparison](#)
[Women's Work Release Report 02-2014](#)
[comm serv report 02-2014](#)
[Warden's Report 02-2014](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Jim Wansacz, seconded by Commissioner Patrick O'Malley, that this Report be Accepted as presented. The motion carried by the following vote.

(In response to Judge Geroulo's question of the safety of the CO's)

Warden McMillan: we have an officer assigned to the corridor, where processing is, all is videotaped by the main control center, processed one at a time.

Judge Vito Geroulo: So you feel that there is sufficient security, notwithstanding the numbers we are dealing with.

Warden McMillan: I do; correct.

Judge Vito Geroulo: 4 out of the 5 extraordinary occurrences that you have reported, would indicate that they are people with mental health issues, which places an enormous burden on you and your staff, dealing with them in an appropriate way, but you find that various agencies throughout the community end up dumping them at the County Jail because of the lack of facilities to appropriately deal with mental health issues.

Warden McMillan: we do appreciate your help Your Honor, in trying to come up with solutions. We recently did a survey of the last three years of the inmate population and 4 out of 10 are self-reporting mental health issues, they are also reporting that they sought treatment in the community at a rate of 93%-good news is they know where to go for services/ bad news is they are ending up here. It is a growing problem. To get someone into Norristown currently there is a 9 month wait.

Judge Vito Geroulo: Shocked and surprised that the Commonwealth is considering eliminating Clarks Summit state Hospital which is right here in our backyard, and it's ironic because we have attempted through our Mental Health Court, to get people in there for help. CO's really rise above the training to be able to deal with this.

Commissioner Patrick O'Malley: Judge, I went to the Fair Child Hearing at the State Hospital, concerns of they (Commonwealth) are eliminating beds, my concern is that they are considering eliminating the hospital in general, they only have 200-some beds. All the doctors I spoke to, psychiatrists, we need a State Hospital- the truth is we should be pushing for more beds.

Judge Vito Geroulo: that seems to be the justification for closing, by saying that there are places in the community that deal with them, and the facilities

and resources in the community are stretched beyond their limit; in the last year, we have lost three major psychiatrists. Difficult situation all around. Less and less spots allocated for the treatment of the mentally ill within our community.

Commissioner Patrick O'Malley: I think as a Board we should make a Motion to address a letter to the Commonwealth regarding the State Hospital, and ask for more beds. And in regards to the Work Release bringing in contraband- is it just tobacco? How much more than before?

Warden McMillian: it's the same as the recyclers were doing up at the center, but unfortunately as long as they are willing to put it in their body cavity, it's very difficult to catch.

Judge Vito Geroulo: In the old unit, there could always be the threat by the Director that if they weren't honest and level, then everyone was going back to Prison, and that peer pressure as a therapeutic tool, is now missing.

District Attorney Andy Jarbola: the other aspect of tobacco, is that it isn't a crime, its Prison contraband.

Warden McMillian: I did research on that a year ago, and it can be made a second degree misdemeanor for the introduction of contraband into the Prison.

District Attorney Andy Jarbola: it would have to be a county ordinance, because as the statute is written tobacco isn't a crime.

Sheriff Mark McAndrew: wanted to make everyone aware, the Warden and I were discussing PREA and the processing center, and my solicitor has come to the conclusion that the processing center doesn't fall under the PREA criteria. My solicitor will consult with the County Solicitor, and in the event it does have to become compliant I don't know how much of a cost that will be. But in terms of right now, I will let it run as is, as per my solicitor.

Judge Vito Geroulo: I am having my law clerks research this as well, when you are organizing your meeting, I will see that my chief clerk attends.

Aye: 6 - Andrew Jarbola, Gary DiBileo, Jim Wansacz, Patrick O'Malley, Judge Vito Geroulo, and Mark McAndrew

Opportunity for the Public to Address the Board

Member's Other Business

[14-1019](#)

Motion to draft a letter, from the Prison Board, to the Governor, State Representatives, and State Senators, regarding the possible closure of the Clarks Summit State Hospital, in particular, more beds are needed.

A motion was made by Judge Vito Geroulo, seconded by District Attorney Andrew Jarbola, that this Motion be Passed. The motion carried by the following vote.

Aye: 6 - Andrew Jarbola, Gary DiBileo, Jim Wansacz, Patrick O'Malley, Judge Vito Geroulo, and Mark McAndrew

Adjournment

A motion was made by Commissioner Jim Wansacz, seconded by Judge Vito Geroulo, that this meeting be Adjourned at 12:37pm. The motion carried by the following vote.

Aye: 6 - Andrew Jarbola, Gary DiBileo, Jim Wansacz, Patrick O'Malley, Judge Vito Geroulo, and Mark McAndrew