

**NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL JAIL AUTHORITY**  
**March 29, 2019**  
**Held at the New River Valley Regional Jail**

**A. CALL TO ORDER:**

The special meeting of the New River Valley Regional Jail Authority was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairman Mark Armentrout with eight (8) members and three (3) alternates present.

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	Bland County:	Sheriff Roseberry
	Giles County:	Sheriff Millirons; Mr. Chidester
	Grayson County:	Sheriff Vaughan
	Pulaski County:	Sheriff Worrell; Mr. McCready
	Radford City:	Sheriff Armentrout
	Wythe County:	Mr. Reeves

<b>ALTERNATES PRESENT:</b>	Carroll County:	Ch. Dep. Bourne; Ms. Dalton
	Grayson County:	Mr. Smith

<b>STAFF &amp; GUESTS PRESENT:</b>	Superintendent Gregory Winston
	Dep. Superintendent John Bowman
	Steve Durbin - Sands Anderson PC

**B. ROLL CALL:**

Mrs. Akers called the roll and reported a quorum present.

**C. APPROVAL OF MARCH 2019 MINUTES:**

The Minutes from the March 8, 2019 meeting will be voted on at the May 2019 meeting.

**D. OLD BUSINESS:**

None

**E. COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

No committee reports were discussed.

**Design and Construction Committee:**

Design & Construction did not meet today.

**F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:**

**G. NEW BUSINESS:**

Superintendent Winston said that we received a 22.7% increase for our health insurance from Anthem Local Choice. As everyone knows the comp board has provided our staff with a 3% pay increase for July. We immediately began searching to see what was out there and available to us in order to preserve some of that raise without losing it to higher insurance coverage. We located a broker with USI a national brokering service and provided him with our information and insurance needs. This service is paid for by the insurance groups so there is no cost to us. After putting our information out to participating insurance groups in our area we had a conference call to discuss the results. Aetna was the one group that responded and could provide us with comparable health care plan at affordable rates. They are able to provide the 250, 1,000 and HDHP plans that we currently offer to our staff. The coverage that they offer is for dental, health care and prescription coverage. Vision coverage can be purchased for an additional charge. It's a fairly equivalent plan without a tremendous increase to the staff or Authority.

If we decide to opt out of the TLC (The Local Choice) group they require 90 days notice and there is a potential of an exit fee being charged. We won't know about that until January. At the year, Anthem will go back and look at their insurance claims burden for the year. If they have an adverse experience then they make the people that left The Local Choice divide up the amount of their loss and pay it. In talking with Aetna, the Superintendent has requested a reduction in our premiums for the month of January 2020 to help us compensate for this adverse experience adjustment should that arise. They have agreed to give us a credit if that does happen. If we don't get an adverse experience adjustment then we'll pay our full premium. Unfortunately we won't know if we're being charged that fee until January 2020.

Our broker at USI assures us that they can educate the staff on the change, get everyone enrolled and roll this out to begin July 1<sup>st</sup>. The next step for us is to notify TLC and then work with Aetna to get the ball rolling.

Mr. McCready asked if the Aetna plan reasonably similar to what the employees have now and would they be happy with the new plan. The Superintendent said yes that he has no second thoughts whatsoever. We're offering the same three tiers 250, 1000, HDHP and we're not going to change the HSA donations. Mr. McCready asked if this program would cost the jail and the staff approximately what they're paying now. The Superintendent said yes with one caveat. Budgeting this year to stay level funded would mean we were budgeting for our current enrollment. We currently have vacancies at this time. The risk we run is if we don't budget forward for that and keep it level funded...then when we bring those people on...then we would have to fund that in some other way. We have areas in our vacancies savings that could offset some of that cost. Tammy Dobbins said possibly if employees move to a higher deductible then there would be additional savings there that we could use to offset that.

The Superintendent said that essentially what we did was level fund for the number of enrollees that we currently have. Mr. McCready asked if that dollar amount is the same as last year. Superintendent Winston said it was approximately \$106,000 less however we would need that money to fund the additional dental plan as part of that package. Health, medical and prescription should be our base offering and anyone can sign up for vision coverage. Mr. Smith said so this insurance is going to cost more because last year we had all of our vacancies in there and this year it is just enrollees. Superintendent said yes that apples to apples there is a 5.75% increase over last year's versus 22.7% going with TLC depending on how we budget it. Mr. Smith said we also run the risk of potentially having to pay \$52,000 in January. Tammy Dobbins added that last year we had just people sign up for the higher deductible plan. Currently almost everyone that we're hiring now in their 20's is taking the higher deductible plan. That plans costs us less so every time some drops down a tier it saves us money.

There was a lengthy discussion on plans that some of our jurisdictions currently have and the tiers they offer. Superintendent also went over options that we may consider in terms of insurance in the future but we need to make a decision for this upcoming year.

**Motion:** Mr. McCready made a motion to notify TLC that we are leaving the state plan. He also moved that we engage USI/Aetna to provide our healthcare coverage to our staff for the next year. Authorize the Chairman Armentrout and Superintendent Winston to execute all paperwork necessary to make these changes. Mr. Chidester seconded the motion.

Ms. Dalton asked if Aetna was the only vendor to respond and did USI think it was because of the short turnaround. Superintendent Winston said USI engaged Cigna, United Healthcare, Optima, Aetna, Aetna Dental and Delta Dental. Cigna and Optima declined to quote because they couldn't be competitive due to our claim experience. United Healthcare gave us a quote above renewal prices that wasn't competitive. Aetna provided a very competitive quote on all lines. Delta Dental was a little bit more expensive than Aetna.

Mr. Chidester added that Giles County has gone to being self insured. He said that approximately 75% of their employees selected the \$5,000 deductible. What happens is they have become better consumers of healthcare. When they go for prescriptions they look for GoodRx or some other discount places to find it. In many cases they're able to get it for ½ price. Superintendent Winston said that should we will be in a much better position next year with more claims data. That gives a year to better prepare and possibly look at self insuring. Mr. Chidester said that Giles County would be happy next year to see about including our staff in their self insuring policy.

Superintendent Winston said that Aetna PPO allows for our employees that live in NC/WV to have access to a large network of healthcare providers. Currently we offer our post-65 employees access to a Medicare supplement. After the change they will not have access to that plan any longer however USI/Aetna will provide post- 65 retirement plans to them. We will continue to keep our pre-65 retirement plan as is.

**Action:** Following roll call, the motion passed unanimously.

The New River Community Services board called for a meeting this past Friday evening. We do not provide mental health services inside our facility; the community services board provides it all. They are not required by code to provide any mental health services in the jail beyond Access/Crisis Intervention. It's unique to find the amount of services that they have been providing here. They had been providing a full-time certified mental health person with experience in the treatment of people with severe mental illness. They also provide substance abuse treatment and 48 hours of psychiatric services.

Over the last four months, we've seen a decrease in the amount of mental health hours brought into the jail. On Friday, we were told that they were cutting our prescribers' hours back from 48 hours to 16 hours and would evaluate the use of a qualified person in terms of licensure to come in the jail. Basically they have one fulltime equivalent for support services/counseling and 16 hours of prescribing hours. We cannot provide mental health to the level that's required with that amount. He gave some facts/requirements and mandatory standards regarding mental health with the group also some increases in requirements that are coming in the future.

The cost of delivery of providing psychiatric mental healthcare is a big deal. The Superintendent has compared with several other jails their costs for mental health care. Our options are to either contract with the CSB to provide licensed people to provide those support services or find another private vendor. For psychiatric services we're looking an approx. \$120,000/277.00 per hour for 32-36 hours a month. We would then need to locate additional funds for a licensed social worker/counselor at around \$50,000 if contracted from the CSB. If we have to go through a private healthcare vendor including insurance benefits we would be over \$75,000 apiece and we would probably need two people. The very best case scenario, we're looking at probably \$220,000-275,000 to bring our mental healthcare system up to speed.

Yesterday we were notified by our Dublin town manger that our domestic cold water/sewer is going to go up another 15% this year which will equal \$45,000. There was an increase of 15% last year which was about \$60,000 over what we had budgeted. We received our

CPI (Consumer Price Index) for food service that will be going up roughly 2.36% which is \$30,000.

Our inmate population is decreasing in this area as well as Southwest Virginia as a whole. We're focusing our ADP on 876 prisoners per day. If we only level fund the budget by decreasing our ADP; that raises the per diem up to \$28.15. That's just changing our ADP to pay the bills. By incorporating the charges listed above, the total increase would be \$1.47 so almost to the \$29 mark. These budget items we're looking to increase aren't optional for us. Providing a constitutional level of behavioral health care is not optional. The option of providing domestic cold water is not optional and the Town of Dublin is still more competitive than the City of Radford or Pulaski County.

We could go back out for bid on our food service contract but we currently get a good deal with Trinity. If our population increases then the food service cost decreases. We currently spend around \$903,000 per year to feed the inmates and that will increase to \$930,000.

Chairman Armentrout gave the history of our per diem charges dating back to 2010. The last increase was in 2017 increasing from \$24.95 to \$27.50. He added that it's a lot of information to digest and unfortunately it's late in the budget season. He asked that everyone take this information back to their jurisdiction.

There was a lengthy discussion on the various increases and the options to fund them. Options discussed were: do we go ahead with the budget without these additional funds in it, do we put it in the budget this year or use money from the reserves to pay it. Then next year we know that the per diems will go up \$1.50 to pay for healthcare services and re-populate the reserves.

Sheriff Vaughan asked if we could approach Mt. Rogers for their services. Superintendent Winston said that historically Mt. Rogers won't provide services due to NRVCS currently being here.

We have a large jail with 1,183 beds. Currently we have empty housing units but to get those units up to conditions we've got to spend some money on them. Since 2010, we've never had a preventative maintenance plan to handle the security system. Today we have four security touch screens down that we've cobbled together. He thinks that we hold on to our repair and reserve account for items like this. The Superintendent has a meeting with DMME on Monday regarding performance contracting to improve our domestic cold water usage, energy usage, etc.

There was discussion on prisoner forecast. The most recent prisoner population forecast for state inmates is ticking up at .3%. The local responsibility is ticking up at about .4%. Since 2014 until now, the linear graph locally it tells us that we should be down about 31 prisoners and we are actually down about 28 so it's pretty predictable. The forecast takes in a lot of things and could always change.

It was asked why the state only reimburses \$12 per day and the localities are paying \$27.50. Superintendent Winston said that there is a bill in the General Assembly every year to

increase that to the jail charge. Other factors that affect jail population are people are being diverted to community corrections; pre-trial diversion and now bond reform is coming soon to Virginia. With it, people won't be coming to jail as often as pre-trial detainees so our population is going to continue to decrease.

Mr. McCready asked that the Superintendent Winston draft a letter to all of the jurisdictions outlining the need for the \$1.50 increase to per diem to break even, plus the loss/reduction of NRVCS mental health services and the 15% increase for domestic cold water/sewer.

Mr. Chidester said despite the talk about increase that from his perspective he saw great effort by administration to save money. Superintendent Winston said he would continue to work on the mental health to see what we can do. He will also continue working with the CSB to try to reduce that number as much as possible and still provide constitutionally adequate services to protect everyone involved.

Sheriff Armentrout said he appreciated the information and as we move forward with budget we will call another meeting if needed.

**H. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS:**

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

**J. ADJOURNMENT:**

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

**Action:** Following roll call, the motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business to come before the Authority, Chairman Armentrout adjourned the meeting at 11:12 a.m.

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Chairman Mark A. Armentrout