

The monthly meeting of the Allegheny County Jail Oversight Board, Thursday, July 1, 2021 held as a virtual conference at 4:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Honorable Judge Kim Clark

Bethany Hallam

Terri Klein

Sheriff William Mullen

County Executive Rich Fitzgerald

County Controller Chelsa Wagner

Others in Attendance:

Warden Harper

Deputy Warden Williams

1. Welcome, Call to Order and Rules

Judge Clark:

Good afternoon and welcome to the monthly meeting of the Allegheny County Jail Oversight Board. Before we get started, I like to remind everyone that we do have rules. The main rule is everyone is treated with dignity and respect. There is no exception to that rule. We hope everyone that wants an opportunity to be heard will be heard. I want to make sure that everyone gets a chance to ask a question or make a comment if they wish to do so.

3. Old Business

Judge Clark:

We are going to take some things out of order because we are waiting for folks to join us. We want to be mindful of the time including the people watching this live stream. We are going to get started. We are going to start with the old business.

A. Incarcerated Individual's Welfare Fund Sub-Committee Report

Judge Clark:

Judge Lazzara is not here and we had as an item of old business the Incarcerated Individual's Welfare Fund Sub-Committee Report. Can anyone that is on that committee let me know whether there is anything to report at this meeting? Mr. Korinski?

Mr. Korinski:

We did not have we did not have an Incarcerated Individual's Welfare Fund meeting this month. Judge Lazzara is on a well-deserved vacation at the moment but we have had progress with the study we commissioned from Pitt School of Social Work for the survey for the incarcerated residents. There has been a feedback from the Warden and the jail on the questions and the format. That is moving forward. We expect to have a survey ready for release within the next 30 to 60 days. I do thank the Warden for the assistance that he has given to the Pitt School of Social Work to move this forward. Also, we have not had the opportunity to meet to further talk about the liaison position that was discussed at the last board meeting. I know there are a number of public comments concerning the liaison position. Admittedly, that was one of my ideas that I had from a long time ago. If any of the public does have any questions about that, I do invite them to email me at brad.korinski@alleghenycounty.us. I will answer any questions that you may have, and I know people are concerned about what that position may entail or what the board envisions with that. I can just give the thinking with that I have had on that and shared with folks on the

subcommittee, who have given that a lot of thought as well. I think the next meeting we will be in a position to report directly to the board on that also. That is what I have right now, Judge Clark.

Judge Clark:

Thank you, Mr. Korinski. When we get to the public comments, we will be prepared to address the concerns of those who wrote in about that. Does anyone have any questions for Mr. Korinski about the Incarcerated Individual's Welfare Fund Subcommittee?

C. Formation of Committee for Developing Best Practices for Transgender Housing

Judge Clark:

The next item was the presentation by the Prison Society, but we will come back to that. Just to give an update, we made a motion that was approved to form a committee to develop some best practices for transgender housing. It is still in its formation. I am waiting to hear from some of the folks I invited. So, we do not have anything can report at this time. I will be sure to provide updates as we go forward.

D. Suicide Prevention Sub-Committee Report

Judge Clark:

Warden, do you have anything to present on the suicide prevention subcommittee?

Warden Harper:

The only thing I would report pertaining to the NCCHC report is that we are painting all our cells white. Once we complete painting the cells white, I will give a report when the cells are completely painted.

Judge Clark:

Any questions? Warden, because it's been awhile since we have talked about the full report, you may be able to do it now but if you cannot, maybe at the next meeting give us an update in terms of those recommendations. How many of them have been completed? What is outstanding? Do you have a projected time frame for when all of the recommendations might be implemented?

Warden Harper:

I will have that for the board at the next meeting Ma'am.

E. Update Regarding Money left on Tablets after Discharge

Judge Clark:

Warden, is there any update regarding the money left on the tablets after discharge? We were looking for GTL to provide a way to return money to the incarcerated individuals either at the time of discharge or after discharge.

Warden Harper:

GTL reported to us that they will have a process in place by the end of summer that individuals leaving our facility will be able to be given their money. I will not have an update about that until the end of summer.

Judge Clark:

The one thing I would ask, and other members can respond as well, since it has been awhile since we first approved money to be put on the accounts of the inmates on tablets and their phone accounts. I would imagine that there is money that was allocated but had not been returned to the inmates. At this time, we may not be able to identify who it belongs to but there should be an accounting. That money should go back into the IIWF. I would suggest GTL should not keep that money because it does not belong to them. It belongs in that fund to be used for the residents of the jail. If we cannot match what is left to a resident and find a good address for them or a way to get

it to them, they need to return that money to the IIFW. That needs to be made clear to them because it is money that we can use for other things, since it was not utilized for the purpose for which it was allocated. It was not allocated just to go into their account to keep. I am assuming that the other board members agree.

Warden Harper:

I will make sure I have a conversation with GTL again about seeing whether or not those funds can be put back into the IIFW but I just need the board members really understand that every inmate is advised as to how they can receive their money once they are released. They are given a card. These individuals do have the capability of getting their money.

Judge Clark:

Yes, but even in a normal course of things, for example, the court has money that needs to be returned to people and it goes into a fund. Then I think it has to be returned to the state or something. There are all kinds of entities that have money that needs to be returned to individuals. It does not belong to GTL. They contract for a service and they get paid for that. There was a pandemic and the board voted to put money on the accounts of the residents of the jail for a specific purpose. I think we also voted subsequently that the money, even if they did not use it, should be given to them upon discharge. I know they might be given that information but it either belongs to that resident or it should go back into the IIFW. There has to be a way they can figure that out. That is why the board wanted them to be here at the last meeting so we could ask those questions. It is easier when we are talking directly as opposed to me talking to you and then you talking to them and then they have a question and the board is not there to say what we need or want. I am asking you when you talk to them if you could make it clear the board believes the money should go back. Some people when they leave the jail, they leave the jail. They do not want to give forwarding information. They do not want anything. They just want out and that is fine. I get that but the money does not belong to GTL.

Warden Harper:

I will have that conversation with them again, Ma'am.

Ms. Wagner:

Judge Clark, thank you. I agree with you wholeheartedly. Just one question for the Warden, if I recall correctly, when we discussed this before, it was reported that GTL does keep that money in an escrow account.

Warden Harper:

They do keep it in an account. Yes Ma'am.

Ms. Wagner:

I wanted to make that point because I believe that should simplify matters to achieve this end without much difficult work, I would think.

Judge Clark:

Thank you. Ms. Hallam?

Ms. Hallam:

I remember correctly you had also referenced asking to meet with GTL.

Judge Clark:

To come to the board meeting.

Ms. Hallam:

Right and what is the status of that. I am still waiting.

Judge Clark:

They did not come. They wanted to meet privately for an executive session. I did not feel under the circumstances that was appropriate. For some entities, we have met with in an executive session I did think that was appropriate. I think the board all agreed they felt GTL should come because there are questions the public has the right to hear. I did not find there was anything confidential or privileged that needed to be discussed in executive session.

Ms. Hallam:

I agree. I am wondering what the path forward is for that, but you know this is there anything we can do to make them come. I mean are they allowed to just not show up.

Judge Clark:

I do not think so. I mean we do not have subpoena powers, nor do I think we should. I would still encourage them, and I would ask the Warden to encourage them. I think we are respectful people. No one is going to beat them up, we just have some questions. I realize this is probably something they did not anticipate because it is not part of their contract. They did not realize there was going to be a pandemic and every meeting the board would vote to put money on the accounts and then expect that it follows the resident when they are discharged. They could not have anticipated that. I am not ever suggesting they have done anything wrong because there is no evidence they have. I feel the money needs to go where it is designated for. That is all. I think they should come to the meeting, but I do not think we can force people to come nor do I think we want to force people to come. We are not a law enforcement agency. This is not the court. This is an oversight board. It is a different kind of entity. I am hoping by the interest people have in the meetings and the way we conduct the meetings people will want to come and talk about the services they provide in the jail and to be able to answer any questions for the board. I think that is it. They do not want to come. Hopefully, we will keep inviting them and maybe they will come.

Ms. Hallam:

And hopefully we will remember that the next time we are negotiating their contract.

Ms. Wagner:

In response to Bethany's questions, this is reminiscent for me of the situation when we had Corizon and they were not immediately responsive. I personally believe any entity doing business with the county, with taxpayers' money, should absolutely come if requested to be present at a meeting. I find GTL's response here to be appalling. However, if there is a situation where we have a problem in the future with these requests in terms of returning the money, my office certainly does have the ability to audit and within that ability we also do have subpoena power.

President Judge Clark Connection Issue

B. Presentation on Pilot for Exit Interviews with Incarcerated Individuals

Claire Shubik-Richards:

I am the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Prison Society. I know many of you are familiar with our Allegheny County Volunteer Chapter who are regular attendees at these meetings and are very active and working to ensure humane conditions at the ACJ. For those of you who are less familiar with us, as a statewide organization, we are the nation's oldest human rights organization. We were founded by Benjamin Rush and Benjamin Franklin in 1787 to work to ensure humane conditions in Pennsylvania prisons and jails. For 234 years, we have served as the monitor and ombudsperson for prisons and jails across the Commonwealth. We monitor all 62 county facilities and all 23 state facilities in the Commonwealth, primarily using incredible, community-based volunteers to serve as citizen eyes and ears, responding to concerns of incarcerated people in their localities. Our incredible group of Allegheny based volunteers was in a conversation with Judge Clark about how to amplify the voice and experience

of people incarcerated at the ACJ for this body. It is through the conversation of our volunteers and Judge Clark that we at the Prison Society were asked to work with the county to create an exit interview survey for people leaving the ACJ about their experience to ultimately be shared with you here at the oversight board. We had tremendous generosity and support from DHS and from Warden Harper. We have been able to beta test, very quickly, a sample survey to learn what works and what does not work about conducting a survey like this in the ACJ. So, over eight weekdays in May, a work in progress survey was given to 50 men nearing departure from the ACJ. The purpose of this beta test was to pilot and find out both what works logistically and what works in terms of the types of questions that were structuring. I really want to thank Amy Krull for going above and beyond to work with the Prison Society to make this possible. The pilot process has led us to think that rather than speaking with people near departure for the next round to switch to instead of quarterly sample of people who are in residence. We are thinking a quarterly sample, as opposed to people who are about to leave, will allow us to track things over time and also not gum up the release process. What I can say about the 50 surveys is the following. This is a nonscientific number. 50 is obviously a fairly small sample and we are analyzing it to present to Warden Harper and then to share with you. But in general, from this nonscientific finding of 50 people, the findings were mixed. There were largely positive observations about hygiene at the jail including access to laundry and hand washing. Issues about safety and perception of safety, depending on the question, came out different ways. So, we look forward to unpacking that with Warren Harper and then presenting that to you. The main feedback that we got from the incarcerated people who completed the survey, was first of all that it was too long, which is the main thing we are working on, and also they really appreciated the level on confidentiality that was given. When the survey was beta tested people anonymously filled it out on paper and placed it in a sealed envelope. The next round I believe is going to be done on the GTL tablets. Again, thank you to DHS for working with us to make that happen. So, the goal is to administer this facility wide, on a quarterly basis, thus enabling us to provide more comprehensive data and then to be able to share it with the jail oversight board on a quarterly basis. I just want to say that we are delighted to be able to do this. I think seeing the beta test gave me a sense that over time we will really be able to pinpoint issues if we structure this well. Thank you and I am happy to answer questions as best I can but the person who has really been spearheading this is our Prison Monitoring Director Noah Barth, who apparently Teams does not like.

Ms. Hallam:

First of all, thank you for doing this. I know this has been a lot of work that went into it in long awaited. A lot of my questions that I have are around this sample. First of all, did you say that it was all men?

Claire Shubik-Richards:

I have here in the notes that it was all men. What I want to reinforce for you was we were not doing this to get the information about the jail, we were doing this to see how the logistics worked. It would not work in terms of pinpointing issues at the jail if we only heard from men. That would not work, and we are going to make sure that is not the case. We wanted to see what we could learn about and how we could logistically do this.

Ms. Hallam:

I understand that. My next question is, since we are talking about logistics, were all these people on one specific pod? Or did you do a sample of different pods to find out if the logistics would work differently on different pods?

Claire Shubik-Richards:

I am not the right person because I know Noah was working with Amy Krull and in this beta test it was people who were being released. I would infer from that that it was not everybody from the same pod, but I do not know.

Deputy Warden Williams:

If I could jump in to confirm? It was those that were scheduled for release to the community, which is as random as we could have though it was all male individuals. It took place in the discharge and release center of the intake

department, which is where they were able to confidentially complete the forms and place them in the sealed envelopes.

Ms. Hallam:

I guess I did not understand that at first. It was people who were literally on their way out the door?

Claire Shubik-Richards:

Yes

Ms. Hallam:

Thank you for clarifying. I totally understand beta test, small sample size, I think you used the term nonscientific, but I do understand we are just getting started with this. I would like to suggest going forward that we make sure it is a diverse sample size, especially including people on the mental health pod, on RHU, people who maybe do not have access to tablets, we do know there are lots of people that do not have regular or at least consistent access to tablets, people who are non-cisgender, non-white folk, all different sexual orientation, and gender identity. I want to make sure we get a truly diverse and representative sample of the jail population.

Judge Clark:

That was the idea, but it really is an exit survey or interview of people on their way out that have been in there. When we were in the earliest formations we are even talking about if we want them to identify race, gender/gender identity, age group, just generically. I do not know whether they included those things in there but that was part of the discussion Ms. Hallam because we do want a diverse group. We want to see if there are any differences, based upon if you are not a heterosexual, white male, do you have different opinions or feelings about perceptions of the jail than others. I think that is the idea.

Ms. Hallam:

Thank you. Are there plans offered in multiple languages as well?

Claire Shubik-Richards:

Yes, and I believe it has already been translated into Spanish.

Ms. Hallam:

That is great news. Also, I know that we had discussed a survey via the IWF and the Pitt School of Social Work. Is there any overlap between the survey that the Prison Society is conducting with the survey that the Pitt School of Social Work is conducting?

Judge Clark:

I do not think they would know that because we have not seen the survey. One I would say is a point in time of who is in the jail and it is a different type of survey. This is really meant to be an exit interview if you will. Even though it is not a face to face interview. It is really a different purpose, and this is more longitudinal, and it will happen, right now the plan is I think Claire said quarterly, so it will be ongoing. It will not be just this one time. The purpose, Ms. Klein or Brad can correct me, of the Pitt study was to specifically home in on how we use the money in the IWF. It is for a completely different purpose. Is that correct?

Ms. Hallam:

I know you mentioned you were going to start doing this on the tablet, will a paper survey options still be available for folks who do not have access to tablets? Or will it be transitioning to 100% on the tablet?

Claire Shubik-Richards:

Here is the good news. Noah, even though he could not get on Teams, has been formulating answers to your questions. So, I am waiting for Noah to give me the answer because I do not know it. I can put that in the chat when I get it from Noah.

Ms. Hallam:

That would be ideal. We have some concerns about access to tablets because they have been running short.

Claire Shubik-Richards:

Noah said that issue is something that he and the group of folks that are helping him are considering working on.

Ms. Hallam:

Thank you, Claire, and Noah, we know you are listening but cannot talk, thank you too.

Judge Clark:

Thank you. I would also thank Noah and Claire. Also, John Kenstowicz, who I met with early on and really helped move this along. We had, I think, two lovely meetings together talking about this. I just want to make sure that we give a shout out to him as well. Thank you.

Warden Harper:

I wanted the board to know that everybody at the jail is given the opportunity to have a tablet, except suicidal inmates. Everyone has access to the tablets except individuals that will be harming themselves.

Ms. Hallam:

Real quick, Judge Clark. Does that include the mental health pod and RHU?

Warden Harper:

That is inclusive of mental health pod and RHU, Ma'am.

Ms. Hallam:

At the last meeting we had talked about how some pods were having to rotate on a schedule the tablets because there were not enough for everyone. Has that been corrected?

Warden Harper:

That has been corrected to some extent. We still have a few tablets we are short on; it is approximately 20. We have received about 200 more tablets.

Ms. Hallam:

What about the people who are on administrative punishments and have had their tablets taken away, not on a suicide watch but on administrative punishment?

Judge Clark:

We are getting off agenda. It is sort of related to the survey because it is done with the tablets, but I think we can have maybe later conversation. I do not want to get sidetracked from the agenda. We can go through the agenda and then if we have time at the end if there are unanswered questions or you could have a conversation with the warden about that. He is very responsive if you call him. Ms. Klein, yes?

Ms. Klein:

Do you have a number or a percentage that you are shooting for quarterly of the residents at the jail?

Claire Shubik-Richards:

We are baking the model right now. As I was just putting into the chat to thank Judge Clark and again to thank our Allegheny County volunteers who dreamt this up with Judge Clark, that this is the first time in our Commonwealth that we have approached monitoring in this way. We are baking the cake and that is one of the ingredients that we have to think about. We just wanted to make sure we could even do it. We can. It looks extremely promising.

Mr. Korinski:

I wanted to reach out to Claire. I would like to share with you and the Prison Society some of the preliminary drafts of the IIWF survey, so we can get on the same page and ensure there is not any overlap.

Claire Shubik-Richards:

I just want to acknowledge, Erin, who made us very aware of that and gave us an outline. We were not doing this blind. We would love to see that and make sure, but Erin flagged that for us right out of the gate. She let us know it was happening contemporaneously and that if we were not really careful people would get confused. I think another thing, when we are talking about baking this, is making sure that the findings are ultimately shared with the people on the inside. I will tell you, you do not have time for me to talk about this, but at the Society we have spent a lot of time over the last year thinking about how to effectively share survey results back with people on the inside. To make sure it is speaking to them and meaningful for them, to not feel like you are a lab rat being surveyed a million times.

Mr. Korinski:

Hopefully, what we do in Allegheny County can be rolled out to the rest of the counties in the Commonwealth.

2. Presentation by DHS

Judge Clark:

I am going to go back, Ms. Dalton, are we ready for the presentation? Is Katrina on?

Judge Clark:

If you could introduce Katrina Kadisevskis to the group. Please tell us who she is and what the presentation is?

Ms. Dalton:

Kat is one of our partners from Partner4Work, which is the local workforce investment board. Folks on the call I do not need to tell know how critical employment and working is to folks coming out of the jail. We have tried a number of different employment initiatives and we wanted to update you on one of those today. Kat should be available by phone and then I am going to share the slides.

Ms. Kadisevskis:

Thank you so much for your help Erin. First slide. As Erin mentioned Partner4Work is the Workforce Development Board for Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. We manage public and private dollars for workforce services across the county, including programs for job seekers with specific barriers to employment like a criminal background. The program I wanted to tell you about today is called the STRIVE Employment Program for Justice-Involved Young Adults. It is operated by the Auberle Employment Institute. Partner4Works role is we designed the program, we went after the funding from the Department of Labor and then we competitively chose a contractor provider locally. Auberle has been a great partner for us, specifically for young adult programs and for programs targeting job seekers that need help overcoming a criminal record in finding employment. Next slide. This project runs October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2021. We are no longer enrolling new participants but Auberle had a very similar program available and the final slide will be about that. If you are interested in referring someone or know someone who would be interested in the services, please do contact us. Program Eligibility - You are eligible for this project if you are 18 to 24; and that you have some kind of conviction on your record, which might have resulted in incarceration, being under supervision through out-of-home placement, on probation or parole, some kind of alternative sentencing for diversion

program; and also that you are of low income status. Next slide. Some of our program services that are career focused include stipend-paid occupational training. Anyone who is enrolled in a training program is eligible to receive \$245 a week throughout their training period, which is pretty much equivalent to minimum wage. Since this project, we have started increasing that to be a bit more competitive and really the idea is to help someone to be able to take the time out of work to go towards a career track through participation and training. Another service that we offer is that we contract with transitional job providers. Providing work experience that can help someone get that experience on their resume, develop workplace skills, and be ready for permanent employment. We offer GED prep through different partners. We also are now offering incitement for people that need to go into their GED prep. We also, of course, provide job search help, interviews support, and employment placement with some of our dedicated employer partners. We help people enroll in post-secondary ed. A couple of things to note is that Partner4Work only invests in training programs that have employer buy in. Oftentimes, we rely on our trading partners to maintain those kinds of relationships with employers and have proven relationships where when someone is going to graduate from their programs, they know that there is an employer on the other side ready to hire someone with that certification. Some of our really fantastic partners include: the Allegheny Health Network, they have a nursing assistant Academy that we see a lot of success in; The Builder Skills of Western PA, their intro to training program; New Century Careers, is a machinist training; The Trade Institute; Community Kitchen; Allstate CDL programs for commercial driver's license; and the list goes on. All of them have excellent employer connections for us to leverage. Next slide. Other program services include a whole host of supportive services. Through these Department of Labor funds, we are able to help participants pay for transportation assistance during their job search, during participation and training, and also the first month of employment. Whether it be gas cars or bus passes. We also can provide funding for workplace uniforms or required testing; document recovery including, state ID's, Social Security card, birth certificate, anything required for work; connection to mentoring or mentoring by our case manager; and linkage to all kinds of supportive services available through a very close relationship with DHS. We are able to meet basic needs like housing and health care, access the childcare subsidy or just childcare providers and other things like that. Then when someone gets employed, we offer ongoing support to them in their employment. Whether it is through coaching for advancement, talking about career tracks, maybe linkage to further training to help them advance on a career ladder. Also sometimes connecting with the employer since we are working with young adults' population. Especially with people where this is their first job or their first career track jobs by being available to an employer to help mediate in workplace issues or just that participant themselves. Maybe they are having trouble, say someone misses their bus or through no fault of their own cannot make it to work, they might not have the experience to know it is okay to call your employer and explain the situation. They might just think it is over for them. So, kind of helping to coach them through barriers like that. Next slide. We have some preliminary outcomes. Like I said, this project is not complete yet. We are still working, for example, place people in employment and we are still looking at are recidivism outcomes, but I wanted to include this to let you know that we are meeting or exceeding all of the outcomes the Department of Labor had set for this family of grants. We are actually one of the leading grantees nationally. It has been pretty exciting for us. We have enrolled 198 young adults total. Our target was 170, so we were happy to be able to overenroll and serve more people. Out of that 198, we had 61% enroll in training, some in multiple training programs. At about 120 individuals, 70% earned at least one industry-recognized credential. We have had 127 so far that have been placed in employment. According to the DOL definition of recidivism, just 2 have been convicted for a new crime within one year of release of their previous sentence and during our program participation. Right now, walking back a little bit to the eligibility criteria, this grant allows for a wide range of justice system involvement. We are not required to enroll anyone within a certain time frame of release and that means a lot of times our participants are not really facing the same acute barriers that someone might right upon reentry. That being said we want to better understand our impact outside of this recidivism definition. We have partnered with the DHS Office of Analytics to look at each participant in understanding arrest rate, conviction rate, rebooking, and all of those different categories of recidivism to just deepen our understanding of the impact of this project, regardless of whenever they completed their sentence. We do have juvenile offenders maybe whose records have actually been sealed. There is just a lot of different kinds of reentrance involved in the project. Next slide. Like I said, this program, STRIVE, is no longer accepting new applicants but AUBERLE had a sister program which is kind of STRIVE 2.0 called the Career Pipeline Program. It is funded by a grant from the state. We are enrolling the same age group with justice system involvement. Particularly, young adults that need to

earn their GED are also welcome. The same kind of benefits and the same kind of services and an even stronger connection between training and employers that value that training. Really trying to create that career pipeline and make sure that everything is a high priority occupation that is looking to grow or projected to grow in the next few years. So, if you or anyone you know might be interested in these kinds of services, paid training in particular, you can contact Abby Wolensky. She is the Director of AUBERLE Employment Institute. Her phone number 412-673-5856 x1317 and her email address abbyw@auberle.org. I am happy to answer any questions.

Judge Clark:

That was a wonderful presentation. If anyone has any questions, we will entertain them at this time. I would just say AUBERLE has been a wonderful partner with DHS and with the court, particularly juvenile court. They have many programs from foster care to everything else. We are very grateful for that partnership. Ms. Hallam?

Ms. Hallam:

Thank you. First of all, I agree, awesome presentation. My first question is how this program is connected to the jail?

Ms. Kadisevskis:

We have enrolled a number of young adults that have exited the jail or have been involved, in some aspect, with the jail, whether it just be a booking or actual incarceration. So, it is an option for anyone exiting the jail.

Ms. Dalton:

Just as Kat said, we are going to do a little more descriptive work so we will be able to describe all of the folks and their jail involvement and we can provide that to the board. While I am speaking, if I could say, if it's working anywhere near that well in terms of recidivism outcomes, like broadly defined because those are pretty narrowly defined, this would be something we would like to continue and expand. Perhaps if we have the funding to do so, offer to many more young adults leaving the jail. Programs that work that well you know need to be continued and expanded.

Ms. Hallam:

You read my mind, Erin. That was literally my next question. Thank you very much.

Judge Clark:

Thank you for a wonderful presentation. I think it is a program that most of us were not familiar with and the results are great. We look forward to next phase, rollout if you will. It is great. Thank you.

3. Old Business (continued)

F. Update on Policy for Polycom Devices to be Used for Meetings with Other Providers (CRR, Inpatient Programs, etc.)

Judge Clark:

While I was booted off, I do not know whether we covered any of these things. If you could tell me an update on the policy for Polycom devices, did we do that yet? Warden Harper?

Warden Harper:

I would like to advise the board we have a demonstration from a vendor tomorrow pertaining to how we are going to do scheduling on the Polycom machines. Once we have this demonstration, it will enable us to be able to finalize the policy on scheduling. Hopefully by the next board meeting we will have the policy finalized.

G. Update on Plan to Resume Visitations in the Jail

Judge Clark:

Thank you. Do you have an update on any plan to resume actual visitation at the jail?

Warden Harper:

Our primary concern is the health and welfare of the individuals and the workers in our facility. We have 38% of the inmate population vaccinated and almost 50% of our employees that are vaccinated. I am not going to resume visitation until we get more people vaccinated to ensure the health of everyone in our facilities.

Deputy Warden Williams:

We are continuing to look for guidance from the governing bodies that study the COVID-19 disease most closely. Additionally, we are looking towards other correctional peers. Several of the DOC programs have recently announced that they will begin resuming visits in the month of July. It is important to note the DOC's having much higher volume of acceptance rate with the vaccinations that we presently do in our facility. That is largely related to the transient nature of our population. People are not here for an extended period of time. I will of course be providing a full update related to COVID-19 and the mitigation processes within the facility, as well as infection rates and vaccination. We do know family are ready to see their loved ones and we certainly understand that being a very strong desire. As soon as it is deemed to be safer, we hope to be able to open the doors again.

Ms. Klein:

Do you have a projected percentage of vaccination you are hoping to achieve before you let visitation resume?

Deputy Warden Williams:

We are still establishing that with the help of the Health Dept. but the current research, and again COVID-19 is still relatively new even though we have all been experiencing it for a year and a half, herd immunity is indicated anywhere between 70-90% of vaccination rates. We are not anywhere there. We are also looking to other congregate settings. Because every setting is different, it is important we do not just restrict ourselves to one idea but utilize all the information available to us to appropriately evaluate the level of risk in our own institution. Although those are some numbers, I do not want anybody to feel that we are committed to something at this moment. We are still continuing to evaluate, and I think the DOC programs opening will teach us a lot as well.

Ms. Hallam:

The visits in the DOC are also conducted very differently than we conduct visits in the ACJ. In the ACJ there is what, 4 feet window to window, there is no contact, no breathing transmission during visits but at the DOC there is. You are sitting there with your loved one in at a table.

Deputy Warden Williams:

It is important to note the ACJ has multiple forms of visits. Typically, with legal entities, those are contacts, right now we are not yet ready to assume those risks. We do also have contact visits with family members within the ACJ. Now, that is not the majority, the majority are exactly as you have described. We are trying to figure out how we would accommodate multiple different groups of individuals to have contact with those currently in our institution.

Warden Harper:

Just because the regular visits are between two glasses, those visitors coming into our facility still have to go by correctional employees that still go onto the pods and could pass on the virus. Just because they are visiting between the glass, they could still bring that virus to correctional employees going to their visits.

Ms. Hallam:

I understand that. My next question, if we are closely monitoring the DOC's lead, the numbers I have seen from the PADOC on their vaccination rates are much higher than our numbers at the ACJ. Do we have any plans to adopt the educational materials that that DOC is using to incentivize vaccines at the jail?

Deputy Warden Williams:

We have geared a lot of the education to our present population. We have explored different alternatives and what we have found most recently is that confidence in the vaccines is starting to increase, in general. I think a lot of the fear associated with the safety and the quick timeline in which vaccines were released, had some people appropriately anxious when they were evaluating whether it would be a best choice. We have seen a large number of individuals have a change of opinion when their family members in the community have chosen to be vaccinated. I think there is a lot more encouragement in general. We still maintain all three vaccines available on site which is important for everybody to know. Family can really help advocate for their members within this institution to be vaccinated while they are with us.

Ms. Hallam:

Is the time we are going to take the incarcerated individuals off the 23 and 1 and put them back to normal times out of their cells for recreation and exercise going to follow the same time for allowing visits to come back? Will the population get off of 23 and 1 before they get visits back? If so, what is the criteria that we are using? I mean, I just cannot help but think that the entire jail has been on solitary confinement since March of last year. I guess I am trying to figure out what the plan is to get them off of that. If that will happen or after visits or what?

Warden Harper:

We are trying to come up with a plan as to how we can get individuals off 23-hour lock up. One of the things we are trying to do is incentivize individuals living in our facility by showing individuals that are vaccinated are getting way more out of cell time. You guys have to remember this, we still have to worry about people that are not vaccinated contracting this disease. We are trying to show individuals that have not received the vaccination that if you get the vaccination, we are going to give you way more out of cell time in hopes that they get vaccinated. We are working on the plan to try to incentivize the individuals living in our facility.

Deputy Warden Williams:

Many of the housing units are already experiencing this, Ms. Hallam, because they have larger population of individuals who are presently vaccinated on their unit. We have one housing unit on Level 3 that has 95% of their vaccines within that housing unit. Again, we have to continuously evaluate the level of risk. I think it's important that we you do not misrepresent ourselves, some individuals in this institution are still very restricted with their out of cell time and others we have been able to reduce those restrictions as we increase vaccinations.

Ms. Hallam:

How many hours out of their cell a day are they allowed if, for example, they hit whatever your benchmark is for a percentage of their pod to be vaccinated? How much time out of their cell do they get once that happens and what is that benchmark? Is it 60%? Is at 50%? Is at 95%? How do you decide once they hit that?

Warden Harper:

What we are doing, especially for the individuals on 3 that 95% of the individuals are out, we are seeing that they are giving least 3 to 4 hours of recreation a day. Of course, we want to try to give them as much recreation as possible but right now that is what it looks like we are able to give them at this present moment.

Ms. Hallam:

Warden Harper, the definition of solitary confinement is in their cell for 20 hours a day. If they are getting 3 to 4 hours a day, I feel like that is still horrible. What is the benchmark that we are using to decide that they even get those 3 or 4 hours? What percentage of vaccinations does each pod have to hit to get that extra time out?

Warden Harper:

We have not come up with that percentage, as of yet, but you got to realize we are still in a pandemic. Until we get out from under this court decree, we still have to comply with the court decree.

H. Update on Live Stream of Board Meetings When They Return in Person

Judge Clark:

We were looking at when we go back to live meetings whether we could still live stream the meeting so the public would be able to view the meetings other than coming in person. Ms. Hallam was going to check pricing information for us.

Ms. Hallam:

I reached out to Dreamscape Video Production. They are the company that County Council uses to live stream our meetings. They go through Granicus, that is where they archive the live streams of our meeting. This company is very reputable which is why County Council uses them. They are also they have been doing Plum Borough Council meetings for decades. Again, they are pretty good at their stuff. So, I did reach out to them and talk to them about the streaming and archiving of the JOB meeting. Judge Clark, when I got this proposal, I sent it to your email but it was late this afternoon so you may not have seen it yet.

Judge Clark:

I did not.

Ms. Hallam:

I did not want to send it out to the board without it going through you first. Everyone will be able to see this proposal, but I am going to go through it for you. The gist of it is the way that County Council streams and archives our meetings is through a service called Granicus. It is the legislative online service for County Council. So, because the JOB is technically through the Courts and not County Council, unless we get some sort of special approval, we cannot use Granicus for this. The person I talked to at Dreamscape did say that maybe if the courts have a platform like that we could use, but since we did not have that he suggested that we used YouTube. The quote that we got includes this man, his name is PJ, he is the owner and runs Dreamscape, setting up a YouTube channel for us. Him doing HD streaming to YouTube and also posting that meeting on YouTube after, so that it is easily accessible at a later date and by the public. The stream starts 5 minutes prior to the published start of the meeting and at end of the conclusion of the meeting. Which means they will be here to set up before, go live when we say to go live and then when we are done. Also, and this is totally up to us as a board or Judge Clark as the chair, the option that even once we do go back in person and for any reason someone's out of town but still wants to remote into the meeting, like we do on County Council, you would still be able to do it via Microsoft Teams. I know the county loves Microsoft Teams and does not like zoom or any of those other streaming functions for security purposes which I understand. This quote does give us the ability that if you are out of town or you know running late and have to get on virtually you would still do that the same way we do it now. We are required as the board to ensure that he has Internet access. I do not know if we are going back to the Gold Room or Conference Room One or what the plan is once we go back in person. If it is the Gold Room, he is already very familiar with that because that is where we do our County Council meetings. He will provide the camera, the streaming equipment, and everything else he needs to do all the streaming and archiving. The charge is two hours for \$1,500. Once a month it would be \$1,500 if we limit our meetings to 2 hours. Any additional hours would be an additional \$150. None of the timings are prorated so once you go over that two hours, even if only by a minute, it would be \$1,650 instead of \$1,500. On the initial setup of the YouTube streaming channel would be \$150 per hour. Any of his test time of him uploading or anything like that is \$150 per hour. Basically, we are looking at a flat rate per month of \$1,500. If we go over any minute up to an hour it is an additional \$150. Again, we can send this official proposal out to anyone. Our Chief of Staff at Council, Ken Varhola, said if anyone wanted to reach out to him to ask about the logistics, since he has been dealing with this organization for a while, he would be willing to talk to anyone

about it and vouch for them. I can answer any questions that anyone has. Also, I would suggest that if we decide to do this, as opposed to having taxpayers pay for this, that this money would come out of the IIWF.

Judge Clark:

A couple of things, maybe this weekend everybody can think about it and we can put it on agenda to vote on. One, do we want to continue to live stream the meetings even when we go back to in person meetings? Second issue is whether we want to spend that money out of the IIWF. I think it should go to that subcommittee to discuss they feel that is an appropriate use. Third, do we have to put this up for bids or because this is a vendor that's already used by the county can we use that vendor if we so choose? Those are the three things that I have. Do we want to live stream the meetings? Maybe we could take a vote on that. We got a lot of requests in public comments to continue to live stream the meetings even when the board goes back to live meetings. I think that is something that we could vote on because if we say no then it is a moot point. We do not need to do anything else. If we say yes, then I think we need to then think this out. Then we have to have the answer to the question on whether or not this has to go out for bids like every other contract. If it has to, then that is fine we can do that. And where the money comes? If we do not feel that the IIWF is appropriate, then the question is where does it come from. Because as far as I know we do not have a budget. The oversight board does not have a budget. Right now, the meetings are live streamed and all the public comments because the court has taken the responsibility to do that. The oversight board is not part of the court. I do not feel that the court should continue to do that. Mr. Sykes has been very wonderful and gracious, but you know he spends at least the first Thursday of every month like the rest of this in this meeting until 7 o'clock sometimes 8 o'clock. I think that is a bit much to ask somebody to continue to do that. He is done it for over a year and done a great job. I think if we are going to do it, we have to have somebody else do it. If we do not feel like it should come out of the IIWF, where would that money come from? We do not really have a budget, per say, I do not think, so I think that is the answer. I would say if you want to vote on whether we should continue to livestream the meetings I think we could do that today. Then I think the rest we have to send it to different entities to answer some of these other questions. The first question is would we want to pay for it out of the IIWF. If the answer to that is yes, then we would need a vote from the board. If the answer is no, then we would need to figure it out. I could then meet with the County Executive and see if there is any funding that would be available to pay for it if that is the pleasure of the board.

Ms. Hallam:

I would like to see if anybody else has any comments first, but I would be willing to make the motion to do the live stream. I would just like to clarify for everyone before we vote that this is not a question about returning to in person or not, this is that livestreams would continue when we are in person.

Judge Clark:

Yes. There were many comments from people because we were talking about when we are going back to in person meetings. I think people realize it is going to happen and obviously many more people get to see the meetings because it is live streamed. All they have to do is click a button and they can view the meeting. There is been a desire from the public to continue that. I would just say that we serve the public, so I think that we ought to listen to what the public tells us. That is just my thoughts. We have a motion. Is there a second to the motion?

Ms. Wagner:

I will second it.

Ms. Wagner:

First, this proposal would be under the amount required to go and seek bids and it is an existing vendor. So that is completely within our ability to enter into that kind of contract without seeking bids. Second, the Controller's Office might be an option to be able to pay for the service. Particularly, by Pennsylvania statute with the Controller being the Secretary of the Board. Since I am the Controller, I will tell you, as you all know and see with the minutes, our office has made them very comprehensive because we believe that transparency is really important. So, they

look a little bit more like a transcript as opposed to minutes. I believe that following all in all this would really be an important step for this board especially in this day and age. I certainly like to see these being made public in that way and would offer any help that we can provide, including bringing it under the Controller's budget.

Judge Clark:

Thank you. That's great. As I said, I think by the public comments that we have gotten, the public has expressed a desire. We are here to serve the public. I think whether we personally agree with it or not I think the public has spoken. Anyone else have any comments or questions? If not, I will call for a vote. All those in favor?

Others:

Aye

Judge Clark:

Any opposed? It is unanimous. Thank you. I would just ask I think Brad, Ms. Klein, and Judge Lazzara, I do not know whether anyone else is on the IJWF subcommittee but if you could meet and then at the next meeting tell us what your pleasure is and how this is going to be paid for.

The board unanimously approved a motion by Ms. Hallam, duly seconded by Ms. Wagner, to continue to livestream Jail Oversight Board meetings when the board returns to in-person meetings.

I. Presentation Regarding Commissary Price Comparison

Judge Clark:

The next thing is the presentation regarding the commissary price comparison. I think there was information sent out to you with all the meeting materials. Mr. Korinski is going to make that presentation.

Mr. Korinski:

Thank you, Board Members. I did send out the materials beforehand to Judge Clark and then she distributed them. For any members of the public who are listening, these materials that I discuss will be made available on the Controller's website tomorrow for anyone that wants to look at that as well. Given some of the public comments concerning the price of the commissary and there was a perception from the public and the inmates that price of the commissary was quite high, I decided to take a look into the commissary pricing with the Controller's office to determine what the pricing was vis-a-vis Summit, the current provider, and Keefe, who was the former commissary provider. Then taking a look at the county contract, which provides that none of the commissary prices should be in excess of 10% of the current market value. Preliminarily, it should be said that commissary pricing is not an issue unique to Allegheny County. Certainly, county jails throughout the United States and the Commonwealth have people complain about excessive commissary. Allegheny County is unique, I think, in the Commonwealth in that we put a Commission that we received from commissary into the Incarcerated Individual's Welfare Fund and not into the general fund. Most counties in the Commonwealth put that commission into the general fund. That being said, if the members would look at the spreadsheet, I provided which is the market price comparison. I took the Summit price, the Keefe price and then for current market value, I looked at Target, Walmart, CVS, or in some cases where I could not find a price, Dollar General. Mostly it was Target, Walmart, and CVS. If Drew Carey ever has me on the Price is Right, I think I am going to win because I know the prices of a lot of items that boy, I did not know before. Then I broke that down on the spreadsheet into clothing, health, miscellaneous and snacks. Then there is an item for inconsistent, which would be items provided by Keefe that is not provided by Summit. By and large, I found that Summit, the current provider, was more expensive than Keefe. Probably, the notable exception of clothing where it would look as if Summit is cheaper than Keefe. If you look at the column where I compared the Summit prices to the current market value then I determine whether or not that was in excess of the 10% allowed by the contract, for a majority of items my conclusion would be Summit is in excess of that 10% restriction. Admittedly, Keefe would have been in excess of that restriction as well. I would

have to say that I would like to hear from summit. That it would appear that they are in a violation of that 10% clause in the county contract, which I also provided to the board.

Judge Clark:

That is a good question. Does anyone have any questions for Mr. Korinski, or does anyone have any comments? There is the clause in the contract, and that means they are in violation of the contract. I do not know what happens with that and I do not know whether Mr. Bacharach has anything he wants to say on that. The board will have some discussion and then we have to decide what, if anything, we want to do about it. What happens generally when someone is in violation of their contract?

Mr. Korinski:

Admittedly, Judge Clark, in looking at the 10% current market value, I went to the CVS, Target, and Walmart within 10 miles of the ACJ. I do not know in commissary practice, the phrase 10% of market value is say a term of art, I do not know that. I used my best judgment as to what that would be and I know the Warden said he used the 10-mile radius, so we did too. Again, I invite board members to comment or Summit to comment as well.

Judge Clark:

I had a question for Mr. Bacharach he may not be able to answer it and then we will take questions or comments from the board. Mr. Bacharach, what normally happens if you know when someone has a contract with the county, and they are not in compliance with that?

Mr. Bacharach:

Your Honor, I do not normally do a lot of that, but I suspect that initially the process would be present the contractor with the information that indicates that they appear to be not in compliance. Ask them to explain why they think they are in compliance. Then make a decision after that. Mr. Korinski pointed out the 10% maybe a term of art and they may think that the sample he has is not the appropriate one. They may or may not have a good reason for that.

Judge Clark:

I guess then if they did say it is a different sample then we would have the right to say what sample did you use. I think that is one thing. Thank you. I mean, that is helpful. Ms. Hallam?

Ms. Hallam:

I was just wondering if Mr. Korinski has come across in his research any commissary providers, I know you said Keefe and Summit did not fall within the 10%, I was wondering if you came in contact with any commissary providers that would fall in the 10% market value rate?

Mr. Korinski:

I do not know about would they fall within the 10% market rate because that's kind of a hypothetical. I have looked at, in my research, commissary providers in this Commonwealth and some selected in the United States certainly are able to. We have one in Altoona called the Oasis and I believe they have contracts with other counties in other States and they are able to. I mean one of the issues that that may be an inherent tension in this contract is the county under the Summit contract is promised a 55% commission. I think if I looked at that commission versus others in the Commonwealth is a rather aggressive commission. I think you could say high commissions equal high prices. But again, the County is trying to do their level best by saying it cannot be more than 10% in excess market value. It really is on Summit the vendor who bid for that contract to try to meet those contract conditions. They knew that going in so they should be meeting that.

Ms. Hallam:

It is based off of your research that commission, and I think you said a 55% Commission that the county is getting off of everything purchased, 55%, is that right?

Mr. Korinski:

That is what is stated in the contract. Yes.

Ms. Hallam:

Okay, if that 55% commission were eliminated, would the cost to the incarcerated individuals be within the market rate that it is supposed to be.

Mr. Korinski:

That I do not know because it is a function of what the commissary vendor will charge. In my research of other commissary contracts, I saw 45% commissions, 48% commissions, and 55% seemed on the high side to me. Again, it is based on what that commissary vendor will charge. The commissary vendor made the bid saying 55% and also said 55% knowing that the county forbids in excess of the 10% market value. So, it is really up to the commissary vendor to have pricing that both meets the commission and the restriction.

Judge Clark:

I just wanted to just throw one thing out there so despite the fact is that the money is going into the IIWF. I do not want anybody to think it is going in the county general fund to use for other things. It is not that we should not have this discussion about the commissary account and what it costs. Ultimately, it is the residents in the jail that are bearing the cost of it when they need to buy things. Also, their families that might have limited resources that are putting money on their books so that they can buy things that they need or desire during their time that they are living at the jail. I am not suggesting that we do not have the conversation. Yes, Ms. Hallam?

Ms. Hallam:

I just want to remind everyone that the IIWF is the general fund. I know we talked about this in previous meetings but just to clarify there is nothing that forces the county to let that money be used for the welfare of the folks who are incarcerated. So, it is going into the county general fund just under the line item of the IIWF.

Judge Clark:

Okay but the county has done a good job at using it for the intended purpose of that line item. I just want to make sure that everybody understands that and that we are not saying that the county is doing anything wrong or nefarious with this money because it is really being used for what it is intended. We are trying to actually look at ways to use it better. One of the things that the county did last year, I think, time sort has stood still for me during this pandemic, was decided that they would not be making requests to the board to utilize the money from that fund for other things that maybe the county should bear the costs for up front. That has enabled us, I think, to a large degree to approve these lovely motions every month from Mrs. Hallam to put money on the books of the residents because they aren't able to have in-person visits at the jail and they need to have more contact through their tablets and through telephone calls. That, I think, has been a good process. Even though we are taking rather substantial amounts out of the fund every month we do not appear to be in danger of spending out all the money. So, I think that has been a good process. I guess the question is now we have the information what is our next step? What, if anything, should we or do you want it to do about it? We have the information and does anybody have a recommendation as to the next step? What can happen next?

Ms. Hallam:

I personally would like to go with what Mr. Bacharach said. Invite Summit to respond to the findings of the Controller's audit of their prices.

Judge Clark:

We can do that. I will get with Warden Harper to try to arrange that for the next meeting. I might draft a letter to go to them first to explain what it is the board is concerned about and so forth. I would want to talk to the folks who entered into the contract and signed the contract and then come up with a plan. I will touch base with them first. Then if we can get the Summit here at the next meeting or get some definitive answers. In the interim, if any of you have any specific questions or things that you want to be addressed, if you could shoot those to me. I would appreciate that, so I can gather your thoughts on the matter. Ms. Klein? You had your hand up.

Ms. Hallam:

It would be helpful to provide Summit with the research that Mr. Korinski did. I would ask that they be sent that.

Judge Clark:

I will do that. Mr. Korinski, I do not know if you want to draft something in a memo form or I could just take what is in the email that you sent out. There is a little bit of a summary, but I can talk to you about that.

Ms. Klein:

Yes, I want to thank you for spending the time to do that, so we can validate that we think the prices are too high.

J. Update on Plan for the First Stage of Compliance with the Solitary Confinement Ban Ballot Referendum

Judge Clark:

Next is an update from the Warden on the plan for the first stage for compliance with the solitary confinement ban that was on the ballot referendum. This came up at the last meeting and we did get some public comments and questions about it. Warden?

Warden Harper:

We will be in compliance with the referendum. According to the referendum, I had to provide the JOB a report 30 days after the certification of the election. I will send you my report on July 7th, which will be the 30th day. The fifth of each month, I have to present it to the board. I will be in compliance with everything pertaining to the referendum.

Judge Clark:

We will look forward to the report and then will report out at the next board meeting. Ms. Hallam?

Ms. Hallam:

There are some other things that are actually implemented like the ban on solitary confinement in the banning of the use of weapons (restraint chair, chemical agents, and other banned weapons) that takes place in December. Is there a plan that you have yet for implementing this whenever it is implemented in December?

Warden Harper:

I will not be able to fully implement everything pertaining to not using leg shackle, the restraints chair, and chemical agents until later in the year. We are preparing now to try to be in compliance. This is a huge task because a lot of tools is being taken out of our toolbox. So, this is huge for us. I will not have anything for the board for a couple of months.

Ms. Hallam:

OK and then the report that you have to deliver on July 7th, is that something that you said the 5th of every month you are going to do? Does that mean you are going to provide it to us separate from our monthly meeting?

Warden Harper:

I am going to be in compliance with the referendum. It says the 5th of the month to the Jail Oversight Board. I will make sure that I will comply, and I will have that report to Judge Clark by the 5th of the month.

Judge Clark:

Any other questions? Alright. Thank you, Warden. I know it is a big task, but we really appreciate the hard work that you and the other staff at the jail are undertaking to comply with the referendum.

4. Public Comment

Judge Clark:

I received I believe 27 separate public comments. I am not able to read all of them. Some of them have deal with matters that have already been addressed and some of them will be addressed when Deputy Warden William gives her report. I will try to go through as many of them that have not been answered. Some are really just comments and not questions because there are so many, I will probably not read the comments. The board has the ones that do not ask questions. The board has them all and they will all be posted. Anybody will be able to read them.

A. Laura Perkins – PA Prison Society

“As the county slowly reopens and lessens restrictions for in-person meetings, I have two requests: 1. that the JOB continue offering remote viewings of its meetings and online submission of public comments, and 2. that the jail continue to provide free remote visitation for incarcerated folks. While we are excited at the prospect of in-person meetings, we need to protect our most vulnerable and respect accessibility for all. Thank you.”

Judge Clark:

Ms. Perkins, the board did vote to continue to have the meeting live stream even when we return in-person. The issue of the online submission of public comments is something that I think the board has to ask to discuss and continue. It is very difficult because we have so many. If we continue to take public comments and I get 27 or 30 public comments and then ten people show up to the live meeting want to speak, I do not know how you decide. We can take public comments, but does that mean we have to answer them all in writing if we do not get them to into the meeting. There is a lot of considerations because we will never be able to get through the meetings. We could say that we could allow a half hour for public comments but that will not get us through all of the comments. I would ask the board to think about the issue of the public comments. Personally I feel that when we return to in-person meetings then the public comments should be presented in-person as they were prior to the pandemic because I do not know how else you do it at the meetings. Do you not let the people at the meeting speak or do you read all the comments? When I try to group the comments, people get mad because I have not read their comment or maybe I do not get the grouping quite right. It is very cumbersome. It is not just as easy as it looks to take all these comments. My secretary does a nice job of grouping them for me so I can kind of look at what are the general themes, if there is a general concern to make sure they are addressed. I think we all agree that we will continue to live stream meetings. We just have to figure out how that is going to happen but as for the public comments, I think there has to be some thought in that. Yes, Ms. Hallam?

Ms. Hallam:

I have been brainstorming with other members of the board a solution to the public comment process would you rather me bring it up now. I was going to wait for new business.

Judge Clark:

You could bring it up in new business. Especially if it is something that you might want to ask for a motion for. Then, Warden, the second request in the comment is the jail continue to provide free remote visitation for incarcerated folks. I do not know exactly what that means, whether that is putting money on the books. Warden, do you know what that means?

Warden Harper:

I am thinking that she is talking about the \$50 that the board gives for the tablet and the commissary.

Judge Clark:

That is what I was thinking as well. Ms. Perkins, if you would not mind clarifying your questions and maybe calling my office or something to let us know specifically what you want, so that we can address it. Then the board can decide what they want to do about that. Thank you for that comment.

B. Allison Crowley

*"If the Board goes ahead with creating a JOB Liaison position, I feel very strongly that they should find a funding mechanism other than paying the salary out of the IWF. I think money from the IWF should go *directly* to incarcerated individuals' welfare whenever possible. A JOB Liaison may help the Board protect incarcerated people in the long-term, but incarcerated people also have immediate needs that are not being met. For example, I think it would be great to increase the amount that the Board puts on each person's commissary account every month."*
And

Sara Walsh

"I was surprised when Judge Lazzara brought up hiring someone to be a liaison for the Board during the "Old Business" section of the June meeting. I didn't remember hearing about it before and I believe Ms. Moss even asked at the time why it was on the Old Business part of the agenda since it hadn't been discussed. (I went through the May minutes to double check and didn't see anything about the liaison position there). I don't think the Board's vote on the proposal from last month should count since the public never got a chance to comment and the Board didn't really discuss it before voting. I hope the Board will discuss it in detail this month, and then vote on it in August so that everyone can weigh in on this really important decision."

Judge Clark:

As the board knows, I had mentioned that. I sent an email out and I have a proposal that I thought may address the concerns about the public's ability to weigh in on something that the board wants to vote on. Do we want the public to have that opportunity? So, I am going to push that to new business as well. There is nothing definitive yet about who the liaison would be or any of those kinds of things. I ask the IWF subcommittee to consider the comments by Ms. Crowley and Ms. Walsh and others as well about how we paid for this liaison and maybe reconsider to say do we need the liaison and should it come from that that fund. I am going to ask that go back to the subcommittee.

C. Chloe Barone

"By the terms of the contract with Summit, the County makes a minimum of a 30% commission on commissary purchases. How much does the County earn by commission each year? (I know the contract with Summit just took effect this year, but the 30+% commission has been consistent across past contracts). If that's not information the Board has access to, I'd appreciate any guidance on how I might be able to find this information. Thanks!"

Judge Clark:

We went over that and there is sort of a plan to look at that. So, thank you Ms. Barone for that comment.

D. John P Kenstowicz – Pennsylvania Prison Society

"At the May JOB meeting, the Board moved to implement 10 recommendations to improve jail operations as a result of interviews with former ACJ administrative staff (NAMES REMOVED FOR CONFIDENTIALITY). In December 2020, the board approved a motion to conduct post-employment interviews with ACJ employees. These employees have experience with jail operations and can offer insights for continuing improvements. Japan's industrial success in the 70's has been attributed to listening and valuing the opinion of workers, people actually doing the job. It is great to see the JOB going in this direction. How does the board see this happening? The December discussion

included conducting interviews on a rotating basis, mindful of members' time. If the board feels it is too busy, this may be the time to think about expanding the board to help pursue these important initiatives."

Judge Clark:

I remember at that meeting I was not willing to do it. I do not have the time. So, I do not know whether there is been any further discussion by anybody on it. The question is how does the board see this happening? I do not know because it has not come back before the board again. I do not know if anyone wants to think about that and come back with a proposal. I was on the group that did the 2 exit interviews, along with Ms. Klein, Ms. Hallam, Ms. Wagner, and Ms. Parees. I think those interviews were very helpful to all of us and that is why we have some recommendations based on that. I do not know about going further. Maybe our committee that did the interviews could meet before the next board meeting and think about this particular question. I know I have my thoughts but just because I feel like I cannot do it and it is not a good idea does not mean it should not be done. I have been known to change my mind and convinced I am wrong. So, you may be able to convince me of that. I can do that.

E. Sadie O'Brien

"Last month someone asked a question about why COs get a salad bar with fresh greens while incarcerated people don't, and that got me wondering about other differences in the food served to these 2 groups. Could we see the menu of food served to ACJ staff for comparison with the menu for incarcerated people?"

Judge Clark:

I think the menus for the residents of the jail are posted. This person is asking could they see the menu for staff for comparison.

Deputy Warden Williams:

Your Honor, this was a submission to us. So, we have received the staff menu and we will be posting that to the website just as we have the incarcerated individual dietary plan.

Judge Clark:

Alright, thank you. So, Ms. O'Brien they will be posting both.

F. Malcolm Durrige

"I was checking out the ACJ website page on Inmate Meals and Commissary, and saw this: "The menu schedule is reviewed by a registered dietitian. ACJ's food service operation is subject to frequent inspections to ensure that all applicable standards and laws are met." Just wondering if the Jail can expand on that! Is there a staff dietitian? How often do they review menus? Does the dietitian ever see the prepared food itself so they can make sure everything is being done according to the menu? How frequently is the food service operation inspected, and by whom? Sorry about the "Twenty Questions" approach but hope you can help :)"

Deputy Warden Williams:

Hopefully, I will field the answers to all of the questions. The vendor has a registered dietitian, who is the individual responsible with preparing the menus per the contract specifications. Sometimes those menus must be modified, and we have a multitude of menus to meet the needs of dietary restrictions, such as medical diets and/or religious observation meals. The dietitian does not work on site. That individual is employed by the vendor and is responsible for overseeing that dietary menus of multiple different contracts. They are certainly available for consultation whenever needed and they are available to their dietary employees as well if there would need to be substitution. As far as the compliance, every single meal that is prepared is being reviewed to make sure that it is appropriate to the menu if there were substitutions and that it would be safe and available for any individuals to eat.

G. Jess Highland

"Hi, last month I asked a question about making sure food served to incarcerated people at ACJ is fresh and healthy. The Warden said that Jail employees do NOT eat the same food as incarcerated people, and I'd like more of an explanation for that. I'm also wondering who prepares food for Jail employees, and where they do it. We know unpaid incarcerated kitchen workers prepare food for the incarcerated, do they also prepare the food that Jail staff eat? Are staff meals cooked in the same kitchens where food is prepared for incarcerated people?"

Warden Harper:

Your Honor, correctional employees have an option of a warm prepared meal and a salad bar. These food choices are outlined within the contract. The food is prepared in the facilities kitchen and/or the employee lounge. Under the supervision of a dietary worker, correctional staff and incarcerated individuals prepare the meals within our facility.

Judge Clark:

Is that for staff and the residents?

Warden Harper:

Yes ma'am.

Ms. Hallam:

So, if I am incarcerated in the ACJ, how do I get in contact with the dietitian?

Warden Harper:

You would not actually get in contact with the dietitian. You would write a request to the Summit vendor and the vendor will contact the dietitian for any response to the question. The dietitian is not here on site.

Ms. Hallam:

And it is not somebody that incarcerated folks have direct access?

Warden Harper:

They do not.

H. John Cooper

"Following up on my question about the fire in Pod 8E in April-- The Warden said in the May Public Comments that a blog "erroneously" reported the fire was set in protest, but then at the June meeting he said he didn't know whether or not it was a protest. Has the Warden or anyone on the Board gotten to the bottom of this? If it was indeed a protest, what were they protesting? Best, John"

And

Brendan DeBiasio – Social Worker

"I'm still hoping to learn more about the fire in Pod 8E back in April. It was alleged the fire was set in protest because people on the pod weren't getting their psych meds, and as someone who works in mental health this concerns me greatly. Withdrawal from psych meds can be dangerous unless done very carefully, and going off a med that was working can increase suicidal thoughts and behaviors. Pod 8E is the segregated ("solitary confinement") unit, so all these risks are multiplied as isolation is incredibly harmful to mental health. I'm still hoping to hear that the Board has checked in with people incarcerated in 8E or their loved ones to see if they're okay. Please provide updates if there are any. Thanks very sincerely for your time."

Warden Harper:

There is no report that indicates that the fire was in reference to any protest at the jail. So that is my response to that question.

Judge Clark:

Although, some of the people might not even still be there that were there at the time of the fire but one of the things that Mr. DeBiasio wanted to know was an update on how the folks on 8E are doing.

Warden Harper:

One of the things we do when we have an incident like that, which is the first thing we did, is clear the air and make sure that individuals that need any medical attention are provided with it. That is what we did on that day. So, everybody is fine from when that incident took place.

Judge Clark:

Then we did have a couple of questions about an update on the implementation of solitary confinement ballot initiative. I believe the Warden answered that.

I. Alex Washington

“I’m wondering what happens when there are not enough Corrections Officers on duty at ACJ. That must make it harder to give incarcerated people time out of their cells and probably makes it harder to take people to and from medical appointments, and other essential Jail functions. How does this understaffing affect the daily functioning of the Jail and the quality of life of incarcerated people?”

Warden Harper:

One of the things I will not get into his staffing of the jail, but I will say that if there is a need for anybody to attend an appointment, we will make sure these individuals attend. But for security reasons, I am not going to get into staffing at the jail.

J. Madison Perry

“It seems like there are still a ton of job openings at the Jail for really important positions. As of right now (June 29) there are active postings for Director of Mental Health Services, Director of Substance Use Program Services, and Director of Nursing just to name a few. It seems like a safety risk to be holding people with serious medical, mental health, and substance abuse issues at ACJ when there simply aren’t enough staff-- let alone credentialed staff-- to meet their needs. Can the Board and the Jail update us on their ongoing efforts to release more people back into the community, and otherwise reduce the Jail population?”

Judge Clark:

I guess I am the one that would have to answer that because as I said at the meetings the Warden may have control over many things in the jail but he does not have control over who is in the jail and how long they were there. That is the function of the court. Everyone in the jail is there because a judge ordered that. Whether it is a Magisterial District Judge, Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, or a Federal Judge, there is someone that has ordered that a person is incarcerated. I can say on behalf of the 5th Judicial District we continue on a daily basis to review the jail population and make efforts to decrease it. We look at those numbers every day. I have regular meetings with the staff in criminal division to make sure that we are really continuing to pay attention to it. We monitor it. Folks that are arraigned and incarcerated pre-trial by an MDJ that do not have a bail that lets them out, have the right to have that bail reviewed by a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas. That happens every day the court is open. Many other people are released from the jail. Now that jury trials have resumed, we are hopeful that numbers will continue to decrease because we were not able to do many jury trials during the pandemic. Now that we are, that will get more people released because the trials will be resolved. There will be a verdict of guilty or not guilty. Either way, it would get most of those people out of the jail and either back into the community and many of them to a state corrections facility. The process is once jury trials resumed many other cases will naturally work out. There will be plea agreements that are accepted and there will be a lot of things that will further reduce the jail population. I am very excited to report one of the things being worked on in a big way in Allegheny County by many different entities, along with the court, the County Executive, the Department of

Human Services and others, is just to really look at ways to divert people from jail in the first place. Connect had a wonderful two-day pre-arrest diversion summit. It was very well attended. There were many presentations on how police can do something other than arrest to hold people accountable for minor infractions and looking at ways to make sure police have other avenues/tools in terms of arrest. If someone is having a mental health crisis and really should not be in the jail or someone is having a crisis with drug and alcohol addiction and should not be in the jail. Over the last couple of weeks, I have learned about Renewal's new program. Maybe when we hear the community corrections report, Renewal can say little bit about their Pathways to Recovery Program. There are many things going on. So, we are really looking at ways to continue to reduce the jail population. We are trying to educate folks on utilization of things other than cash bail and to really make sure that we really get to the people that have to be there that are not serving a sentence. When you look at the data there are very few people in the county jail that are serving a sentence. They are all detained for other reasons. Many of them are detained on serious charges and really should be detained because they present a danger to the community or to a particular victim. Others are detained because they committed their charge with a new offense while they were under supervision. The judge who had them on probation has issued the detainer and so they cannot get out. We are looking at ways to try to streamline the process to deal with the new charges and the detainer so that people are not spending longer periods of time at the county jail. So, that is what I could say is going on. Ms. Hallam?

Ms. Hallam:

My question is in regard to the public comment, about specific progress on Safety and Justice Challenge Grant effort that are targeted in lowering the jail population. I know that this is something that is a function of both the County and the Courts, specifically you in the Courts and the Executive in the Administration has made it a priority to reduce the population of the jail, which you know I am a big supporter. I am just wondering what the progress of that grant is and also how, whether it is myself personally or the various row offices represented...

Judge Clark:

I can ask them if they would like to make a presentation before the board. I get a monthly briefing from them on the grant and so I have ongoing knowledge and what is going on. I have asked some of them and others to make presentations and they have done a wonderful job. If they agree to do it, I am sure they will, if they can make a presentation at one of the meetings coming up soon. I think it is just too much and they have all the data. I do not want to give any wrong information, but I think that would be a nice idea for the public to have some information. Erin, do you think that is a good idea?

Ms. Dalton:

Yeah sure that sounds perfect. It is a lot Councilwoman Hallam, so happy to go into more detail.

Ms. Hallam:

Yes, I would love that very much and I did not know if the Executive wanted to add anything about his administration because I know they have been big proponents of that as well.

Mr. Fitzgerald:

As the Judge said we are working on that very diligently and a lot of partners are coming together, including, obviously, the President Judge. She has done a great job and we want to do everything we can to use diversion, use other tools, to lower the population.

Ms. Hallam:

Thank you and if there is any way that members of the JOB or even County Council can assist in that, I am sure we would all be on board. So, thank you.

K. Samantha Adirondack

“How many times was the restraint chair used last month? Why does ACJ use the restraint chair so much more frequently than other Pennsylvania jails?”

Judge Clark:

I will say this, there is a subcommittee that is looking at that and making some recommendations. I think Mr. Korinski and Ms. Moss, who could not be with us today, will be making a report to the board at the next meeting. Is that correct, Mr. Korinski?

Mr. Korinski:

That is correct, Judge Clark. I spoke to Ms. Moss at length this week and she has some ideas that I think will really be very impactful for presentation to the board.

L. Amber Riazzi

“I know it’s been discussed but I am still so concerned about the pest situation at ACJ. Myself and others have tried really hard to ask detailed questions so we can get specific answers but it feels like the Warden refuses to say anything other than “the exterminators come twice a week.” Is the Board able to reach out to Complete Pest Solutions and ask them for more information about the services they provide? Maybe they could send someone to a JOB meeting to answer some questions, like GTL is going to do about the money left on tablets? Thanks.”

Judge Clark:

I am not so sure what more they could answer other than they do the extermination twice a week and I think all parts of the jail. I do not know what other information could be gathered. If anyone has any suggestions could you let me know?

M. Natasha Clay

“One of the major suggestions made by the NCCHC Suicide Prevention Program Assessment report was that ACJ should “Increase medical leadership and safe housing for inmates withdrawing from substances.” Could Deputy Williams give a brief overview of how that suggestion has been implemented since October 2019? Does the long-term plan include expansion of MAT services for people with substance use disorders?”

Judge Clark:

She is going to talk about that in her report so we will put that off.

N. Naomi Coen

“Now that the solitary confinement ballot initiative is approved, I’m wondering if people who were being held in segregated housing have been released into the general population? Is there a timeline for when they might be released (if they haven’t already)?”

Judge Clark:

Warden, I do not know who whether you want to comment upon that, or you want to wait until after you have released your report to the jail.

Warden Harper:

I would really like to wait until I release the report to the Jail Oversight Board, your Honor.

Judge Clark:

That is all for the public comments. I want to thank the public for their thoughtful comments and especially for your concern for some of the most vulnerable citizens of our county, who currently reside at the ACJ.

5. Review of the Minutes for June 3, 2021

Judge Clark:

Ms. Carroll sent out the draft of the minutes from the June 3, 2021 meeting. I hope that you had an opportunity to review them. At this time, I would ask for any additions or corrections or a motion.

Ms. Hallam:

I will move.

Judge Clark:

Is there a second?

Ms. Klein:

Second

Judge Clark:

Any comments and questions. All those in favor?

Others:

Aye

Judge Clark:

Any opposed? Alright, the minutes are approved with much thanks to Ms. Carroll for an outstanding job.

The board unanimously approved a motion by Ms. Hallam, duly seconded by Ms. Klein, to receive the Jail Oversight Board Meeting Minutes from June 3, 2021.

6. President's Report

Judge Clark:

I do not have anything additional to report.

7. Warden's Report

Warden Harper:

I would like to report to the board the retirement of Chief Deputy Warden David Zetwo from ACJ. His last day was June 25, 2021. We are really going to miss his expertise and knowledge. I am excited to announce the promotion of Jason Beasom as the Chief Deputy Warden of Operations at the ACJ. Also, Adam Smith to Deputy Warden.

Judge Clark:

Thank you. Congratulations and we look forward to working with them. Anything else you want to report today?

Ms. Hallam:

Can I ask a question about that first before you move on?

Judge Clark:

Yes

Ms. Hallam:

I heard about this change in administration. Did ACJ go through a competitive hiring process before promoting these people from within?

Warden Harper:

I do not have to go through a competitive hiring process. I base my decision on the work that these individuals have demonstrated while they were here. I made that selection Ma'am.

Ms. Hallam:

I was just wondering, these positions, these changes are not temporary they are the permanent new people who are filling those positions permanently.

Warden Harper:

Yes, Ma'am.

Warden Harper:

Also, I would like to announce Dwight Edwards has been promoted to Major at the ACJ. That is all I have.

8. Deputy Warden's Report

Judge Clark:

Then we will move to the Deputy Warden's report. Deputy Warden Williams, I do not know where you want to start. We have the Covid update, an update on the modifications of health care record, and Medication Assistance Treatment update.

Deputy Warden Williams:

I organized my presentation in order of the agenda, so if it suits the board I will proceed in that fashion.

Deputy Warden Williams:

I will also say that we are having some technological difficulties, so we sometimes mute here without any of us pressing a button. We are all going to make sure that our light says green and I may be fiddling throughout that to make sure that I am still on. So, I do apologize for that.

A. COVID Update (testing, vaccinations, dashboard, etc.)

Deputy Warden Williams:

We have continued to update our website and we are working to make sure we can provide the most up-to-date numbers. When it comes to vaccinations, we are a few days behind in updating those numbers. They are present and current as of today, but if individuals from the community are continuing to check our website, they will notice sometimes there is a lag time in vaccinations. That is because we are continuing to verify the vaccination status of individuals as they come in and making sure we can provide second doses to individuals who are within their vaccine series.

The website will indicate 2,769 incarcerated individuals have received a PCR viral diagnostic test for COVID-19. Of those, 348 or 13% have been found to be positive throughout the facility during the pandemic. We have one presently positive individual in our facility and that is not reflected in our testing numbers. The reason for that is we received the individual yesterday. So, they were tested somewhere else. They were in another correctional setting. We knew they were positive prior to their transfer to us. They have been maintained on isolation status at all times. So, they are reflected as presently being positive in our facility. We have had 2,411 negative test and 0 pending present tests. There are 0 incarcerated individuals hospitalized from COVID-19 at this present time. I was doing a review to help reflect because there is been a lot of appropriate discussion related to COVID-19 and our facilities capacity to mitigate the disease throughout the pandemic. I was able to really find some very staggering numbers that I wanted to share specifically with the board but mostly to provide credit to the hardworking essential employees within the institution. So, we are the jail. We recognize we are not necessarily seen in a popular light because of what we stand for but that is not fair to the individuals who serve

the community. Those who have worked very hard and have dedicated their lives and careers to this profession. So, I wanted to make sure that everybody was aware that since March 14, 2020, that was the first diagnosed case of COVID-19 in all of Allegheny County, our institution has received and committed 8,580 individuals since that date. Despite the transient nature of our population and the vulnerable risk to a congregate setting our facility has had 349 individuals test positive in 15½ calendar months. This represents a total positivity rate of 4%. Facing a pandemic has been terrifying for our nation and for facilities like ours. Though disease was introduced within our facility the management and mitigation of risk was admirable. Many other facilities faced significant challenges and loss that we were unfortunate to have abated. Our fight is not over, and we recognize that. It is imperative we continue to congratulate every correctional employee (no matter what uniform they wear), the community and the entire incarcerated population. Without everyone's continued commitment and compliance, our facility would not have been as fortunate. In the last month we have not released any individuals that were known to be positive or infectious to others. In the look back from the last month, in June 2021, 90 individuals received a PCR viral diagnostic test. Of those 90 individuals 2 were positive. One was a new admission in the community, and one was a previously positive individual that was placed on isolation protocols additionally. We have continued to do the surveillance testing with the rapid antigen tests within the facility. We have completed 2,466 rapid antigen tests since April 12, 2021 with 8 individuals being found to be positive, which is less than 1%. There was 1,986 negative individuals and 472 refusals. None of the positive rapid antigen tests were for asymptomatic individuals. We did not have to do additional confirmatory testing because all of those individuals that were positive were also symptomatic. Throughout the pandemic we have had 347 staff tested for COVID-19, which 139 were positive, 208 were negative, and we still have 2 individuals who are continuing through their recovery process and have not yet returned to work.

In terms of the vaccination efforts, as many of you know, we started having vaccines available for our employees through our collaborative clinics with the ACHD beginning at the end of December. We started our own clinics for the incarcerated population in April and we had some onsite partnership clinics with AHN during that time period. Before I get to the data, I think it is extraordinarily important that I talk a little bit about how this has been done. We have a controlled population within a structured environment, which requires a lot of oversight into movement and safety and considerations for individuals. We have not been able to mix populations throughout the pandemic for cohort reasons, as well as quarantine. Yet we have been able to do some pretty incredible things especially with getting individuals vaccinated. I wanted specifically to recognize and thank our Infectious Disease Coordinator, Lauren Bach. Our institution has been successful with mitigation efforts because everyone has maintained their commitment to the care, custody, and control of our population. We have made incredible efforts and advancements because of the coordination, commitment, dedication, and persistence of Lauren Bach. Whatever has been needed she has been willing to do. Many people will never be able to appreciate the amount of time and resources she had dedicated to making vaccines available in our facility. Many people do not know that she herself has traveled to other institutions to receive additional vaccine supply, has verified with health departments and treatment providers well beyond the limits of Allegheny County (including many other states) to verify vaccination status, has provided ongoing education and encouragement, organized schedules of vaccination, and tirelessly ensured compliance to all of the necessary reporting and documentation efforts. The facility has been safer because of all of our staff contributing to these efforts. We are fortunate that she has served as a tireless leader throughout this as well. Thus far, our facility has supported the vaccination of 853 incarcerated individuals. We have fully vaccinated 652 individuals and we provided dose 1 for 707 individuals. On site we have Pfizer, Moderna, and Janssen vaccine. Presently incarcerated, we have 531 or 32% of the population that are fully vaccinated and 48 individuals that are within their vaccination series. When those individuals are all completed will be at 35% of our present population. This morning's count was 1,669 incarcerated individuals in our facility. Vaccines remain available to all incarcerated individuals and they can express interest to receive a vaccine either through the tablet, telling a staff person, or sending in a sick call request. We will continue to ensure that we can provide access. We have applied the \$25 to the accounts of fully vaccinated individuals from the Incarcerated Individual's Welfare Fund, with the exception of those that have been completed since June 23, 2021. We will however continue to process these account payments. We have just not caught up within the last 10 days. In terms of our employee vaccination efforts, 387 of our employees, which is 53%, have elected to be fully vaccinated at this time. As we have discussed throughout, we have not evaluated as a facility that reduction and restrictions. It is important to note that ongoing mitigation efforts are supremely important. Our facility has found that what works should continue to be done until we have reached a level within the community, as well as our facility, that it

would be deemed to have the least amount of risk to a vulnerable population. So, as you can see, we are still all wearing masks within the facility, regardless of somebody's vaccination status. There are many entities, even with restrictions within the community, that are still following those same guidelines. I do believe that you know public transportation, you are still required to wear masks because the federal recommendations still support that. That would be the same for congregate settings. I know that everybody is extremely frustrated, we are all ready for this to be over but within a congregate setting we are still following a lot of these restrictions to maintain the safety of our community as well.

Judge Clark:

Do you want to just go through your report and then we can ask questions about all of it? Or would you rather break it up?

Deputy Warden Williams:

That is all for COVID. So, if anyone has any Covid related questions we can field those now.

Judge Clark:

Does anyone have any questions? Ms. Hallam?

Ms. Hallam:

I have a question about the person you said we took from another facility who was positive for COVID, is that like a common practice? I was under the impression people would not be transferred while they had a positive status.

Deputy Warden Williams:

Many entities prefer not to but legally if somebody is committed to our facility, we cannot deny accepting them. Regardless of their status. That has been something that many people coming into the facility have misunderstood as well. If somebody is legally to be held within our institution, we will hold them no matter what their COVID status is. We were very fortunate that we coordinated with the previous facility prior to receiving them. Anyone who was involved in the transport was well aware. Everybody could adhere to the appropriate isolation protocols and we could keep this person separate throughout the entire time. It is unfortunate. I am certain that most facilities would prefer that we do not transfer anybody who is positive but legally we are required to accept them.

Ms. Hallam:

Is that the same for the state correctional institutions? If someone in the ACJ is going upstate? We will not keep them in ACJ while they are positive until they test negative or until they hit like 14 days. We will send them immediately?

Deputy Warden Williams:

I cannot speak to other facilities practices. I can state that we kind of maintained individuals until they have completed their isolation status prior to transfer.

Ms. Hallam:

Okay. The person that came to the ACJ from another facility, did they complete their isolation before they came to the ACJ?

Deputy Warden Williams:

No, they are still in their isolation status.

Judge Clark:

Any other questions? Mr. Fitzgerald, did you have a question?

Mr. Fitzgerald:

Just real quick, your Honor. I want to thank the Warden Harper and Deputy Warden Williams. When you think about this pandemic and the fact that we have lost 2,000 of our fellow Allegheny County residents during his last 15-16 months and then none in the jail, which is a very difficult congregate setting. Often a lot of the population has other health issues that they are dealt with. Also, dealing with testing and the mitigation strategies. Again, we are not out of this pandemic. I think some people think that we are, but we are certainly not and certainly not in a congregate setting like the jail. But I just wanted to really give kudos to the Warden and Deputy Warden for really the wonderful work to keep those folks safe during a very difficult time. Thank you.

Judge Clark:

Thanks, and I would agree. I think at the beginning of the pandemic, I think the Warden and I had each other on speed dial. We were trying to work through and figure things out. Also trying to keep the board informed because he would call me, and I would try to send out emails to the board to keep them apprised of what was happening. We are the largest corrections facility, I believe, in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, single facility. Philadelphia has more prisoners, but they have more than one facility. So, they do not have as many people in one place. There are probably more prisoners in the state system, but they are all over the state in different facilities. It is a difficult place to manage. So, the fact that there were some periods of time that we went without any positive cases. Then, of course, like anything else it only takes one person that is positive to start story rolling again. But the fact we did not have anyone die and I do not know that we even had any residents in the jail that even for hospitalized as a result of COVID was, I think, in and of itself is a wonderful thing. I am sure staff was very concerned. People working with the residents in the jail and I know people that have a loved one that worked in the jail and they were concerned. You know, my spouse is working in the jail, my son is working in the jail, and then they are coming home. I think, all things considered they did a great job and I am very grateful. I echo the County Executive's remarks. I think they did about as well as they could do under the circumstances and probably better than most facilities. I want to thank everyone involved in that for the great work that they did. I think the one thing that the County Executive said is true, we are not out of the woods yet. I think everybody is so happy to be a little bit free now that many of us are vaccinated but we have to still being vigilant and I think that is the thing. I say that because I know that many people are really wanting in-person visitation to return to the jail and I think the jail wants it too. People do better when they have contact with their families and their loved ones. But I still think we have to be very vigilant because we do not want there to be a serious issue in the jail. We have to continue to look at it and take guidance from those who are the professionals that know about the spread of these diseases and people in congregate care setting. Hopefully will be able to have people return to visitation at the jail and the not too distant future but I understand the need for caution. Thank you, Deputy Warden Williams for a very thorough report, as you always do. I think you can then move to the next part of your report.

Deputy Warden Williams:

Before I move on, I want to acknowledge we did have 4 individuals who we sent to the hospital for monitoring. We do far more than basic nursing care and I always hate saying that we are a facility that does basic nursing because that does not credit that medical professionals in the building. But out of a precaution we did think it was important for continuous monitoring for 4 individuals. I do qualify that, none of them were admitted to the ICU and none of them were on a ventilator or ECMO. They were not severely ill from COVID-19.

Ms. Hallam:

Does the jail have any data on people released from jail with COVID back into the community, any hospitalization status or loss of life of people who maybe got COVID in the jail and then left? Do we have any data on that?

Deputy Warden Williams:

I do not say that we have formal data. I can say that, unfortunately, reincarceration rate for some of our previously positive individuals would indicate that they are still with us.

Ms. Hallam:

Okay, just the ones who were reincarcerated?

Deputy Warden Williams:

We have seen a fair amount of them back to our facility, unfortunately, that were released while they were positive. We had a very small number that was released, I guess I should clarify that, while they were positive. It was a total of 13 individuals. Every single one of those was coordinated very closely to make sure that they were released safely and securely. The majority of them have unfortunately returned to incarceration.

Ms. Hallam:

Thank you for clarifying that.

B. Update on the Modification to Healthcare Record to Include Length of Individual Counseling Sessions

Deputy Warden Williams:

We have been talking a lot about therapeutic services within the facility and our psychologist has been working until we have the modifications that our electronic health records to provide more frequent updates. It is important to note that we did submit, in collaboration with our vendor, the changes that will allow for what we have discussed, which is essentially billable minutes, though we will not be billing for those services, to track the average length of time of a session. Last month there were 169 individuals that were referred for counseling services, with 23 individuals refusing those services that were offered. The manual tracking, which is not scientific but was done as fast as our psychologist could do in addition to all of her other duties, was an average session length of approximately 34 minutes. Those that were not personally seen by the psychologists still have access to a number of other staff. So, I think it's important that if they cannot receive formal counseling, maybe they are going to be released or something like that, there are a number of other health care professionals that are qualified within the building to address their needs. If there are stressors or problems that are increasing some of their maladaptive behaviors, it can be addressed by some other means. We have a large number of professionals within the building that can do that. For example, caseworkers, alternative housing staff, substance use counselors, mental health specialist, psychiatric aids, we have other psychiatric providers, other health care providers, nurses, and a huge credit to the correctional officers, who work on the units. They do what I call informal counseling because they are around these individuals and understand what their needs are probably better than most of us do.

C. Medication Assisted Treatment Update

Deputy Warden Williams:

The last topic of old business is the updates related to medications for opioid use disorder and the expansion of those efforts. Presently, in our facility, we have 21 individuals who are prescribed Buprenorphine. Historically, this was only provided to pregnant inmates. There is only one individual within the last month that was prescribed Buprenorphine that was pregnant. We have had a larger volume of individuals engaged in the program, but today's count is only 21. We presently have 18 individuals who are prescribed oral Naltrexone who were either inducted on that or it is a continuation of that medication. In collaboration with DHS, we applied for a PCCD grants to be awarded monies for the expansion of medications for opioid use disorder. We are still awaiting the outcome of that. Excitingly today we received notice from DHS, who assisted us, they really lead I should say, they did not assist, we are very grateful for them finding this and then submitting a letter of intent very quickly on an expedited timeline, but they applied for funds through Alhousie to assist again with medications for opioid use disorder and we did learn that we were awarded those funds as well to be spent exclusively to expand those services. The funding is until May of 2022 and we are very excited to be able to direct some of those funds to Sublocade which is the injectable form of Buprenorphine. We will be able to do both the oral and the injection form for Buprenorphine. We are extremely hopeful, that we will be able to in the next couple of months, announced a

partner with an agency who is committed to providing methadone services within our institution. Then we will be a community provider that has Narcan, Vivitrol, Naltrexone, Buprenorphine, Sublocade, and Methadone.

D. Sick Calls

Deputy Warden Williams:

Lastly, for my reports we have 65 sick call requests for medical and all were scheduled today. So, they have been waiting for less than one day. For sick call requests for mental health, we have 20 appointments again all waiting less than one day. For mental health specialist appointments, we have 9 with the longest waiting 3 days. For psychiatrist appointments we have 33 with the longest appointment waiting 7 days. I have no further other prepared report but am able to answer questions.

Ms. Hallam:

This one is about the most recent thing you said about the MAT. I think that is awesome. I think that is something that we should definitely be doing. I have a couple of questions about it first. Are there any people who are in the jail currently that need MAT who do not have it?

Deputy Warden Williams:

So again, we have talked about this in some other meetings, I think that really depends on how you define it. I can offer some statistics for you. In the last 3 months we had 2,618 individuals committed to our facility, 673 of them reported illicit use of opioids. So, they were not previously on any form of medication for opioid use disorder, but they would be somebody who could qualify should they elect to participate in a treatment program for that. I think language is really important, who needs something, who wants something, and what is presently within our policy and procedures to provide. There may be different definitions for all three.

Ms. Hallam:

In my opinion, 673 people self-reported opioid use disorder to me I think they need it. At least they need to have access to it and the option to get it if they want to. How many of those 673 people are receiving MAT of any kind right now?

Deputy Warden Williams:

I just use those numbers. I can tell you that we have been continuing individuals who are verified for having received the treatments in the community, but I do not know right now whether or not there is any overlap. I have also reported that we are not inducting individuals in large volumes at this time because we are still expanding our services. In the future, we do have intention of doing that. That is not where we are presently.

Ms. Hallam:

So, when we become, I forget the term used, community, what was the term?

Deputy Warden Williams:

I said a community provider. A much different way to think of a correctional agency.

Ms. Hallam:

When we become, like it's set in stone, we are a community provider, we have the resources to be able to provide it to anybody who needs, wants, is eligible for it, anyone who comes in self-reported opioid use disorder qualify for it? Is that the plan? Or is that further down the road than the actual implementation of everyone who comes in on an active prescription for MAT?

Deputy Warden Williams:

I want to be very clear again because language is super important. I am held to everything I say which is also totally responsible. People who self-report opioid use would not necessarily clinically qualify. There has to be a clinical determination that they are eligible for the medication and the treatment. Somebody who's self-reports opioid use but does not test positive for any opiate would not meet treatment standards within the community and would also not meet treatment standards within our organization. There must be some diagnostic measurement and assessment done by the medical provider to determine this is the appropriate course of treatment. It would not just be somebody saying yes, I use opiates and I would like to be on this. That would be up to the clinical provider to make a determination. But to directly answer where we plan to go, right now we are coordinating and continuing individuals who are prescribed verified medications and we hope to move as soon as possible in the future to providing medication assisted treatment for anybody who meets clinical eligibility criteria. That may be somebody coming in not previously engaged in treatment that we would be inducting to the medication and assisting coordinate with the treatment provider before they are released.

Ms. Hallam:

So, my concern, what I am trying to convey, is that I feel like for years I've been hearing that the jail is going to start providing MAT to people who, I do not want say need or want or whatever it is, are clinically eligible for MAT, regardless of whether they come in with a prescription or not. So that is my concern is when is it coming? Is it coming this year? This summer? The winter? The fall? 2026? Can we have a feasible timeline for when you would estimate that it is coming? Because there are people who are cold turkey detoxing on the floor of the ACJ in their own vomit and feces. I would like to know when that is going to stop.

Deputy Warden Williams:

I want to be very clear that there is nobody currently in their vomit or feces on the floor in the facility. That would not be acceptable to us and we would not want somebody to be treated that way. Detoxification is an extraordinarily uncomfortable, painful, irritating, awful process that I do not want to minimize that at all. I just do not think it is a fair assumption to indicate we put somebody in a cell and leave them to languish or to suffer because that is not what we do here. I do not appreciate the representation. Particularly in a public format when you make such suggestive remarks. I want to be very clear about that. Additionally, I will say this. Our nation in general still continues to stigmatize substance use disorders. It is a very challenging topic. I have looked at a couple of different things in statistics and found that the DEA reports there is 1,900 in the nation. That is an unbelievably small number. So, access to care for services is an issue in the nation. We remain a committed entity to expanding services. I know you want a timeline. I wish I had a crystal ball and I could give it to you. I know you are probably tired of me saying we are working on it, we are working on it but I do not want to be a dishonest person and I do not want to commit to something that I cannot without continuing to be as transparent as possible. We continue to provide updates to this board. I will continue to do that. I will continue to partner with Vital Strategies as well the rest of the jail administration. We are motivated to do this. We want to do the right thing. There are people in the community that can benefit from these services and are turned away every single day because they do not have insurance. This is an issue in the nation, and we will be part of the solution. That is all I have to say.

Ms. Hallam:

I will agree. I am tired of there not being a timeline, but I am also tired of you denying things I personally have seen with my own eyes.

Judge Clark:

We are not going to get into this debate.

Ms. Hallam:

This is very important. This is something that is very personal to me as well as, I know for a fact. I talked to loved ones of people in the jail currently, I talked to people who are incarcerated currently, who are going through this detox that Deputy Warden, who is in charge of overseeing medical in the jail, is saying is not happening. I have

seen people laying in their own vomit as a result of detox. I have seen people shivering and shaking uncontrollably using the toilet. I have seen that, and I have talked to many people who are in the jail. I look forward to our visit to the jail. Hopefully we do not have to see that with their own eyes but I promise I am not using suggestive terms, I am using things I have personally experienced and have heard first hand from people who have experienced it in the jail. I am just so frustrated hearing this issue of providing medication to people in the jail who should have it and do not because this process is being dragged out for years. So yes, I am frustrated. Yes, I am tired of not receiving a timeline and I do not want to have this conversation every single meeting.

Judge Clark:

I think if she could give you a timeline, she would give you a timeline. I can say that more has happened in the last year towards getting MAT in the jail. Deputy Warden Williams mentioned the partnership with Vital Strategies. That is one of the goals of that to increase the use of MAT. I think it is more complicated than just saying it is going to happen. I think she explained that to us, but I think we just have to be respectful. I think sometimes when we use sort of the volatile terms maybe sometimes you think that you may need to use them. I think you made your point and I think she made her point and I do not think that any further of this kind of discourse is going to be beneficial to the progress of the meeting. It is not going to address the issue. This is what I say to myself when I am sort of frustrated and I am thinking about responding, I ask myself, "is what comes out of my mouth going to change the situation?" and if the answer to that is no then I probably should not say it. So, despite the fact we all have a right to speak our minds and I respect that right, it's one of the things that makes the United States the great country that it is, but as a practical person, if what I have to say is not going to make the situation better, or change the situation, then it really does not help. That is all I am saying. I think the issue is bigger than just saying it is going to happen. There are all kinds of things that were needed to do it and they have worked in a big way in conjunction with DHS and others to make these things happen. So while it seems like the wheels are turning very slowly, I think within the last year, even within the last six months, especially during a pandemic, when the focus of everything was changed because we were all looking at the day to day maintaining of safety of everyone in every type of setting. I think that is we are going to end this discussion on that there. I thank the Deputy Warden for her report.

9. New Business

C. Motion to Request Money from the Incarcerated Individual's Welfare Fund to be put on the Commissary Accounts of Each Person.

Judge Clark:

We will move to new business. We have a number of items. I am going to start with the motions that Ms. Hallam has because I think those can be voted on very quickly and then will go to some other things.

Ms. Hallam:

The first one is a motion to request money from the IWF to be put on the commissary account of each person. When I looked at the population the other day, there were 1,829 folks incarcerated at the jail with \$50 for each person for a total cost of \$91,450. I would like the motion to approve.

Ms. Klein:

Second

Judge Clark:

Any discussion? All those in favor?

Others:

Aye

Judge Clark:

Any opposed? The motion is carried.

The board unanimously approved a motion by Ms. Hallam, duly seconded by Ms. Klein, to request money from IIWF to be put on the commissary accounts of each incarcerated individual (1,829 individuals x \$50.00 = Total \$91,450).

D. Motion to Request Money from the IIWF to be put on the Tablet Accounts of Each Person.

Ms. Hallam:

The next one is a motion to request money from the IIWF to be put on the tablet accounts of each person again 1,829 folks incarcerated in the jail at \$50 for each person with a total cost of \$91,450. I would like the motion to approve.

Judge Clark:

Is there a second?

Sheriff Mullen:

Second

Judge Clark:

All those in favor?

Others:

Aye

Judge Clark:

Any opposed? The motion is carried.

The board unanimously approved a motion by Ms. Hallam, duly seconded by Sheriff Mullen, to request money from Incarcerated Individual's Welfare Fund to be put on the tablet accounts of each incarcerated individual (1,829 individuals x \$50.00 = Total \$91,450).

B. Voting on Motions

Judge Clark:

I had two items I put on new business. I am going to start with the second one the voting on motions. I put this on in response to some of the public comments that we received, particularly about the board liaison. The public felt it took them by surprise because it was mentioned in old business. It was not really on the agenda and they felt like they did not have an opportunity to weigh in. So when I thought about it, I thought as a board what is our responsibility to the public and should they have a right to at least comment on things that may be a major vote that we are having. This would involve at least potentially use of money from IIWF. Maybe raise it at one meeting and vote on the next so that the public, by way of commenting, could have made comment on it. Also, sometimes even with this staff we just raise new issues at a meeting and vote on them. It might benefit us to have him some input from staff from the jail and they may not really have the opportunity to do that because it is sort of has taken everybody by surprise. My thought was, absent an emergency, I mean there could be something that is an emergency that we really need to vote on. There are some pretty routine things now, like the motions Ms. Hallam made that we expect to continue as the pandemic is still on and there still is not any in-person visitation in the jail. My thought was that maybe we should have the presentation of a potential motion at one meeting with the

discussion and then call for the vote at the next meeting. So, people that might want to weigh in on it or provide the board with information that might be beneficial for our consideration would have the opportunity to do so. I do not know whether anyone else has any thoughts on that. I mean I do not feel as the Chair I should make a motion or else I would. I mean I do not think that there is anything in Roberts Rules of Orders that prohibits that, but I feel like someone else should if they feel like it is a good idea. I do not know whether anyone has any thoughts on it. The letters and comments that I got in the public comments made me rethink the way we do business and that is why I brought it up. Yes, Ms. Klein?

Ms. Klein:

I think it is a good idea because I also thought as a Board Member, we should have at least the opportunity to look over requests from the IIWF. If you would like, I am happy to make the motion that we do not vote on any significant action barring some kind of emergency until the public has had an opportunity to weigh in.

Judge Clark:

Is there a second to that motion?

Sheriff Mullen:

I will second.

Judge Clark:

Alright, thank you. Is there any discussion? Does anyone have any thoughts or any other discussion about that?

Ms. Hallam:

I do. I am just trying to think this out. I understand if we had limits, like if it is about spending money or things like that but sometimes things come up that probably should not wait until the next month to discuss.

Judge Clark:

Well and that is why I said in absent of an emergency if there is something that cannot wait until the next meeting to think about. If there is something an action that we that we need to vote on because it needs a response right now, I think yeah we should try to get it on the agenda and pass a draft motion like we have really been trying to do. We can pass draft motions around, so at least the board can have a have a look at it. I think that is a good idea. I think the problem is sometimes things are raised and even the board has not had an opportunity to really look at it. Then we vote and maybe we have second thoughts about it because we have not had time to deliberate either. I just think that the better way would be for our general course of business, I do not even know that this really needs a vote, I think it could just be. That way we are not sort of etched in stone. I just think that we as a board should be mindful that we serve the public, which includes the residents and staff inside of the jail, but we also serve the public who might have loved ones in the jail or taxpaying citizens. Do they have a right to say I have an opinion about this thing before you vote on it? Especially since if our decision is to continue to live stream the meetings and because we have more people seeing them, it would give some people an opportunity that aren't physically at a meeting to say something about it. They might have a really good suggestion or another idea or an opinion or a thought that maybe I would like to consider. Maybe if this had been a live meeting and folks who put those comments in, if I had that input maybe I would have said at the meeting, "Well maybe we shouldn't do it at this meeting. Maybe we wait and vote on it at the next meeting." or something like that. I think it is a better process. I get to deliberate on it. You get to deliberate on it. The community and the jail staff get to have input on it too. Even the residents of the jail, there is nothing to preclude them from writing a public comment either and to say something or talking to their loved ones and say they do not like that idea. I just think it is a better way, but we do have a motion in a second. I do not know whether anyone else has any thoughts. Yes?

Ms. Hallam:

I would just like to add a bit more. I got a couple concerns. I am going to be voting no on that because I disagree that this is the way forward is to make if it is solid like rule that we put in place. I just want to say, first of all, that I guess one of my big concerns is how it would be determined if the thing that we are discussing is something that needs it is an emergency. My second thing would be that we do not do a motion on this and we just kind of do we have done already. For example, the liaison is something we have talked about many meetings. I think where the confusion happened for the folks who submitted the public comments about the liaison thing, when we made that vote, that was a vote to start the process of deciding if we should vote to approve to have a liaison. That was like an initial vote. It was not like we just had 24 hours' notice and decided this is what we are doing, this is the job description, this is how much they are going to be paid, and this is who the person is.

Judge Clark:

I think the problem was that there was a vote that was not on the official agenda and it came as part of a committee report but without like a formal written motion that we got to see in advance. It also included where the money would come from to pay. I think that's where the public's objection. I do not think they care whether there is a liaison to assist, I think the thought was we said we would be taking money from the IIWF. That is just an example. There could be other things too, which the public might want to comment. So, I do not care whether there is an actual motion. There is a motion on the floor. Ms. Klein and Sheriff Mullen can withdraw the motion if they want. I just feel the board should have at least a policy on motions of significant things, unless it is an emergency situation that has to be handled right then and there. If it cannot wait the 30 days or so until the next meeting to take action because there is a situation that is unsafe. It has to happen right now. I think that would be the discussion among the board. I mean should we vote on it now or get all the information and we will have a motion at the next meeting. I heard what they were saying, and I agree with them. I do not really care if there is a formal motion. I just would like it to be our sort of policy to really think about how we present motions and give them in advance to give people the opportunity to think about it and weigh in. If you know a motion is coming, maybe you do not know a lot about the issue you and you want some research on your own. You may have information that you want to add to the discussion to help inform the board and help me with my deliberations and any potential vote I might have. That is all. Ms. Klein?

Ms. Klein:

I am going to withdraw my motion. Ms. Hallam, you got me thinking about what it means. I feel like I did not give it proper thought. I am not ready to commit until we tease out what an emergency is and what it is not.

Judge Clark:

That is fine. Sometimes you do not know until the situation happens. I think that is the issue. I just feel like we just need to be more deliberate in how we handle motions. I think we can do that without having a vote. I think we all know what that means, think about it so that we have enough information. I think we all feel like once there is a motion, we feel this urgency to resolve it. I would ask us to challenge ourselves, if you feel like you are not really ready to vote on this or that you would like to hear what the public thinks or you need more information from the Warden or jail staff and it is not something that has to be voted on right now, to say, "Can we vote on this at that at the next meeting?". I think that would be fine. The motion is withdrawn. I think it was a good discussion and as we go forward that is what we just need to think about. I do not know if anyone else has anything that they want to say. Thank you.

A. Returning to In-Person Meetings

Judge Clark:

The other thing I put back on the agenda returning to in-person meetings. The reason I added that back in is that at the last meeting Ms. Hallam made a motion to not have us return to in-person meetings until the jail returned to in person visitation. The board voted in favor of that motion. That's your pleasure but since we do not have a definitive date as to when that is, I thought we should really bring back to the table the issue of when we want to

return to in person meetings. I personally wanted to return to in person meetings today, but I would like to return to in-person meetings in August and I will tell you why. I get that if everyone else has a different view, majority rules. For me, the virtual meetings take significantly longer. Even when we began court hearings in a virtual world, all judges had to add additional time to the anticipated time a hearing would take. We very seldomly start right at 4:00 on these meetings because people struggle to get on. Many of our guests have not been able to successfully navigate Teams. Sometimes the presentations that we are meant to have, although they are very good, but the other people that are here presenting are not able to present in the same way. People get booted out and sometimes do not get back in. Next week the Supreme Court has indicated that all judges will be back in their court houses on July 6, 2021. So next week I will be back in the Courthouse. I can tell you with the virtual meetings, when I am working all day, this is just a very stressful and long day for me. I think it is an unhealthy situation. I have been doing this for 16 months now, sitting in this environment like this all day. But if I am downtown in my office because there will not be enough time for me to leave work and go home, it is already almost 7:00 o'clock. We have been at this for 3 hours and you know most board meetings really should not last more than 2 hours, but it takes a while. Maybe it is my job to revise the agenda in a way that where we give specific time frames. I know some agendas have that you have 5 minutes for this, you have 15 minutes for this, and/or each member can only ask two questions. What adds a lot to the virtual meetings is the number of public comments that we really try to cover. People take the time to write in and I try to cover as many of them as I can, but it takes a very long time to do that. So, we do not even get to the voting business until like the third hour of the meeting or sometimes after that. So, we will be finished probably close to 8:00 and if I am in town that means I will have this long day. I will get home at 9:00 o'clock. I will not have had dinner and sometimes not even lunch depending on how the day goes. That is a personal thing for me and so I have my personal reasons. I also have the bigger reason of I just feel that there is something lost in the in the virtual meetings. People get in and out. I just feel that we need to go back to live meetings. That is my position. I do not know whether anyone else has any thoughts, whether anyone wants to make a motion. If you do not that is fine. I will do whatever the board wants but I am getting stressed out, I guess. I do not know if anyone has any other thoughts. If not, then I think Ms. Hallam wanted to add something to new business. You wanted to talk about public comments.

Ms. Hallam:

Yes, I do but only if I have to because we are going back in-person.

Judge Clark:

We have not voted on that. As far as I know, right now, the virtual meetings are tied to when the jail goes back. That is what you voted on at the last meeting, to have us continue virtual meetings until the jail begins in-person visits. We do not know what that is. So, I do not know when we are going to start in person meetings. Right now, I guess the issue with the public comments is moot because if we are still doing virtual meetings then they will still submit them on the website. The other thing is court staff, who do not work for the jail and are not members of the board, have been the ones to facilitate the public comments and the running of these meetings. I am sure if I ask him to continue to do it, they will do it because they probably feel like they do not have any choice. I feel like it has been 16 months and there are still continuing to do it. For me, it takes a lot of time with the whole issue of the public comments, to go through them, I read every one of them, I try to organize them and I try to present them. The jail staff spends a lot of time. They read them so they can have answers to them. My staff has to organize them and constantly check the mailbox. Court staff has to turn it on and turn it off. That part is easy once they created it. Mr. Sykes probably has the most difficult job because of managing all of us and getting us on these meetings. Are there any other items for new business?

Sheriff Mullen:

Can I make a motion to return to in-person meetings?

Judge Clark:

You can. When?

Sheriff Mullen:

As soon as possible. When everything goes back to normal.

Judge Clark:

It depends. Are you talking that you want to make a motion to say the August meeting? the September meeting? You can make a motion, you just have to tell us when, Sheriff.

Sheriff Mullen:

For the August meeting.

Judge Clark:

There is a motion by Sheriff Mullen to return to in-person meetings in August. Is there a second?

Ms. Klein:

I will second it.

Judge Clark:

Ms. Klein has second. Is there any discussion?

Ms. Klein:

I have been trying to pull up the COVID cases. I know my papers in the other room. It seems to me, fortunately, that the even with the delta variant the COVID cases are going down.

Judge Clark:

I can pull that up for you. I usually check them every day. I have not actually checked them today, but I can do that real quick.

Ms. Klein:

My other question would be, Judge, if you had the responsibility of the public comments taken away from you, how would that ease your burden?

Judge Clark:

It would help. I think the length of the meeting is the other thing for me. If I have my normal court day and then if I have a 3-hour meeting. Like today, as Ms. Hallam said, she sent me an email a little bit after 3:00, while I am trying to finish stuff. I try to log on by at least by 3:45, in case difficulties but I am working right up until the time of this board meeting. Sometimes I am butting meetings. Then sometimes when I am done, I have not finished my work and so I have to go back and do things like court orders and things like that. So sometimes I am having this meeting and if we finish at 8:00 o'clock, then it is 11:00 o'clock at night and I am still working. That is not unusual in this kind of scenario. What has happened with COVID and everything pretty much being virtual is there is just way too much stuff you have in your court day because you do not really have to travel to anywhere. It is just, join a meeting and leave a meeting. There are no breaks in between. So, I have to finish stuff now when everyone else is trying to go to bed. But that is my problem and that should not really tie into you. But yes, the public comments are a stressor. The issue is if I do not do them then you are going to have to find another way to do them. Right now, they are using all the court stuff with a court mailbox, which you all would not have access to. Somebody would have to create another mechanism for that to happen. The controller might be willing to do that and somebody have access but the courts not going to create a mailbox for people that are not employees of the court and to receive things that are coming from the court website. I am sure you could use the same mechanism that they have and that could be put on anybody's website but that is the issue. Yesterday, on June 30th, there were

11 cases in Allegheny County. I think the numbers dictate that we should go back in person. I do not know whether there is any other discussion. Ms. Hallam?

Ms. Hallam:

I have a question because one of the things, I mean there were many benefits of having meetings online during COVID, but a big one is when we talk about GTL, when we talk about Summit, when we talk about different employees from Community Corrections and you know different people throughout the county who are participating in our meeting, in your vision of coming back in person, will that ability for anyone to participate virtually be gone? Is it either you come in person to participate or you do not participate at all? I am not talking about the public; I am talking about those types of people.

Judge Clark:

I think what you described as the process and the courts are even now looking at continued virtual participation, I think the idea is that the board should attend as many meetings as they can in person. But if we are live streaming the meetings, there would be a capability for also a board member who is traveling out-of-county, out-of-state, or even out-of-country and wanted to participate would be able to remotely. I think that could continue. That can always happen. We could have we could have outsiders that wanted to make presentations that are not even in Allegheny County make presentations because we do have the technology and the capabilities to do that. But I think, we should resume to in-person but allow a board member who is traveling to participate virtually either in this kind of mechanism or to call in if they cannot participate in this kind of mechanism.

Ms. Hallam:

That is very reassuring. I was not sure that was something. Although the streaming service did say they will facilitate via Microsoft Teams for that as long as we are okay with it. My biggest concern is the public comments. I totally hate that you have this huge burden on you. I am wondering, maybe before we vote on this motion, if we could incorporate into the return to in-person meetings a compromise and make a provision for public comments. I would be willing if everyone is okay with explaining what I have been talking about with some other folks.

Judge Clark:

The issue for me with the public comments, even if someone else was to collect them and sort them, when we return in-person meetings, you have people that show up at the meeting that want to present public comments and then you might get 40 public comments submitted online. You cannot present all of those at a meeting. It just cannot be that way.

Ms. Hallam:

I have a solution. If we cannot do something along the lines of accepting public comments, I am a hard no on this, but if there is a way to compromise, I would be amenable to this. My idea is kind of multilayered. The first thing would be is that we would still accept online comments but there are caveats.

Judge Clark:

Hold on, I have to take a call.

Ms. Klein:

Poor Community Corrections is hanging in there all these hours.

Ms. Hallam:

I think about that all the time. By the way, while she is on hold, we should really think about letting them go first. Judge Clark, after this piece of our new business, I would like to motion to move Community Corrections to the first thing on the agenda. They do sit here for like 4 hours.

Judge Clark:

Somebody said that. I have to get up for a minute, this is the other thing. It is 7:12. I am going to ask you to continue to discuss and I will be right back. Thank you.

Ms. Hallam:

While she is on hold, is everyone cool with if we do a motion after to let Community Corrections be first on the agenda going forward. I think it is unfair that we had them last, but they have to listen to us hash out things that have nothing to do with them. I feel so bad.

I can tell you guys before Judge Clark comes back and then explain to her what I think is a fair compromise. I personally love online meetings. I work a full-time job, in addition to, County Council, JOB, Board of Elections, and all the other stuff I do. I love being able to start the meetings in my car ride on the way home from work and not have to leave work early to do it. I have all the documents in front of me on my computer screen. I love that. But if we absolutely have to come back in person, I was thinking we cannot stop take public comments online. There are too many people who are immunocompromised, cannot get vaccinated, or have little kids that cannot be vaccinated. I think that we cannot stop online comments, but I think we can do kind of a middle ground. We make the deadline 72 hours ahead of the meeting for online comments. In-person comments if you want to show up to testify in the meeting you could do that you do not need a heads up. Let us say you want to submit a comment about something that happens the day before the meeting you have to come in person for that. After that 72-hour cutoff, any public comments that come into whatever forum we decide to use will have to be read at the next meeting. That 72 hours gives, hopefully, any liaison that we have the opportunity to sort through them, organize them and also gives the jail administration an opportunity to formulate responses to any of the public comments that were submitted. It gives a little bit more time, so that we can have answers to the comments like we do now. I think the part that Judge Clark is most worried about is the time that it is taking a meeting. I think a compromise is that we do not read every public comment in meetings. To be fair, the comments that are read now are edited, sometimes completely skipped, generalized, and summarized together. So, I really do not think that it is going to be much of a disservice if we stop reading online public comments in the meetings. I think it will save the time the Judge Clark is worried about. I think we should collect them, put them into order and then we have an agenda item after the in-person public comments on every agenda, where members of this board, who have received the public comments ahead of the meeting, are able to bring up in get answers to any of the public comments of their choosing. For example, if there is a specific excerpt from John Smith's public comment that I would like an answer to, I can bring that up. Everyone could do the same thing. That way, we are still getting answers to public comments that we as members think are pertinent to get answers from. We do not need to read the entirety of any of the public comments and we can pull out excerpts that members of the board think are most important and that would be on the agenda. The jail administration will now have more time to prepare answers to all the public comments in case they are asked about any of them. That is the 72 hours. Therefore, if I pull out that excerpt, they have an answer ready to go. So we stop reading them in meetings, we give responses to any of them that board members individually want to ask, that will be placed on the agenda and then we cut it off at 72 hours ahead of time. In-person, no deadline, you just have to come to the meeting. Does anyone have any qualms with any of that?

Ms. Klein:

I do not have a qualm but who is going to organize the online.

Ms. Hallam:

Right now, there is a link that goes automatically to an email address that exists. Many of you may have seen that when we get the public comments emailed to us, it is from a specific email address called like Jail Board Public Comment or something. The Controller's Office, who currently is the Secretary for the Board already, would do it. Then when the ACJ Liaison is eventually hired it would be a roll of their position. Since they are supposed to be the liaison anyways, it would just be part of their role.

Judge Clark:

I am back. I can maybe talk to somebody later...

Ms. Hallam:

I can tell you quickly, Judge Clark.

Judge Clark:

No because I do not want to prolong the meeting for this. I do not even know where we are with the motion. There was a motion by the Sheriff and a second by Ms. Klein. Is there any more discussion about that?

Ms. Hallam:

I would like to add the provision for public comment in order for me to be able to support coming back to in-person. I do not want to vote to come back in person without a provision for accepting public comments for people who because of a lack of child care, because of work commitments, or lack of transportation, or folks who are immuno compromised that aren't able to be vaccinated and feel safe in the courthouse, I do not want them to be left out of jail oversight board meetings. So, I would prefer to either include that or wait till the next meeting to vote on this.

Ms. Klein:

Maybe next meeting, Bethany, you can write out your suggestions because I think that they were all very reasonable and it would relieve you Judge Clark the burden of all these public comments. Maybe we could table the motion until next month.

Ms. Hallam:

I actually do not even think we have a quorum. I do not even think we can vote if we want to right now.

Judge Clark:

We probably do not because some people have gone.

Ms. Hallam:

Judge Clark, if we are waiting for the next meeting for this, can we all agree right now to let Community Corrections go first next meeting and going forward?

Judge Clark:

We will put Community Corrections on first at the next meeting. This is why I cannot do this. Anyway, we will put them on first. I think that is a good idea to put them on at the beginning of the agenda or at least after the presentation. I think Frank Scherer is gone because he had to leave. I saw that in the chat. Alright I think we need a second to table the motion. There is a second. That is tabled to the next meeting. I guess the next meeting will still be virtual and then we will have some process for that. Any other new business?

10. Community Corrections

Judge Clark:

Now we are down to Community Corrections. We will put you first on the agenda or at least maybe after the presentation.

A. The Program of the Offenders

Carol Bender:

Like everybody else, we are slowly trying to get back to some sense of normalcy too. Again, always continuing to recommend and assist anybody who is unvaccinated with obtaining the vaccination. We are also able now to give it in our facilities. We are able to bring them in through our nursing staff. I would say approximately 90% of our staff are vaccinated. We have still got about a 10% hold out of those who do not want to get it. Basically, some of our outside service providers are now coming back into the facilities. That's been a nice addition back in. The AIU, Grow Program and others that benefit all of our residents are coming back in. We had our first supervised child visit actually happened within the facility. While again, we have not allowed full on visitation back this is the slow gradual back in process. But I think the best news was we received a substantial grant for technology improvements. We were able to get all of our clinical staff new laptops, new tablets for our client use, and were able to purchase 4 more Microsoft service hubs to put in to increase our ability to do tele-health and all of those other things that may not go away post this pandemic. I would say that is the biggest news from the program.

B. The Renewal Center

Adam Zac:

Adam Zac reporting for Renewal. Our men and women continue to get hired at a substantial rate. Out of our employable re-entrance, over 80% at this time are currently working. This is definitely a morale, confidence booster for guys and women, especially the younger population. Some of them are working their very first job. Our expectation is to maintain these numbers in the next upcoming months. Beginning on July 12th, the Allegheny Center Alliance Church are inviting our men and women to attend their prison ministry support groups. These groups will provide encouragement and valuable resources. They are not just for incarcerated or formerly incarcerated people. They are for parents or guardians, children, spouses, friends and families, and anybody in the community. If you are not familiar with this already, it is the Allegheny Alliance Church on the Northside. These meetings start Monday, July 12th at 6:00 PM. That is all I have.

C. Electronic Monitoring

Judge Clark:

I know Frank Sherer is gone and I think Steve Esswein is gone. I do not think we have an electronic monitoring report.

11. Adjournment

Ms. Hallam:

Judge Clark, just to clarify because I know we are about to adjourn because no one else is here, that live stream guy should I tell him to maybe meet with Greg for the next meeting so you can see how Greg does it virtually?

Judge Clark:

I cannot answer that. I will talk to Mr. Sykes about it. I mean I think the next meeting since we are just doing this anyway like this Mr. Sykes and the Court will still arrange for the next meeting to happen and we will leave the link to the comments up.

Ms. Hallam:

Do you care if I introduce you and PJ via email? So, you guys can talk. So, there can be a hand off.

Judge Clark:

I think the board has not voted on that yet because there is a cost yet. we voted to live stream the meetings, but we have not voted on that. That has to go back to IIWF. We should have information on that. I think that is premature. We have to figure out the payment and they might decide on some other avenues to do it, that might be cheaper.

Ms. Hallam:

Judge Clark, is that still the case even though the Controller offered for her office to pay? I thought that that kind of meant that that was done. No?

Judge Clark:

We will figure that out in the meantime. If the Controller is going to pay, then we do not need to do anything else. You can let me know and then we will decide. I do not know whether he will need to meet with Mr. Sykes or not. But we will do the next meeting like this and then he can decide that. One of the things I want to ask is that we continue to use the Gold Room like we had been before the pandemic. I thought that was a much better venue than the conference room we were in. That was really small and tight there. Even though the pandemic is behind us, I would feel very uncomfortable with any numbers of us in that room. Especially if it is a public meeting and there are no more requirements for masking. I guess we could require masking at those meetings, but that room is really small, and I would be very uncomfortable meeting in that room. So, I want to ask. I am sure that will not be a problem, but I do not like to presume things because there could be other things going on. The county did even use it for a third courtroom during the pandemic because we did not have court rooms large enough to socially distance a jury trial. The gold room was one of the rooms that we have used to do a jury trial. So, we want to make sure it does not conflict with anything. Not that they would be doing jury trials on a Thursday night from 4:00-8:00, I am sure but still.

The final thing I would like to say is that before we take a motion to adjourn that I do think the meetings are just really too long. I think once we go to live meetings that will shorten them because we will not have the issue of muting and unmuting and people getting kicked out and people trying to get in. We should be able to start promptly at 4:00. I really think we should set a goal of having a 2-hour meeting. We should work towards that. Sometimes, and I am included in this, I am not saying it does not include me, there are some things that we do not need to say and we ask questions about things and I think we need to kind of restrain ourselves from the numbers of questions and comments we asked. Maybe put some limitations on how long we want to discuss the particular topic or anything, just so that we can finish in 2 hours. I think 2 hours is plenty to do the business. In the old days, the meetings lasted 20 minutes. We have come a long way. The board is doing a lot of things, but I just think that we need to be respectful of everybody's time and level of comfort. As I see the faces as the meeting goes on. I can see people are really tired and stressed. I think we not as effective when we are just tired. I know the Sheriff is in his office and I do not know how far away he lives but I can see him. It is 7:30. I do not know how long it takes him to get home. I do not know what time he came in, but I know he comes in pretty early. It has been a long day for him. Some people have to leave. With that, if there is no other business, I entertain a motion to adjourn.

Ms. Hallam:

Moved.

Judge Clark:

Is there a second? Not that we need one.

Ms. Klein:

Second.

Judge Clark:

Alright, thank you all for your considerable patience. That will conclude the meeting. Stay safe everybody.

Kindest regard,



Chelsa Wagner

Public Comment – Jail Oversight Board Meeting – 7/1/21

Comment: Rachael Neffshade: I hear from incarcerated people in ACJ that the food is inedible and that the kitchen is unsanitary. I am also told that there is a lack of access to medical treatment at a time when COVID-19 is still infecting people. What is happening in this jail, with my tax dollars, is torture. Plain and simple. It makes me truly sick to know what you are doing at Allegheny County Jail, in the name of all taxpaying residents.

Response: The food within the facility is provided by a dietary vendor that must meet minimum food quality standards. The menu is prepared with the company dietitian to ensure minimum standards are met and exceeded. Healthcare services have been provided 24/7 in the facility throughout the pandemic.

Comment: John Kenstowicz: At the May JOB meeting, the Board moved to implement 10 recommendations to improve jail operations as a result of interviews with ACJ administrative staff (NAMES REMOVED FOR CONFIDENTIALITY). In December 2020, the board approved a motion to conduct post-employment interviews with ACJ employees. These employees have experience with jail operations and can offer insights for continuing improvements. Japan's industrial success in the 70's has been attributed to listening and valuing the opinion of workers, people actually doing the job. It is great to see the JOB going in this direction. How does the board see this happening? The December discussion included conducting interviews on a rotating basis, mindful of members' time. If the board feels it is too busy, this may be the time to think about expanding the board to help pursue these important initiatives.

Response: This question is for the board.

Comment: Jess Highland: Hi, last month I asked a question about making sure food served to incarcerated people at ACJ is fresh and healthy. The Warden said that Jail employees do NOT eat the same food as incarcerated people, and I'd like more of an explanation for that. I'm also wondering who prepares food for Jail employees, and where they do it. We know unpaid incarcerated kitchen workers prepare food for the incarcerated, do they also prepare the food that Jail staff eat? Are staff meals cooked in the same kitchens where food is prepared for incarcerated people?

Response: Correctional employees have options of a warm prepared menu and a salad bar. These food choices are outlined within the contract. The food is prepared in the facility kitchen area and/or the employee lounge area. Under the supervision of dietary workers and correctional staff, incarcerated individuals prepare the meals within the facility.

Comment: Adrian McCauley: I'm concerned about the possibility of a "JOB Liaison" position. From Judge Lazzara's description it sounded like the Liaison would take over nearly all of the Board's responsibilities, and I don't see the wisdom in delegating Jail oversight to a single person. The most concerning part though is that the position would be funded through the Incarcerated People's Welfare Fund. It seems unfair to take money earmarked for incarcerated people and use it to pay someone to do the work the JOB's work for them. That money could instead go directly to helping the incarcerated (for example, putting more money on their books). Can the Board explain more about why it wants a Liaison, and why they think it's appropriate to use IPWF money for it?

Response: This question is for the board.

Comment: Emily Petersen: Last month it sounded like Judge Clark wouldn't want to keep live streaming JOB meetings once in-person meetings resume. It also sounded like she didn't want to continue to allow online comment submissions at that point, and would only allow people to comment in person. However, I think it is very important that people still be able to participate remotely. Many people cannot take time to go downtown on Thursdays @ 4pm, because of work, childcare, or other obligations. Their voices should still be heard.

Response: This is a comment.

Comment: Miriam Sheffield: Are there any updates about the implementation of the solitary confinement ballot initiative? Sincerely, Miriam

Response: The facility will be in compliance with all expectations by the designated timeline.

Comment: Diana Weiss: Judge Lazzara brought up hiring a JOB Liaison at the June meeting. That's an interesting idea, but she brought it up during Old Business and called a vote on it even though that was the first time it had been mentioned at a JOB meeting. I

try to assume “best intentions” in my life but I find it concerning that the Board voted on it without ever introducing it as New Business and giving the public the opportunity to comment. Was that just a mistake?

Response: This question is for the board.

Comment: Ashley Greene: Why aren't incarcerated people allowed to show their meals to their loved ones during video calls anymore? If the food is edible and provides sufficient calories, as the Warden says, then he should be happy to let people show their meals. Making that policy change at a time when food quality at ACJ is hotly debated honestly comes off like censorship. I would love to be proven wrong, but every image I've ever seen of food served at ACJ appears unhealthy and unappetizing so it seems pretty suspicious to me. So what's the reason for this policy? Wouldn't it make more sense to let people have their meals with them during video visits, if there's nothing to hide?

Response: Meal times are designated within the facility. These periods are separate from periods of recreation, when visits take place.

Comment: Samantha Adirondack: How many times was the restraint chair used last month? Why does ACJ use the restraint chair so much more frequently than other Pennsylvania jails?

Response: Restraint chair used 3 times and due to pending litigation, I will not respond to the 2nd part of this question

Comment: Amber Riazzi: I know it's been discussed but I am still so concerned about the pest situation at ACJ. Myself and others have tried really hard to ask detailed questions so we can get specific answers but it feels like the Warden refuses to say anything other than “the exterminators come twice a week.” Is the Board able to reach out to Complete Pest Solutions and ask them for more information about the services they provide? Maybe they could send someone to a JOB meeting to answer some questions, like GTL is going to do about the money left on tablets? Thanks.

Response: This question is for the board.

Comment: Natasha Clay: One of the major suggestions made by the NCCHC Suicide Prevention Program Assessment report was that ACJ should “Increase medical leadership and safe housing for inmates withdrawing from substances.” Could Deputy Williams give a brief overview of how that suggestion has been implemented since October 2019? Does the long-term plan include expansion of MAT services for people with substance use disorders?

Response: NCCHC was contracted to conduct a survey to identify areas of opportunity within the facility. These recommendations were for consideration and were not required to be implemented. Increased medical leadership has continuously evolved to include additional partnerships with community stakeholders and AHN to increase/expand services within the facility. Long-term plans include expanding MAT services to include methadone and sublocade. The facility currently provides: Narcan, Vivitrol/Naltrexone, and Buprenorphine (oral).

Comment: Zana Daghles: Incarcerated people in the ACJ have been treated in a grossly cruel and inhumane manner for years now. Our community members are not only incarcerated people, but they are sons, daughters, mothers, fathers, spouses, and friends that deserve respect and humane treatment. The food that the ACJ provides is inedible, commissary prices are very high, and conditions within the ACJ are unsanitary, unsafe, and utterly dehumanizing. Incarcerated people at the ACJ have been refused access to medical treatment, and there has been excessive use of restraint chairs and solitary confinement. Our communities must keep working and fighting in solidarity to ensure the safety and wellbeing of incarcerated people within the ACJ. Serious changes must be made.

Response: This is a comment.

Comment: Naomi Coen: Now that the solitary confinement ballot initiative is approved, I'm wondering if people who were being held in segregated housing have been released into the general population? Is there a timeline for when they might be released (if they haven't already)?

Response: The facility will continue to utilize appropriate population management mechanisms, such as segregated housing, while maintaining compliance with the ballot initiative.

Comment: Sara Walsh: I was surprised when Judge Lazzara brought up hiring someone to be a liaison for the Board during the “Old Business” section of the June meeting. I didn’t remember hearing about it before and I believe Ms. Moss even asked at the time why it was on the Old Business part of the agenda since it hadn’t been discussed. (I went through the May minutes to double check and didn’t see anything about the liaison position there). I don’t think the Board’s vote on the proposal from last month should count since the public never got a chance to comment and the Board didn’t really discuss it before voting. I hope the Board will discuss it in detail this month, and then vote on it in August so that everyone can weigh in on this really important decision.

Response: This is a comment.

Comment: John Cooper: Following up on my question about the fire in Pod 8E in April-- The Warden said in the May Public Comments that a blog “erroneously” reported the fire was set in protest, but then at the June meeting he said he didn’t know whether or not it was a protest. Has the Warden or anyone on the Board gotten to the bottom of this? If it was indeed a protest, what were they protesting? Best, John

Response: There is no substantiation to the reports that the fires were related to a protest.

Comment: Nathaniel Rosen: This question is about the high commissary prices now that Summit has taken over providing food service at ACJ. According to the “invitation to bid” that Summit responded to, the commissary menu is “determined in collaboration with the Warden’s Office or Warden’s designee at negotiated prices.” Why did the Warden sign off on these higher prices? When can he lower them again?

Response: Summit has complied with the contract and approved by Warden Harper.

Comment: Rachel Linner: I’m very frustrated by the Warden’s insistence that everything at ACJ is fine just because he says so. He cites the pest control contract to say that extermination happens twice a week; he cites the food service contract to say that everyone gets 3200 calories a day; he says the kitchens prepare food according to the posted menu calendar; but anyone who has ever worked in a bureaucracy can tell you that words on a page don’t always translate to reality. Especially if a place is as understaffed as ACJ is. How does the Warden explain the frequent reports of inadequate nutrition and pest infestation if those problems don’t exist?

Response: This is a comment.

Comment: Laur Perkins: As the county slowly reopens and lessens restrictions for in-person meetings, I have two requests: 1. that the Jail Oversight Board continue offering remote viewings of its meetings and online submission of public comments, and 2. that the jail continue to provide free remote visitation for incarcerated folks. While we are excited at the prospect of in-person meetings, we need to protect our most vulnerable and respect accessibility for all. Thank you.

Response: This is a comment

Comment: David Williams: The citizens of Allegheny County were the first in the nation voting by referendum to eliminate solitary confinement and use of torturous devices like the restraint chair. This was historic. Since items like the restraint chair will not be used in the future and the Allegheny County Jail has I think seven of them, maybe they should donate one to a museum like the Heinz History Center to document for posterity this achievement. Other items indicative of solitary confinement and other punishments should also be donated, so people in the future can see an exhibit and be proud that we, at this time, put an end to this particular form of inhumanity.

Response: This is a comment

Comment: Gabriel Heller: Because of the confusion over commissary prices, I looked up the official Jail policy on commissary. It says that “Commissary pricing of non-postage items are established by the County, either by direct application or through agreed upon prices between the County and Commissary Vendor.” So the County has the authority to set commissary prices-- and the Warden knows that better than anyone since he personally authorized the Commissary Fund policy. Will the Warden please explain why ACJ raised commissary costs? [Policy #632 - Commissary Fund, accessed at https://www.alleghenycounty.us/uploadedFiles/Allegheny_Home/Dept-Content/Jail/Docs/Policies/Jail/632-commissary-fund.pdf]

Response: Summit has complied with the contract and approved by Warden Harper.

Comment: Madison Perry: It seems like there are still a ton of job openings at the Jail for really important positions. As of right now (June 29) there are active postings for Director of Mental Health Services, Director of Substance Use Program Services, and Director of Nursing just to name a few. It seems like a safety risk to be holding people with serious medical, mental health, and substance abuse issues at ACJ when there simply aren't enough staff-- let alone credentialed staff-- to meet their needs. Can the Board and the Jail update us on their ongoing efforts to release more people back into the community, and otherwise reduce the Jail population?

Response: The jail releases individuals ordered by the court to be released.

Comment: Nicole Hall: As a resident and homeowner in Pittsburgh, I see the Allegheny County Jail as one of our great shames. The way we hold people who aren't even convicted of anything, the sub human conditions that no one should be subjected to no matter what they've been accused of, and the torture that they subject people with mental health diagnosis to should all make anyone in this city hang their head. The ACJ needs to close, but short of that, it needs MAXIMUM OVERSIGHT. The incarcerated folks should have access to clean and sanitary and healthful food, books and reading material, legal aid, and communication with their loved ones at minimum. Timeline: needs to be done yesterday.

Response: Comment

Comment: Esther Kim: Are there still people being held in solitary confinement/segregation at ACJ? If so can the Jail tell us how many people, and when will they be released?

Response: A report will be presented to the board by the deadline

Comment: Allison Crowley: If the Board goes ahead with creating a JOB Liaison position, I feel very strongly that they should find a funding mechanism other than paying the salary out of the Incarcerated Individual's Welfare Fund. I think money from the Incarcerated Individual's Welfare Fund should go *directly* to incarcerated individuals' welfare whenever possible. A JOB Liaison may help the Board protect incarcerated people in the long-term, but incarcerated people also have immediate needs that are not being met. For example, I think it would be great to increase the amount that the Board puts on each person's commissary account every month.

Response: Comment

Comment: Malcolm Durrige: I was checking out the ACJ website page on Inmate Meals and Commissary, and saw this: "The menu schedule is reviewed by a registered dietitian. ACJ's food service operation is subject to frequent inspections to ensure that all applicable standards and laws are met." Just wondering if the Jail can expand on that! Is there a staff dietitian? How often do they review menus? Does the dietitian ever see the prepared food itself so they can make sure everything is being done according to the menu? How frequently is the food service operation inspected, and by whom? Sorry about the "Twenty Questions" approach but hope you can help :)

Response: The food within the facility is provided by a dietary vendor that must meet minimum food quality standards. The menu is prepared with the company dietitian to ensure minimum standards are met and exceeded. Food service operations are inspected daily.

Comment: Jennifer Fox: I think Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) expansion is a recurring agenda item that the Jail was going to update the Board on each month, but just in case it's not already on the agenda I hope the Wardens will let us know if any progress is being made on that front. Thanks!!

Response: This will be addressed in the Chief Deputy Warden report.

Comment: Brendan DeBiasio: I'm still hoping to learn more about the fire in Pod 8E back in April. It was alleged the fire was set in protest because people on the pod weren't getting their psych meds, and as someone who works in mental health this concerns me greatly. Withdrawal from psych meds can be dangerous unless done very carefully, and going off a med that was working can increase suicidal thoughts and behaviors. Pod 8E is the segregated ("solitary confinement") unit, so all these risks are multiplied as isolation is incredibly harmful to mental health. I'm still hoping to hear that the Board has checked in with people incarcerated in 8E or their loved ones to see if they're okay. Please provide updates if there are any. Thanks very sincerely for your time.

Response: There is no substantiation to the reports that the fires were related to a protest.

Comment: Chloe Barone: By the terms of the contract with Summit, the County makes a minimum of a 30% commission on commissary purchases. How much does the County earn by commission each year? (I know the contract with Summit just took effect this year, but the 30+% commission has been consistent across past contracts). If that's not information the Board has access to, I'd appreciate any guidance on how I might be able to find this information. Thanks!

Response: Contract with Summit just took effect

Comment: Alex Washington: I'm wondering what happens when there are not enough Corrections Officers on duty at ACJ. That must make it harder to give incarcerated people time out of their cells and probably makes it harder to take people to and from medical appointments, and other essential Jail functions. How does this understaffing affect the daily functioning of the Jail and the quality of life of incarcerated people?

Response: I will not discuss staffing

Comment: Sadie O'Brien: Last month someone asked a question about why COs get a salad bar with fresh greens while incarcerated people don't, and that got me wondering about other differences in the food served to these 2 groups. Could we see the menu of food served to ACJ staff for comparison with the menu for incarcerated people?

Response: This will be made available.
