

Minutes

MEETING OF BOARD OF INSPECTORS FOR THE POTTER COUNTY JAIL October 1, 2021, Gunzburger Building

CALL TO ORDER - Paul Heimel, Chair

MOMENT OF SILENCE/ PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL – Members Glenn Drake, Nancy Grupp, Andy Watson, Barry Hayman, Paul Heimel, all present; Warden Angie Milford, present; Administrator Jessica Giebel, present; Member Stephen Minor was detained in court and unable to attend.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS -

--Daniel Cowburn said he believes public comment should be recorded in greater detail in the board's meeting minutes. Lillian Cowburn said she had not received response to questions she posed by email to the Board of Commissioners. Secretary Grupp advised that there is a specific email address for questions or comments for the Jail Board.

MINUTES - September 3, 2021 – G. Drake moved to approve, B. Hayman second; all in favor.

GUEST SPEAKER –

--Erick Coolidge, a long-time member and former chair of the Tioga County Prison Board, shared information on procedures for effective administration of the jail. He suggested that members monitor changes in the field of corrections, including research verifying that inmates who receive re-entry services while incarcerated are less likely to become repeat offenders. Commissioner Coolidge advises the warden to communicate frequently with the Jail Board and draw upon its members' diverse backgrounds and areas of knowledge. He emphasized the importance of reducing risk/potential liability by effectively meeting the challenges presented by inmates with mental health issues.

OLD BUSINESS –

--Draft of a contract for telepsychiatry services at the jail was reviewed. Members raised concerns about several provisions, including advance purchase of psychiatric services that may or may not be used. Dawn Dovensky, clinical social worker contracted for services in the jail, said about 30 percent of inmates she sees could benefit from the telepsychiatry services. G. Drake stated that services such as virtual visits with family and/or friends could help improve the mental health of inmates, while also protecting jail staff from possible virus contact. A. Watson moved to table; G. Drake second. All in favor.

NEW BUSINESS –

--Local pastors are discussing the possibility of forming a Pennsylvania Prison Society chapter in Potter County.
--Dennis Goodenough from the Riley Gallery has offered to donate books and periodicals to the jail. He will be advised to discuss details with the warden.
--Members were advised that a Tioga County agency is interested in partnering with Potter County for a joint workforce development initiative to assist jail inmates.

REPORT FROM WARDEN ANGELA MILFORD

--Current jail census is 42, with 1 inmate serving on weekends; 5 on work release; 1 engaged in community service, and 3 out-of-county inmates. There are 11 Potter County females being held by contract in other jails.
--Warden Milford summarized public health and safety procedures in place during the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic. Those who are permitted work release are segregated. Visitation is limited to three people at a time with social distancing and room disinfection after each visit. Staff must be masked and take daily temperatures upon arrival each day. New commitments have a 14-day quarantine upon arrival. The jail nurse has administered vaccines to 11 inmates and one corrections officer. She also advised that A Way Out will soon begin to provide services; Narcotics Anonymous is scheduled to hold meetings starting in October and Pa. CareerLink will soon be providing services.

NEXT MEETING – November 5, 2021, starting at noon; Gunzburger Building Auditorium

ADJOURNMENT – N. Grupp moved, G. Drake second; all in favor.