

The monthly meeting of the Allegheny County Jail Oversight Board was held on Thursday, February 6, 2020 held in Room 327 of the Allegheny County Courthouse in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania at 4:00 P.M.

Members Present

Honorable Judge Lazzara
Sheriff William Mullen
Brad Korinski representing County Controller Chelsa Wagner
Barbara Parees representing County Executive Rich Fitzgerald
At-Large Council Member, Bethany Hallam

Others in Attendance:

Warden Harper
Deputy Warden Williams

Meeting guidelines –

1. Everyone in this room will be treated with dignity and respect. No exception
2. Everyone will have the opportunity to be heard, within reason. Depending on the number of public comments that sign up to speak there may be a time limit imposed.
3. Profanity and yelling will not be tolerated. Anyone using profanity or anyone who is yelling will be removed from this meeting.

Announcements – None

1. Old Business

- A. Provide a list of the discharge area staff provided by Warden Harper - all law enforcement agencies, jail employees, Department of Human Services, court personnel, pre-trial services, probation, public defenders, alternative housing providers, justice-related services, Trinity Food Services, ACJ Maintenance Department, and community treatment programs such as White Deer Run and Cove Forge.
- B. Warden meeting with Monica Ruiz, Casa San Jose update - We did have a very productive meeting with Casa San Jose. The issues that they brought to our attention, we were able to show that they were not issues, especially when they come to interpretation services, we were able to actually go down to our intake department and show them that we have a language line in which we can communicate with individuals that have limited English-speaking capabilities. We also asked to the Casa San Jose that what we really need is some help, and interpretation services of our policies and procedures, and they actually said that they're willing to translate a lot of our documents to Spanish for our Spanish-speaking inmates, so think we had a very productive meeting, and I'm hoping that we can continue to have the good relationships that we developed during this meeting.

And we had a question prior about those documents and videos being translated into Spanish, so with the help of those Casa San Jose people, that's really going to help the jail immensely, so we really appreciate that. There was a question at the last meeting about the cause of death of an inmate that occurred on December 30 of 2019, I believe at this point we are unable to provide that cause, that is still being investigated and we do not have that information to be able to update you on that at this point in time.

There was also a request for the information about the tablet vendor and the costs, and so Warden I'm going to punt that one to you again.

- C. Confirm cause of death of inmate at ACJ on December 30, 2019 – Still under investigation
- D. Tablet vendor and costs – I'm still unable to tell everybody the vendor that got the telephone contract, as soon as I'm able to let you know who the vendor is, I will let you know the vendor and the cost for the tablets and our telephone services.
- E. Recidivism: Rate of re-offenders of domestic violence cases – See Deputy Warden Williams Report
- F. Lexis Nexis Contract - See Deputy Warden Williams Report
- G. Report on JOB sub-committee meetings – Great starting point for both committees
 - o Prisoner Welfare Expense Fund Committee – Gaining a better understanding of what expenses the fund has traditionally covered and the expenses the county is responsible for.
 - o Investigations Committee - The Warden provided an overview of how investigations are conducted within the jail. The committee discussed adding a staff person to assist the board with various administrative tasks.

2. Public Comment

A. Mrs. Damick, Pennsylvania Prison Society

Ms. Damick expressed delight to the recent JOB subcommittee meetings, specifically, Investigations, however she is concerned about having a person employed by the county to serve in the position as a conflict.

Three years ago, the ACJ had a good ACLU review. Scored 100% on the mandatory requirements, Allegheny County Jail was one of only two that scored 100%.

Ms. Damick requests additional kiosk's for inmate housing units to better serve the population. There were complaints that some inmates did not know how to use the kiosks, or the kiosks were often broken. She impressed that Lexis Nexis is expected to allow inmates to check their legal information which is needed to file their own cases or to understand their cases.

The next concern is the number of people on the Jail Oversight Board. She notices that one has been missing and requested that Mr. Fitzgerald appoint somebody to add more community input.

Suicide report update has been delayed and Ms. Damick commented that it was supposed to be reported 90-days after the report was submitted to the county, the reason for the request for delay was a lack of staff. She questioned that on the basis that ACJ has enough staff that they would be able to do what is necessary to review the report and disclose the findings to the public.

The final concern today is food service. Hot meals are being served cold to inmates. Please reevaluate the method of meal delivery to the units.

Warden Harper

One of the things that I've been trying to tell the board and the community for a while is that every inmate at the Allegheny County Jail is going to have a tablet. So that tablet will have law library capabilities with Lexus Nexus, so that we don't have to put another kiosk on the pods. So that will satisfy the situation with the kiosk being put in the pods. Every inmate in the Allegheny county jail will have a table to access the law library services. The next thing I want to talk about is the food delivery of the inmates at the Allegheny County Jail. Today's count was 2373. We serve over 9000 meals a day, 9000. We do everything in our power to make sure that our inmates get hot meals, but any ideas that anybody has that would make it so we can ensure that everybody gets a hot meal, which we really try to do, we're more than willing to meet with you to discuss these issues. But I think we do an outstanding job with the 9000 meals that we serve every day. And that's not including staff meals.

B. Taili Thompson

I successfully re-entered society 16 years ago. I've had the ability to represent a lot of different agencies and organizations throughout Allegheny County, and am currently doing some contract work for the Health Department, running the office of Violence Prevention, I'm a member of the EBT, a think tank at Duquesne University, and I'm also actively attempting to do some work with the Prison Society. With that being said, my purpose for being here today is understanding and knowing that as we attempt to do a lot of this work throughout Allegheny County as it pertains to returning citizens and oversight, and improving jail conditions, is knowing how important it is to have individuals that have had lived experience in these institutions and that have successfully navigated these institutions. I recommend Richard Garland to become a member of this board. He has mentored me and played a role in my successful reentry in Allegheny County, I think he would be an asset to this board, he's someone who has way more lived experience with the other institution than I have. For people that know his story and his history, and the work that he's done over the years. We would like to ensure that all those community slots are filled, and we have folks that are engaged and want to be a part of this process.

Judge Lazzara

Thank you very much. First, congratulations, it's wonderful to see someone who has successfully moved on from the Allegheny County Jail, we certainly appreciate that greatly. There is an open community slot, and that will be something that Mr. Fitzgerald will have to consider. Our other two members, unfortunately, had conflicts this evening, they are very much engaged within the board and newly formed subcommittees. Word can be given to our County Executive about the one spot where we don't have someone participating and maybe a decision can be made about that.

C. Carrington Keys

There was a statement made about the inmate general welfare fund, and the Lexus Nexus contract going through the inmate general welfare fund. My question is, law

library is a right. Should that come from the inmate general welfare fund, or should it come from the county?

Judge Lazzara

Deputy Williams is going to be addressing Lexus Nexus, which will not come out of the Prisoner Welfare Expense Fund. Deputy Williams will explain more fully how that decision was made. Thank you very much.

D. Autumn Redcross

I'm initiating a court watch program. I'm very excited to be amongst you and looking forward to what we can do together. Also, I wanted to second the nomination for Richard Garland in this community spot. I think it's very important that the representation be as even as possible.

Judge Lazzara

Thank you very much. We appreciate all types of voices and comments. The community participation gives us a different perspective, provides different things to think about, and we really appreciate those people that take that opportunity to participate, so thank you. I'm very interested in the court watch program, I think that'll be a very interesting thing to watch grow.

E. Sai Koros

I wanted to talk about something that happened in late October, October 23, 2019. I along with a number of other activists were arrested for peacefully protesting. We were taken to the Allegheny County Jail, at which time I'd given my talas, it's a religious garment, to my friend. And as we were going through the screening process, as we were entering the jail, I went and asked, and my friend experienced, my talas being ripped from her neck and thrown in the garbage. She clarified to the person who was inspecting her that it was a religious garment, and she wanted it back, and he shrugged it off and it went into the garbage. And she repeated herself and it stayed in the garbage. So at this point I'm wondering, what are you doing to make sure that your staff is responsible for their actions, and then also sensitive to different religious items and needs.

Judge Lazzara

We can't speak specifically to the incident, because obviously when you brought it to us today, we have no time to look into it. I can assure you that the one thing the Warden will do when he gets back is to look at that incident to see exactly what happened. In terms of how staff is instructed to respect religious items, the Warden can certainly speak on that.

Warden Harper

One of the things that is demanded of my staff is to treat everybody with dignity and respect, and we train all of our employees about IPC skills and how to treat people with

dignity and respect. I just wish that you would have notified the administration when that incident happened on October 23rd or soon after, so we could actually review video to see the who, what, when, where, and why. But the only thing I can say to you is that I apologize for the situation, but I do assure you that we take providing respect and dignity to anybody that comes into our jail seriously. We do have a policy as to what is allowed as far as religious items.

F. Olivia Bennett

On February 4, 2020 inmates on POD 4A were short 26 blankets and three new inmates entering that POD did not receive blankets. This is a reoccurring issue, shortage of blankets.

Warden Harper

Inmates not receiving blankets has not been brought to the administration's attention. Every inmate should and will receive two suicide prevention blankets during their stay at the Allegheny County Jail. The February 4, 2020 incident will be investigated.

G. Kelly Clein

Questioned when the inmates will receive the tablets. She teaches with the Foundation of Hope program. Unfortunately, there is no definite timeline as to when the tablets will be available.

Judge Lazzara

Thank you for what you do with the Foundation of Hope, it's really an awesome program. I send some of my people through it, I request that they go through it, and they really come out of it with some of those skills that they're going to need to be in the community and to be more successful. I greatly appreciate the work that you do, thank you.

3. Review of the Minutes for December 5, 2019 meeting

The Board unanimously approved a motion by Judge Lazzara, duly seconded by Sherriff Mullen to approve the minutes from the January 2, 2020 meeting.

4. President's Report

None

5. Warden's Report

Warden Harper

In 2019 we teamed up with 412 Food Rescue, this organization partners with food retailers, non profit organizations and other entities to bring health food directly to those experience food insecurities. Last year they made 17 stops to the Allegheny County Jail, in which we provided 1667 meals to this vendor. They also rescued 2000 pounds of unused meals. We're really proud, it's a great partnership in which we're providing and giving food to needy individuals in our care.

Brad Korinski

Requested a status on the Suicide Prevention Report. The Warden provided an update on the Suicide Prevention Report 2019 – We have not received the report yet, 2/6/2020. We are expected to have the report by the March Jail Oversight Board meeting.

Second request, is it possible for your administration to put together a book of policies and procedures for the Jail Oversight Board members so that we may be aware of what the policies are at the jail? When we receive complaints or are able to ask questions of the jail, we would know what the policies are of the entity we're overseeing?

Warden Harper

There are policies that I will have issues with providing due to the level of security of those policies, if I do provide the board with those policies they *cannot* go out to the public.

Brad Korinski

Redacted version is acceptable. We don't want to inadvertently disclose confidential information but thinking of a way we could meet your concerns and also improve this board's function.

Judge Lazzara

Possible to have two, one manual that includes all the public information, and one that is only for the board members. So that we can better function in our capacity as board members. We can have an update on for the next meeting.

6. Deputy Warden's Report

Deputy Warden Williams

- a. Lexis Nexis – last meeting the request was made to the board for payment through the Prisoner Welfare Expense fund, upon further discussion the payment is now going to be provided from the operating budget this year. We have a commitment from the vendor to ensure that they can transition us to the tablet program, so that everybody will be able to have access to the law library services.
- b. Batterer's Intervention Program – DHS provided the Deputy Warden with the following some statistics. In the calendar year of 2019, we had 189 individuals who participated within the batterer's intervention program. Within 3 months after their release, we had 10% recidivate and 19% within 6 months. Because there are many different reasons for why people return to incarceration, DHS looked to see of any individual who completed this program, how many recidivated with the same or similar charges, meaning charges relating to violence, and domestic violence in particular. We're happy to report that this program really does support the growth of skills for the individuals, within 3 months only 2% recidivated with similar charges, and within 6 months, 8% recidivated. Those numbers came dramatically down, showing that there are still some challenges for this population when they are reentering or reintegrating into society, but that they are not reoffending for the same charges, which would speak to the success of the program and all those that are involved with it. Thank you, it was actually a public comment that made that request, so I

was glad to have the opportunity to report out. I would like to call up Amy Kroll. She's going to give a little bit more information related to CYF and family visits at the jail.

c. **Amy Kroll**

I'm very happy to talk about the CYF, court-ordered contact visits, because they have grown over the years. Several years ago, we met with all the administration from CYF, and the family court judges. We adopted the following process. During a family court procedure, if a judge feels that they are trying to do family reunification, or they feel that they need to keep the children in contact with the parent, whether it's one custodial parent or both parents in jail, there is a process to get them to have an actual contact visit with their child. That process is, the judge orders a contact visit, and it can either be the first Saturday of every month, CYF, a court-ordered contact visit. Or, if the individual is involved in our parenting and family support program in the jail, they can have both the first and third Saturday visits. The judge prepares the court order. From there, that court order and CYF has it on their main page. This form is then filled out. It is filled out very specifically of the inmate, the child, the caseworkers and the supervisors, and the main caregiver bringing in the child to ensure accuracy and safety of the child and parent visiting the jail. ACJ Deputy Wardens then go into our system, find out where the inmate is at, and verify the information. They are then given to me and the head of classification. We contact the parties involved to confirm visit times, because males and females are not able to do their visits at the same time. The females have the 8:30am to 9:30am and the males have the 10:30am to 11:30am. In the case where the jail must cancel visits due to lockdowns or other mechanical emergencies, we will work diligently to reschedule the child's visit. The case workers bring in the children because they are doing direct observation of the visit, so we really try to make sure these visits take place. Some part is security where it goes through our Deputy Wardens, the other part we're making contact with CYF to make sure they understand that the visit is approved, and to ensure that the caregivers know when and where to bring the children. There is a dress code and visitors, at times, come in with tank tops, halter tops, and other articles of attire that is not allowed in the jail. These visits are very important, and we do not want to turn people away, so I keep extra t-shirts in my office to help those visitors.

Councilwoman Hallam

Thank you. Is there a way that we could develop some sort of procedure for making sure that these visits happen in case of a lockdown, or any other situation? Because I've just seen first-hand how important these contact visits are to the people who are incarcerated. So when we have issues where there's a lockdown on a Saturday that the visits are supposed to happen, is there a way we could pre-plan for that, and have a procedure in place that makes sure that the visits still happen, despite a lockdown?

Amy Kroll

The Warden has gone above and beyond in some of our situations where we've had lockdowns, and believe me, I understand. Monday morning, I was up on the female pod, and I had moms crying that they did not get to see their kids this Saturday. The warden, the deputy wardens usually go above and beyond, because I've been there. I usually come to these contact visits, where we've had lockdowns. But in this situation, all the elevators went down. Unfortunately, we couldn't even bring all the people down,

this is what I sat up on the pod explaining to a lot of the moms, all 3 of the female pods, to explain to them and to try to work with their caseworkers to see if we can get them in on the 15th this month. But there are situations where we just can't physically get the inmate down. They would have had to have taken the stairs, and it becomes a security issue.

Councilwoman Hallam

I understand that, in this situation specifically, but maybe if there was a specific procedure, instead of just saying we go above and beyond, and have an actual policy in place, like a rain delay for a Pirates delay, right? We have a rain date for if something happens on the day that the visits were to be had. Whether it's the following Sunday or Monday or whatever it is, just to make sure that they don't just miss their first Saturday visit, that they're not just relying on the third Saturday that they may have.

Warden Harper

We will look into that Ms. Hallam.

7. Allegheny County Jail Medical Services

Deputy Warden Williams

Pregnant Population and Services

Thank you. Today's population of pregnant females is 6. And there are services that are offered to pregnant females within the facility. We've been partnering a very long time with the Duquesne School of Nursing, as well as a Doula organization called Olli's Angels. Historically these services have always been grant-funded, and this is the first year that it's within the healthcare budget. Our pregnant females are introduced to the different supportive options, as far as their pregnancy goes. Pre-natal care, pre-natal visits, parenting classes for the pregnant females specifically. We talk about breast-feeding, adoption, any options that might be available to them, we talk about supported birth processes and their birth plans. During the visits that they have with our on-site provider, who comes from AHN, we now have a Doula present for those appointments as well. The doulas are the individuals who tend to go to the hospital, and for security reasons, since family can't be present. We don't have a large number of individuals within the room, but we do authorize and support the doulas, who go through our security training procedures, present and available for the entirety of the birthing process once they're in the hospital. And they're there for post-partum as well. We've had successful deliveries of breast milk recently, from some of the females who've given birth while they were incarcerated, and that can continue to be provided for the infant who was in the hospital. Then at time of discharge it's also provided to their family members. We're expanding some educational services as well as resources for this population, while they are incarcerated, because it can be a challenge to be incarcerated in general, but particularly when you're pregnant and expecting. We wanted to make sure that we had these services available. Both organizations consented to me letting people know publicly that they've been doing this work for quite some time, and I wanted to make sure that they did get credit.

Deputy Warden

In response to a question by Ms. Hallam regarding the time a mother can spend with the newborn. Based on the conditions of the birthing process as well as the status of the

child. There are some circumstances, unfortunately, where mom and baby are separated because mom has had to go to receive additional care, and so has baby, but typically they're able to room in. They're able to do skin-to-skin contact and latching procedures. Depending on the type of delivery, vaginal delivery versus a cesarean, which impacts when mom is going to come back to incarceration, and at that time, would be separated from baby. Unless she's chosen adoption or some other options. No confirmed, but on average the incarcerated new mother and baby spend approximately 48 to 72 hours prior to the mother's return to the facility.

Allegheny Health Department and Hepatitis Vaccines

The Allegheny County Health Department had alerted jail that there were some concerns regarding Hepatitis A and they would be willing and able to provide our organization with vaccines. Hepatitis A can be something that IV drug users or individuals who experience homelessness might be at a greater risk for. They asked if we would be willing to start a pilot program in which we were providing vaccines at no cost to the inmate population. With the health department's support, our Infectious Disease Coordinator, Amy Kroll, and reentry programs, we were able to provide 75 hepatitis A vaccines to individuals who voluntarily elected to participate. The vaccines were administered by health care professionals as was the education for any signs and symptoms, and education for the risk factors that would be included, either with contracting the illness or with getting a vaccine in general. We still have 125 vaccines available, and we are going to continue to offer these volunteer vaccine services for as long as we can. We may look at potential options for expansion as well.

Brad Korinski

Presented a question on the healthcare staff vacancies. ACJ has 2 psychiatrists as a vacancy, I'd ask that you speak on that. I also wonder, if we do have a contract with AHN, and why AHN can't under the contract provide a psychiatrist or more at the jail. Because again, they're AHN, I would think psychiatrists would want to work with a jail population, and I don't understand why we continue to see 2 vacancies for psychiatrists there, which I would think is a rather important position. So if you're not in a position, and I understand you're always put on the spot, but if AHN could come and speak to this board why they can't fulfil the contract.

Deputy Warden

I'm not going to speak for AHN, I think that that's appropriate for them to do, but I can speak to the report. I think that it can be confusing. There are vacancies, and we've had two fulltime psychiatrist vacancies for a period of time. AHN has struggled to fill those fulltime psychiatrist vacancies, but as we do on the jail healthcare side, which includes RNs, LPNs, MAs, med techs, various mental health professionals, as well as substance use counselors, if we cannot hire them as a county individual, then we contract with agencies to bring them in. AHN does the same thing. We utilize locum tenens, either physicians or nurse practitioners or physicians' assistants. We do still have psychiatric providers coming, we have 7 days a week coverage on site of psychiatric providers, we also have tele psychiatrists who are providing support to us, but they have not filled those positions. I appreciate the opportunity to speak on it, because it does appear that we don't have people providing those services. We do, they are just not official AHN employees.

Brad Korinski

And are they different people? because I would think a fulltime mental health professional who's in the facility for a lengthy period of time and knows that he or she is going to be at that facility and can work with the population, any institution, would be more preferably than locum tenens, temporary people that aren't there fulltime and aren't part of the institution. But perhaps we can have that conversation with AHN.

Deputy Warden

They contract for a period of time. We've had a physician's assistant currently who has been with us for I think nearly 6 months, and he doesn't have any intention of leaving until we no longer require his services. We do have contracted employees that come in, but AHN would have to speak to their recruitment efforts and/or their challenges with filling those vacancies.

In defense of those providers, because I don't want it to appear that they're not invested. We work very closely with all of our providers, whether they are AHN employees or from locum agencies. They are very invested, they are on site, they know the population that they are treating, and they work very well alongside our staff, so I just want that to go on the record, that yes, it would be preferable that they would stay with us forever and be our fulltime psychiatrists, but we're very fortunate with the providers we do have.

Judge Lazzara

I think we also have to recognize that there is a general, I believe, shortage of psychiatrists in the community. It is very difficult to get a psychiatric appointment. I do mental health court, I have people who come in and they have their intakes, and then they're not going to see a psychiatrist for months, because the backup is so severe. So while I understand there's a concern about that, I have a primary concern about that, it's one of my big things to make sure my folks in the jail are getting proper treatment. But we do have to recognize that there is an overall shortage that everyone is fighting with. And so the fact that we can get seven day a week coverage is fantastic. Certainly we always look to improve that, and I'm sure that the jail is going that as well.

Councilwoman Hallam

To clarify, you're saying that there *is* seven day a week coverage for a psychiatrist currently?

Deputy Warden

We have a physician, but that person is not there seven days a week. We have coverage of at least one psychiatric provider every day. It may not be a physician, it could be a physician's assistant or a nurse practitioner that specializes in psychiatric services, but seven day a week.

Judge Lazzara

thank you. Any other questions from the board before we got to the community questions? Any other questions from the board? ... no? If you're going to make a

comment, please stand up, state and spell your name please so that we have a record of it.

Deputy Warden

Responding to a questions from the community that were unrecognizable on recording. We do have a policy, and we do not restrain our females unless it would be necessary for their safety or the safety of others. In the instance this should occur, there is a very specific report that must be sent to the state to justify said actions. Those are confidential reports, so no we cannot provide those. They go to a government agency. There are policies in place for the restraining of inmates.

Brad Korinski

Your honor, I would like to add for new business for the next meeting, a presentation by the deputy controller on the inmate welfare fund so that she could explain to this board the \$2.7 million in the fund balance that is unrestricted and able to be spent by this board, and she could walk the board through where inmate welfare monies have been spent over the past 3-4 years, and the money that is available and the inflows and outflows, and to discuss that to the board in a brief presentation.

8. New Business

No new business

9. Community Corrections Reports

A. The Program for Offenders

Mike Gilmore

The County Department of Human Services conducted an audit last month of Our Drug And Alcohol Services for residents that are funded through Alda [?] and we did very well on that audit, we had no significant [unrecognizable]. I'm just reporting that we had an Alda audit last month, and we did very well on that audit. Child's Place have been providing parenting services at our female facility for a number of months, and they're expanding that program now to our male program.

B. The Renewal Center

Adam Zach

To mention a success story, Aaron Hallis, one of our reentrants, recently completed the masonry and brick-laying curriculum at the Trade Institute of Pittsburgh and is now in the process of finding a fulltime employment. We've had a long-standing relationship with the Trade Institute, for those of you not familiar, they provide tuition-free training for willing and able candidates who want to learn a trade and get meaningful employment. If you know anybody, please send them their way, and we're looking forward too many more years of our partnership with them.

C. Electronic Monitoring

Steve Esswein

844 Individuals are enrolled

114 Completed

10 Absconders

10. Adjournment

The Board unanimously approved a motion by Judge Lazzara, duly seconded by Sheriff Mullen to adjourn the meeting at 5:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Chelsa Wagner, Secretary