

NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL JAIL AUTHORITY
September 11, 2020
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 10:02 a.m. by Chairman Mark Armentrout with nine (9) members and four (4) alternates present.

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Carroll County:	Sheriff Kemp
	Floyd County:	Sheriff Craig
	Giles County:	Mr. Chidester
	Grayson County:	Sheriff Vaughan
	Pulaski County:	Sheriff Worrell; Mr. Travis
	Radford City:	Sheriff Armentrout; Ms. Cumberland
	Wythe County:	Mr. Vaught

ALTERNATES PRESENT:	Giles County:	Mr. Martin
	Grayson County:	Mr. Smith
	Pulaski County:	Mr. Sweet
	Wythe County:	Ch. Dep. Foster

STAFF & GUESTS PRESENT:	Superintendent Gregory Winston
	Mr. Steve Durbin-Sands Anderson
	Mr. Robert Lyons-Citizen
	Mr. Bob Sumner-Citizen
	Ms. Ashley Spinks-Floyd Co Press

Sheriff Armentrout welcomed the group and reminded everyone of the significance of this date 19 years ago today.

B. ROLL CALL:

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

C. APPROVAL OF JULY 2020 MINUTES:

Copies of the Minutes from the July 24, 2020 meeting were mailed to each member. Chairman Armentrout asked if there were any additions or additional corrections to the Minutes as presented.

Motion: Mr. Chidester moved that the July 24, 2020 Minutes be approved as presented. Sheriff Kemp seconded the motion.

Action: The motion passed unanimously.

D. OLD BUSINESS:

E. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Finance Committee:

Copies of the monthly financials were distributed. In Mr. Workman's absence, Chairman Armentrout and Superintendent Winston reviewed the report in detail with the group.

Motion: On behalf of the Finance Committee, Chairman Armentrout made the motion to approve the Finance Report as presented.

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

F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Employee News:

Superintendent Winston began by discussing the Weight Loss Challenge that employees had been competing in for the last few months. The top two employees having lost the most weight were Mail Room Officer Kristian Smith and Transportation Officer Bobby Wright.

Academy:

We began the academy with eight officers attending but lost one due to sickness and one suffered an injury during defensive tactics. Six officers remain in training with graduation scheduled for Oct 7th.

Superintendent Winston also gave an update on Montgomery County possibly pulling out of the agreement with the academy. Our jail is the largest contributor to the academy and may be involved in some future litigation in regards to Montgomery County leaving. An attorney is expected to attend the next academy meeting to discuss their options and Superintendent Winston will update the Authority more in November.

Operations:

- Headcount today: 939
- Total days served 28,242
- Average Daily Population: 911
- Average Daily Population for male prisoners: 720
- Average Daily Population for female prisoners: 191
- Number of commitments: 465
- Avg Daily commitments: 15
- Number of releases: 381
- Avg Daily releases: 12.3

COVID-19 Update:

We currently have one positive COVID case and that person is asymptomatic. The jail has been very successful with their efforts to keep COVID infections down. We're sending a lot more prisoners out for court and everyone is being tested afterwards with the rapid COVID tests.

Superintendent Winston just ordered 84 dozen prisoner masks this week and he asked the sheriffs to let him know if they need any additional masks sent over. We are fully compliant with the state's Occupational Health regulations regarding COVID-19. We've designed/implemented the proper training and notified all of our staff in accordance with regulations.

IT:

We've received three CellSense magnetometers and they were displayed in the board room today. They are portable and can be taken into the housing units to cut down on inmate contraband. Staff training was performed earlier in the month.

We're moving forward with the inmate tablets which will enable inmates to visit with their family at home. It will be about another 40 days or so to be up and going. Once that is rolled out law enforcement will be able to access DataIQ and training will be offered to the jurisdictions.

We received a grant from the Department of Criminal Justice related to dealing with COVID issues. Our jail wasn't a recipient of an any CARES money and didn't receive anything from any localities for COVID, therefore we had priority to receive money from this grant. We applied for \$38,000 and received it. With that grant money we will enhance our technology in order to reduce movement within the jail. This enables us to improve our internal health care delivery through video via telemedicine as well as mental health and substance abuse counseling. In addition to that, we're going to be able to establish another courtroom in the back. We will have a whole new poly-com system coming in. He discussed some improvements that would be performed on this new courtroom such as a different window glazing and noise canceling headphones to address some issues that we've had with video hearings in the past.

Prisoner Days:

Our prisoner days continue to creep up. We had planned for a significant budget deficit by putting money in the general reserve account. It is still sitting there if necessary but based on our

current numbers it looks positive. We'll take another peek at that moving forward but for now our revenue is just a tick below of where we were expected to be at this time of year.

Ameresco-Performance Contracting:

This has been a planning month for us. We've had 2-3 meetings and a walk-thru of the facility along with approving contractors that will be working on the project. Anyone that will be back in the jail will need to have a criminal history performed.

During the day of the walk-thru, the pump on one of the boilers went out. Replacing the boilers was going to be one of the last projects on their list but has now been moved up to be the first before the heating system is on.

Employee Info:

Currently we have 42 vacancies. Over the last two months we have lost four to localities, one to the military and one to a Roanoke agency because of pay. When talking with HR during their exit interviews, we were told that we're not very competitive in pay. Of the officers that left, the longest serving employee was hired March 23rd of this year. In the Finance Committee meeting this morning we discussed finding a way to incentivize longevity. He updated the group on the jail's current pay structure and added that we're actively trying to improve our employee retention.

We have so many new staff members so if we increase our starting salary we're going to be taking on a level of compression that has to be corrected immediately. We will be looking at the budget to see what can be done. Doing it now while we have this level of vacancies would be a good time to consider this. We're also looking a more employee recognition ideas.

Sheriff Vaughan asked if we had started employment contracts yet. Superintendent Winston said we looked at them but they've been unenforceable until officers have been to the academy and are trained.

Dep. Vaught said Wythe County once had the same issue of keeping deputies and a few years ago they began offering a bump in the deputies' salaries at they gain years of service and longevity. It seems to have worked well for their jurisdiction.

There was much discussion on the topic and ways several jurisdictions had used to incentivize longevity with their employees. Several ways to recognize employees were mentioned. Superintendent Winston gave examples of things we had done like food trucks, t-shirts, donut wagon on-site, etc. COVID has definitely played a part in us not doing more recently.

Chairman Armentrout tasked Superintendent Winston to get some numbers together on possible pay raises to report back at the November meeting.

G. NEW BUSINESS:

H. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS:

I. OTHER BUSINESS OR INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

J. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: Mr. Vaught made the motion to adjourn the meeting.
Mr. Smith seconded the motion.

Action: The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business to come before the Authority, Chairman Armentrout adjourned the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

Chairman Mark A. Armentrout