

**NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL JAIL AUTHORITY**  
**May 13, 2016**  
**Held at the New River Valley Regional Jail**

**A. CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting of the New River Valley Regional Jail Authority was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairman Mark Armentrout with twelve (12) members and four (4) alternates present.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Bland County:	Mr. Workman
Carroll County:	Ms. Cannon; Sheriff Gardner
Floyd County:	Sheriff Craig; Mr. Turman
Giles County:	Sheriff Millirons
Grayson County:	Sheriff Vaughan; Mr. Sweet
Pulaski County:	Mr. Conner
Radford City:	Sheriff Armentrout; Mr. Young
Wythe County:	Mr. Reeves

**ALTERNATES PRESENT:**

Giles County:	Mr. Martin
Pulaski County:	Mr. McCready; Major Alderman
Radford City:	Major Schumaker

**STAFF & GUESTS PRESENT:**

Interim Superintendent Charles Poff, Jr.  
Steve Durbin-Sands, Anderson, Marks and Miller  
Robert Lyons-citizen  
Charles Havens-citizen  
Bob Sumner-NRVRJ officer

**B. ROLL CALL:**

Sheriff Gardner called the roll and reported a quorum present.

**C. APPROVAL OF APRIL MINUTES:**

The Minutes from both the April 8, 2016 Authority Meeting and the April 15, 2016 Special Meeting were mailed to each board member for review. Chairman Armentrout asked if there

were any additions or corrections to the Minutes. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve both sets of Minutes.

**Motion:** Sheriff Millirons moved to approve both sets of Minutes as presented. Mr. Workman seconded the motion.

**Action:** The motion passed unanimously.

**D. OLD BUSINESS:**

**E. COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Personnel Committee:**

Mr. Reeves gave a report from the Personnel Committee meeting that was held at 9:30 am. Basic jail school graduation was held on Thursday, May 12<sup>th</sup>. On April 18<sup>th</sup>, there were twelve vacancies for correctional officers and one part-time dentist. Jobs were posted online with 180+ hits by people interested in employment. We have hired seven officers, one part-time dentist and one of our maintenance officers asked to be transferred back to security. Also since April 18<sup>th</sup>, we have had six resignations consisting of four officers, one nurse and one food service supervisor. Our current vacancies consist of seven officers, one maintenance officer, one nurse and one food service supervisor. The investigators are currently completing background checks for various open positions. We continue to receive applications for these vacancies and hope to have them filled by June 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Operations Committee:**

The Operations Committee did not meet today.

**Finance Committee:**

Ms. Cannon gave an update on the Finance Committee activity and handed out copies of the monthly financials. For April, our total gross revenue was \$16,509,094 with total expenditures of \$17,085,920 for a net ordinary loss of \$576,826. There was some other income incorporated from the bank refinancing that brings our net other income to \$1,285,920. We do have some outstanding accounts receivable of \$765,634 with accounts payable only being \$27,005.

One thing that was brought up at the Finance Committee is that staff has started restricting expenditures in an effort to control spending at the end of the fiscal year. We have had some items paid out this year that weren't budgeted for such as the VRS issue.

**Motion:** On behalf of the Finance Committee, Ms. Cannon recommended the Financial Report for approval.

**Action:** Following a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously

Ms. Cannon had anticipated presenting the budget today for approval. However, Ms. Dobbins is out due to a death in the family and copies of the budget are not available. There was discussion in the Finance Committee Meeting that while we had a finalized budget at the last meeting; there may be some modifications made. This is based on some operational issues such as the leave payout for the two retirements in August and the starting salary for the new Superintendent. Those are not in the projected budget number. We do plan to present the budget at the next meeting but there may be some slight modifications to the last version of numbers that everyone has seen. Outside of that, we have an inmate telephone contract that Mr. Poff will give an update during the Superintendent's Report. Mr. McCready asked if Authority members would get a draft copy of the budget prior to next month's meeting. Ms. Cannon has requested that staff email the draft budget out to everyone. Mr. McCready confirmed that it would just be modifications within the budget but no changes to the per diem. Ms. Cannon said she didn't anticipate a change in per diem.

#### **Design and Construction Committee:**

The Design and Construction Committee did not meet today.

#### **F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:**

Mr. Poff introduced himself to the group. He has been in law enforcement for over 38 years. He didn't want to retire this past January as the Sheriff of Roanoke County but the election didn't go as he had wanted. He enjoys this type of work and has been doing it for a long time. He appreciates the board's confidence in him to come and work at the facility for a couple of months.

Since he began on April 18<sup>th</sup>, he has taken several tours of the facility, interacted with all levels of staff, attended roll call meetings and has met with upper Administration numerous times. He has met with Captains, Lieutenants and has a Sergeant's meeting scheduled. He has found the jail to be extremely clean and as a whole the facility looks very good. It is well maintained and the physical layout is very impressive. He thinks we have a great staff here. They are very attentive to their duties, polite and respectful.

A concern of his is that when all of these vacancies are filled that we will have thirty-five officers that will need to attend the academy. These officers will need constant supervision and they can't be put out there by themselves. Our current ranking format includes one Captain, one Lieutenant and three Sergeants that are assigned to supervise the four watches. Due to a staff shortage, the Sergeants are usually assigned to a duty post. The Lieutenant is busy giving breaks and relieving duty posts for lunches/breaks so there isn't a lot of supervising there either. There are three Captains that supervise four different watches. There needs to be four Captains supervising four different shifts. We have the capability to do so and we may have to do some switching around to make that happen. We need to support our security side as much as possible since that's where a lot of the concerns are. Right now, we are using the daylight support staff to take trips, go out to relieve people and take off a little bit of the burden.

Communication flows down the ranks but not back up. That is typical in a big operation and we're doing some things to correct that. He has given employees access to their emails and voicemails from home. They can now log in to check those to stay up to date while they are on vacation, military leave, etc.

**Employee Advisory Committee:** This committee will be comprised of members from each of the watches, security shifts and representatives from daylight support groups. The purpose is to improve communications up and down the ranks. This allows these folks to make some recommendations on how to improve operations and staff morale. Basically we're involving staff and giving them a chance to be heard.

**Employee Newsletter:** We are starting an Employee Newsletter that points out special events involving staff such as births, birthdays, academy graduations and will highlight a different staff member in each edition. He started one at Western Regional and it really took off.

**Human Resources Committee:** The purpose of this committee is to make a hiring and selection plan. This includes how vacancies will be advertised, job fairs, working with colleges, developing a plan to improve employee retention and reviewing our current employee evaluation process. Recruitment should always be a continual plan whether you have an opening or not.

**Website:** With Major Schumaker's assistance, we are updating the website and making it easier for people to apply for jobs. They can now download the application, fill it out and mail it back to us. We're also now testing that person immediately. We're not waiting until we have a full group. We're testing them immediately and letting them move on.

**Training Committee:** This group is responsible for the entire agency's training plan. We need to know where we're going in regards to training and identifying training needs. Roll call training needs to be utilized more for training on policy and procedures. He knows that we need a communication skills class for our supervisors and we also need some in-service report writing for staff.

**Vehicle Monitoring:** We have a low jack vehicle monitoring system. This has been moved from the Administrators' offices to the Captains' Office and Sallyport. Supervisors can keep up with the drivers on transports during the day, nights and on weekends to better ensure officer safety.

**Cameras:** When he moved into the Superintendent's office he had a camera monitor that he doesn't want to use. He would rather be out in the jail trying to find people doing something good if he can. He said Administration won't be monitoring staff by the cameras and he has asked them to be out in the jail more frequently.

**Five Year Plans:** He asked the IT Manager to develop a five year technology plan for updating network devices, hardware, operating systems, etc. We have to be aware of how much these things cost for replacement. He has also asked Col. McPeak to work with the maintenance group to develop a five year capital maintenance program.

**Job Descriptions:** We've put together a committee to look at our job descriptions. Some need to be updated, others don't contain all of the information needed and some jobs have split.

Mr. Poff updated the group on the solar hot water system. We are very close to resolving this issue. Baker has proposed the pumps to be installed in the tanks. Thompson & Litton had a few questions regarding the pumps being used in extreme temperatures. The factory responded that yes they could be. We're expecting a call any day saying when they will be here to install the pumps.

**Employee Activity:** As stated earlier, when Mr. Poff began on April 18<sup>th</sup> there were twelve openings for officers and one part-time dentist. He suggested that Mrs. Gentry begin using social media websites such as Indeed and Craigslist to advertise these positions. We received over 180+ hits on those sites and that's free advertisement. From those hits, we have hired seven officers and one part-time dentist from those sites. We did have some resignations and people moved on to what they thought were better jobs. Background checks are currently being done on four potential officers and we're still receiving some very good applications. We were visited by the Montgomery County Sheriff who has three openings and he was here doing a background on one of our officers. There is a possibility that we may lose more. Volvo has been laying people off and we're starting to receive some applications from these folks. When we hire people we make a big investment into them. If Volvo recreates jobs, they will be gone. He doesn't know if the board is interested, but we may want to consider doing contracts with officers. That way, if someone leaves within a certain time frame they would have to pay for the cost of the academy. That may be something we want to consider in the future.

**Dentist:** We haven't had a dentist in two months since our last one retired. There were approximately one hundred inmates on the dental list with eighteen of those being more serious cases and on medication. We located Dr. Higgenbotham in Pulaski who agreed to treat these inmates until we had a dentist in place. We sent a total of fourteen inmates to him. Last Thursday, we hired a part-time dentist Dr. Leonard Tatro and his assistant. Dr. Tatro has worked with DOC for nineteen years and is currently working with Wallens Ridge Correctional Facility in Big Stone Gap, VA. He plans to retire from DOC in September but is currently taking vacation time to come in and take care of our inmates. Dr. Tatro is highly impressed with our layout and medical department. We are very lucky to have found someone of his caliber and experience.

**Employee evaluations:** Policy requires probationary employees be evaluated every quarter up to the end of their probation. After completing probation, employees are to be evaluated two times a year. These evaluations are not being done so our HR committee is looking into the policy, the forms and hopefully can streamline it a bit. That's an important tool to managing employees.

**TB Skin tests:** The majority of our staff needed those done. Lt. Col Lawson has been working with the medical department for the last week to make that a top priority. In approximately a week, seventy-four officers have been tested and have all been negative. To ensure this stays up to date, we're going to start doing those on everyone's anniversary date.

**Policy & Procedures:** These need to be updated. If we hire a new Superintendent, we need to have our policy and procedures up to a certain level before that person comes in.

**Prison Rape Elimination Act:** PREA hasn't completely been implemented here yet. PREA is a Federal law that was signed into law in September 2003. PREA falls under the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment prohibiting cruel and unusual punishment. PREA became effective in August 2012 and applies to

all federal, state and local institutions that have juvenile, male and female inmates. Currently, there is no penalty out there for non compliance other than the lack of federal grant funding. We need to comply with these standards to minimize the risk of civil liability and to ensure inmate safety. He has asked our Compliance Officer to work on it and put together a committee. We need to review all of the policy and possibly make some small tweaks to the facility to be compliant. Once complete, we would need to bring in a paid consultant to certify our program. That service would need to be put out for bid but a recent one that he had been involved in cost approximately \$3,500.

**Correctional Officers Week:** May 2-6, 2016

In celebration of Correctional Officers Week, Aramark provided lunch for all of the staff. It was a very nice gesture and everyone seemed to really enjoy it.

**Inmate Telephone Contract:** Col. McPeak put out an RFP for Inmate Telephone Services and received three responses. There were initial meetings with all three and then the vendors were narrowed down to two. The two remaining groups were NCIC out of Texas and GTL which is our current vendor that has been here since the facility was opened. After review of the proposals, the committee agreed to bring GTL back and further negotiate with them. GTL will replace all 100+ of our video visitation components and they will come in to replace all of the inmate telephones. GTL's video visitation was so much more advanced and they will also be responsible for any additional wiring that needs to be done. GTL supplies our jail management computer system. If we were to separate from them, we would have go out and pay contract services for a jail management system. Also, they are already in place so it will be a smooth transition so it just makes sense to stay with GTL. He asked Ms. Cannon if there was a motion from the Finance Committee regarding this.

**Motion:** On behalf of the Finance Committee, Ms. Cannon recommended approval for the Interim Superintendent to continue negotiations and enter into a contract with GTL (Global Tel\*Link) for inmate telephone services.

Mr. McCready asked how many years that the contract would last. Mr. Poff asked Mr. Durbin if he knew the exact terms of the contract. Mr. Durbin said that he didn't remember off hand what was put in the RFP but it should be five years or less. Mr. Poff said but we would be able to negotiate 2-3 years out from that.

**Action:** Following a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously

Sheriff Vaughan asked if we were required to have a full time PREA compliance person. Mr. Poff said we were trying to use existing personnel and our current compliance officer has been handling that. There are issues regarding it. You need to have trained investigators such as Pulaski County or State Police. There are a lot of things that still need to be worked out. Basically all through the years since 1972 we've been doing the same thing. If you have an assault you first have to separate the person involved. Then you need to give them access to the court system and medical. Now you have to also give them access to counseling. Sheriff Vaughan asked if 1,000 inmates was the threshold for a fulltime PREA compliance person. Mr. Poff said he would need to check the standards to see. Sheriff Vaughan said we are generally close to that amount on weekends.

Mr. Workman thanked Mr. Poff for informing the group.

**G. NEW BUSINESS:**

Chairman Armentrout said we need to talk about the election of a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer for next year. The current slate of officers has expressed interest in continuing to serve with the exception of Sheriff Gardner as Secretary. We need to find someone to serve in that capacity. Mr. Chidester has agreed to take nominations for any of the offices and any additional nominations can also come from the floor at next month's meeting prior to the election of officers.

Mr. Sweet asked if we could revisit whether alternates would be able to serve as officers. Chairman Armentrout said that we had fixed the BY-LAWS to say that the Secretary and Treasurer could be alternates but the Chairman and Vice-Chairman must be full members.

**H. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS:**

**I. OTHER BUSINESS OR INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

**J. ADJOURNMENT:**

Chairman Armentrout asked if there was a motion from the floor to adjourn.

**Motion:** Mr. Workman made the motion to adjourn the meeting.  
Sheriff Millirons seconded the motion.

**Action:** The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Armentrout adjourned the meeting at 10:40 am.

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Secretary, Sheriff Gardner