

The monthly meeting of the Allegheny County Jail Oversight Board was held on Thursday February 7, 2019 in Conference Room #1 of the Allegheny County Courthouse in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania at 4:02 PM.

Members Present

Honorable Judge David Cashman

Sheriff Mullen

Brad Korniski representing County Controller Chelsa Wagner

Barbara Parees representing County Executive Rich Fitzgerald

Councilman DeFazio

Terri Klein

Abass Kamara

Others in attendance:

Warden Orlando Harper

Marion Damick of the Pennsylvania Prison Society

1. Public Comment

Ms. Damick: I hope that you all have had the chance to review the Suicide Prevention proposal from last meeting. And if I can make a correction to that, your honor, I think you were misinformed. Lindsay Hayes has never been in Allegheny county jail at all. He's never, I'm not sure he has ever been Pennsylvania, but I know he has not been in the jail. And wasn't here eight years ago. We were all glad to see that there were no suicides attempts. There was an attempt last month and unfortunately you did have natural deaths, which is again, really unfortunate.

In any event, I can pass around something called Greater Friends that was published by the Pennsylvania prison society. And you'll see some of this work that we do. I do want to backwards or something, I have to report back on it, but I don't think any of you have probably seen this before and we do get involved in a lot of the lot of programs across the state. So of course we're trying to get involved, make prisons or state prisons and the county, county jail, as good as it can possibly be. So all the met people who are leaving the jail are going to not return. That's the whole purpose of this, right? Yes. So we want to make it that way. I want you to know that, and I think she would probably do that the state passed the clean slate law.

Just passed last year, which wasn't that long ago. It's got a lot of qualifications, five years you have to be out but you can get your record removed so that you can have a better opportunity to get jobs and get housing, get a whole lot of things. That is one of the reasons that inmates come back because they can't get jobs and you know, the whole bit as I've told before. And so it's a step in the right direction. We're really urging you all, we would really strongly recommend Mr. Lindsey Haze because of his vast experience and his knowledge.

With the alternative housing it would be nice to take one board meeting to describe a little bit more in detail than just what is in the report. It's also possible to go visit so that you could talk to maybe one of their residents. Unfortunately, I do notice that Renewal has six escapes. That's most unfortunate and fairly high. I also noticed that for some reason you're way over capacity 3000, then the figures are wrong. I'm just reading from the report.

Warden Harper: We will look into that number Ms. Damick

Ms. Damick: But if you took some time to go to visit them, then you would have a chance to see how they're set up, how the workers helped them or not and what they feel, what they maybe talk to one or two are willing to talk to you. I think it would give you a better idea of how difficult it is or how they're working. Some are not succeeding as well as others. So that we can be really proud in Western Pennsylvania. Article from the New York Times on January 31st from Indiana.

Judge Cashman: Is that the Rikers island article? That has nothing to do with us; New York City has five boroughs; every borough has their own judicial system. Rikers Island is a consolidated facility for the housing. What they're talking about is what we've been doing for 10 years now. Non-monetary bonds, it's the same issue over and over and over again. They may call it something different, but that's what it is because we sent people to New York to explain how the system operates.

Ms. Damick: Are you saying we can't be better?

Judge Cashman: I'm not saying that at all. All I'm saying is it, this is nothing new. This is what we do and this is what we've been doing for 10 years. They haven't improved upon it. They're using our system.

Ms. Damick: I do hope purpose as you know, is the see that the inmates released do not come back.

I you want to remind you again that I'm trying to save the County some money there has been a case that was in part of Pennsylvania in which the judge determined that they had provide some medication for those who come in. I don't want to see a lawsuit in Pittsburgh. So I'm suggesting you consider you already provide for the women, for everybody that come into our facilities.

2. Review of the Minutes for January 3, 2019

The Board unanimously approved a motion by Sheriff Mullen, duly seconded by Brad Korinski to approve the minutes of the January 3, 2019 Board meeting.

3. President's Report

Well, I'm back. I was asked by Judge Clark if I would stay on the oversight board, but the fact that I've been here for about six years and I told her I would, she is still in the process of trying to line up some people. She's going to have to replace Judge Woodruff because he has a conflict, because he's on some committees in the state. That being said, and I want to apologize to everybody because I think that either I was misunderstood or I didn't articulate my position last time with respect to this review of the suicide policy correctly.

I think it's a wonderful idea. Don't get me wrong, I just think the manner in which it was presented was wrong. I think we should operate the way this county operates on that with request for proposals. So I've met with the county manager after our last meeting. We discussed it and he has to hold me that he is preparing a request for proposals to get a number of people to submit their particular proposal, which will include Mr. Hayes. He will be given the opportunity to present his proposal; there'll be a board put together that'll be an advisory board to review that and then make the selections and then we're going to go forward with it. And the county's going to pay for it, not the inmate fund.

This is a county expenditure. I was just against that idea of how to pay for it, but it was never against the ideas, I think the idea is a fine idea. Anytime that we can improve the safety of the inmates it's a good

thing, which in turn improves the safety for the employees. So we're going to have that process take place.

Ms. Damick: Can I put a little comment there? Doing that just takes time. I mean that takes time to interview ten people. We were trying to save that time and use Welfare fund money instead of county money.

4. Warden's Report

Good afternoon everybody. The only thing that I would like to report is January 9th we began using that body scanner and it has been very effective since January. So I just want to report to the board that we are using the body scan and that's all I have John.

Judge Cashman: Well I'd like to point out for everyone that the population in the jail is 2,120 people. That is the lowest population in the warden's tenure and that is in large measure due to all the efforts undertaken by people to look at our detained population because that is generally more than 50% of the population. There are currently 955 people who are detained in the jail. A year ago that number was 1,058. The new people detained on new charges you 675. So people are looking at that and making sure that we're not warehousing people we are trying to get them into the system and then if they are eligible to get out on non monetary bonds, we try to do that within the next three days and keep Judge Manning busy. I want to commend the warden and the staff who are watching the population, which is just continuing to decrease.

5. Deputy Warden's Report

Nothing to report.

6. Old Business

Judge Cashman: Now under old business we have the proposal to conduct a suicide prevention assessment and I moved that that'd be tabled until such time as we have all of our requests for proposals out and review them.

Ms. Klein: Can I just comment? I spoke with county manager about the suicide prevention and I agree with what he was saying that we should have a transparent process and to make it most transparent, it needs to go out to an RFP. Mr. Hays is welcome to submit his proposal. But I think we have to be mindful of what it looks like if we pick somebody without it being an open and transparent process.

Judge Cashman: So just so you know, over the last five years I've met weekly with the county manager, I'm going to continue that weekly meeting. This will be the top of our agenda. We want to make sure that we get the proposals out, you get them back in. But when I talked to him after our last meeting, he said, there's no question that this is a county expenditure and we're responsible for it.

I like the fact that they're taking responsibility for these particular actions. And I liked the fact that we are also protecting the welfare accounts of the inmates.

Ms. Klein: I would just like to suggest that someone from this board be part of the selection process if that's possible.

Judge Cashman: The warden will be one member of it and we're going to have somebody from medical. We have some ideas as to who should be on there because we want people who are intimately familiar with the process as it currently exist and who would be familiar not only with the terminology and

various reports, but how the methodology was in making the analysis of our particular program. I'll let everybody know who it is going to be.

The Board unanimously approved a motion by Judge Cashman, duly seconded by Sheriff Mullen to table the conversation of the Suicide Prevention study until after RFPs.

7. New Business

Nothing to report.

8. Allegheny County Jail Medical Services

a. Allegheny County Health Network

Laura Williams:

We've been closely looking at our pregnant population and we've also been discussing medication assisted treatment. So if you look at this month, we actually see an increase of buprenorphine population for our pregnant women. Now we can't always control, you know, the condition in which we receive women, but we do make every effort to make sure there's continuity of care and when they are released and discharged in the community, we make sure that we are setting them up with appropriate follow up care so that they can continue with their medications and treatments. Right now our current count of pregnant women is not 18 that's not a point in time, that's our range, but today is 12.

9. Community Corrections Reports

a. The Program for Offenders

Mike Gilmore – We brought Allegheny health choices into our facility and to provide motivational interview training for our case managers and our therapists just wanted to give our staff an additional tool to have more meaningful interactions with our population.

Judge Cashman:

Before I get to the renewal center, I want to go back to this, I forgot to mention this. Sometimes we get caught up in terminology and the terminology really doesn't reflect what the condition is. And we've talked about the fact that there were a number of escapes from Renewal. They weren't escapes. That was where people just walked away. They had a worked release opportunity to go out and look for jobs and they didn't come back through the time that they were supposed to be back in the facility. They use the term escape when in fact that's not really what occurred, but what happens when we get a hold of them again, they go back into the jail and terminology problem more than I anything else.

b. The Renewal Center

Adam Zach – All we out for the fork this month is on January 29th we had five of our staff members attend an all day PREA investigation training at the Allegheny county jail, which they found very beneficial.

Brad Korinski: Are you able to speak to the six events that occur that are noted in the report.

Renewal VP Shelly Thager:

That's exactly the same scenario happens pretty frequently. They get to go out into the community, find a job, utility leave, it just depends and then they don't come back. And then we have to follow the protocol and the protocol is we have to make all the phone calls within a half an hour to all the people involved at the county and let them know. They're not breaking out it's just the terminology correct.

The facility is secure; it's the inmates that are not secure. You're trusting them to abide by rules and regulations. Maybe they don't want to do that, when they are given these privileges and they don't come back they follow the protocol, but it's not as though a guard was over powered to get out.

c. Electronic Monitoring

Steve Esswin – So at the end of this recording periods, we were down to 695 on the bracelet, which is a little bit lower, but I can tell you that numbers back up as we speak today. During that time we had 133 complete successfully and 12 are returned to the jail for various violations.

d. Goodwill

I wanted to report out three of our staff members that have attended the PREA investigator training at the Allegheny county jail and then also our facility recently got all new mattresses and all new lockers for the guys.

10. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 4:29 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Chelsa Wagner, Secretary