

**NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL JAIL AUTHORITY**  
**March 12, 2021**  
**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 10:07 a.m. by Chairman Mark Armentrout with twelve (12) members and two (2) alternates present.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Bland County:	Mr. Workman; Sheriff Ramsey
Carroll County:	Sheriff Kemp
Floyd County:	Mr. Turman
Giles County:	Mr. Chidester; Sheriff Millirons
Grayson County:	Mr. Shepley; Sh. Vaughan (video)
Pulaski County:	Sheriff Worrell; Mr. Travis
Radford City:	Sheriff Armentrout
Wythe County:	Mr. Vaught

**ALTERNATES PRESENT:**

Wythe County:	Mr. Bear; Ch. Dep. Foster
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**STAFF & GUESTS PRESENT:**

Superintendent Gregory Winston  
Mr. Steve Durbin-Sands Anderson  
Mr. Bob Sumner-Citizen  
Mr. Robert Lyons-Citizen  
Mr. Gordon Jones-Robinson, Farmer & Cox  
Dr. Linda Millsaps-Floyd County Administrator  
Mrs. Tonya Akers-NRVRJ  
Mrs. Tammy Dobbins-NRVRJ  
Mr. Tim Clark- NRVRJ  
Sgt. Brian Golden-NRVRJ  
Sgt. Travis Hamilton-NRVRJ  
Lt. Eric Faulkner-NRVRJ  
Mrs. Amanda Lester-NRVRJ  
Mr. Chauncey Robinson-retiree  
Mr. Wayne Embrey-retiree

Prior to roll call, Chairman Armentrout read notices from Carroll, Wythe and Bland County announcing the following re-appointments:

- Carroll: Nathan Lyons (member) and Michelle Dalton (alternate)
- Wythe: Brian Vaught (member) and Stephen Bear (alternate)
- Bland: Eric Workman (member) and Randy Johnson (alternate). (Mr. Workman said that was sent in error and the notice should have stated Randy Ratliff remains as alternate. Following the meeting, a new notice was sent and this has been corrected).

**B. ROLL CALL:**

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

**C. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 2021 MINUTES:**

Copies of the Minutes from the January 15, 2021 meeting were mailed to each member. Chairman Armentrout asked if there were any additions or additional corrections to the Minutes as presented.

**Motion:** Sheriff Millirons moved that the January 15, 2021 Minutes be approved as presented. Mr. Workman seconded the motion.

**Action:** The motion passed unanimously.

Superintendent announced to the group the passing of former NRVJR officer Paul Bailey. Mr. Bailey was a jail officer from 1999-2012 before going to work for the Wythe County Sheriff's Office. Our condolences go out to his family as well as the WCSO.

Superintendent Winston also recognized two recent NRVJR retirees: Mr. Wayne Embrey (eleven years of service) and Mr. Chauncey Robinson (22 years of service). Lt. Faulkner spoke on Officer Embrey's behalf describing him as someone that was very professional and not only took care of the inmates but also his fellow officers. Sgt. Golden spoke of starting at the jail with Officer Robinson back in 1999. He added that after 20 years together that he was more than an employee but also as a friend. Superintendent Winston added that Chauncey was responsible for keeping everything stocked, recorded and on budget. His role was very important and we miss him every day.

Congratulations to both Wayne and Chauncey. Best of luck to both of you in your retirement!

Superintendent introduced Amanda Lester, HR Manager. Amanda is tasked with employee recruitment, on-boarding and employee engagement. She has been working on an Employee Recognition Program to award an Employee of the Quarter and an Employee of the Year for both

sworn officers and non-sworn civilian staff. Employees were nominated by peers but winners were selected by an outside committee. As employees are selected their pictures will be added to plaque hung in our lobby area.

Brenda Moran, LPN was selected as the Civilian Employee of the Quarter. She received multiple nominations from her peers for going above and beyond her job duties. When Brenda's job is complete, she helps the officers by passing out trays or wherever she is needed.

1<sup>st</sup> Sgt Matt Wells was selected as Sworn Employee of the Year. He was chosen for going the extra mile in helping a positive COVID inmate that was being released. The inmate's vehicle had been impounded and 1<sup>st</sup> Wells worked closely with him to limit contact & exposure to other employees.

Congratulations to both Nurse Moran and 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt Wells on their awards. They both received a \$50 gift card which was supplied by one of our vendors and each will have a designated parking place for the quarter.

**D. OLD BUSINESS:**

**E. COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Finance Committee:**

Copies of the monthly financials were distributed. Mr. Workman reviewed the report in detail with the group.

**Motion:** On behalf of the Finance Committee, Mr. Workman made the motion to approve the Finance Report as presented.

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

Gordon Jones our auditor from Robinson, Farmer and Cox supplied copies of the independent auditor's report and Financial Report to each member present. Mr. Jones reviewed several sections of both reports and explained them in detail to the group. The jail received a clean, unmodified report which is the highest level anyone can receive.

In the financial report, in regards to the internal controls of the jail's financial reporting and compliance there was one reporting for adjustments made to financial statements. The explanation was given in the management comments.

Mr. Jones also reviewed the audit presentation. He highlighted various portions of the report such as the Statement of Net Position, a summary analysis of the jail in relation to other regional jails in our area as well as the Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and our Fund Balance.

There were two management notes however there were no formal findings. The first was in regards to some journal entry adjustments which occurred when staff was becoming familiar with a new financial software. Also, five financial disclosure forms were submitted incomplete. Mr. Jones recommends that each board member/alternate complete the disclosure form in its entirety by the due date.

Copies of both reports are available for any members/alternates that were unable to attend the March meeting. Mr. Jones added that the overall audit went well and he instructed the members to contact him with any questions regarding either report.

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

### **Academy:**

We have 10 officers currently in the academy with graduation scheduled for April 9<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am. Superintendent Winston and Lt. O'Dell met with the academy officers and one of their main concerns was how to minimize the amount of inmate damage done to the cell doors. He stressed that supervision was one of the main ways to minimize that but we are also working with Willo a detention group from Alabama. They will be here in the coming weeks to check out the mechanical parts of the inmate cell doors on the old side of the jail.

### **Operations:**

- Headcount today: 906
- Total days served 26,001
- Average Daily Population: 929
- Average Daily Population for male prisoners: 749
- Average Daily Population for female prisoners: 180
- Number of commitments: 332
- Avg Daily commitments: 12
- Number of releases: 341
- Avg Daily releases: 11

### **State Responsible Inmates:**

Due to COVID over the last year, the number of DOC prisoners that should have been transferred to prison but remain in local jails has increased around 200%. This increase totals approximately 7,400 inmates statewide. There have been several meetings to discuss the situation and we are expecting a letter from the Director of Intake announcing that they will begin taking in 900 inmates from all across the state over the next month. We expect to see our state responsible inmate population dip due to this action.

**Accreditation:**

We have been working over the last few years to attain our national accreditation but we still have a long way to go. This has slowed down due to our Professional Standards Unit whose main job was to manage accreditation, being pulled to help out with transports and doctor's appointments. Also, we received notice that our Accreditation Sergeant was leaving us to become a teacher. With our three-year audit coming up, we hired a part-time Accreditation Specialist to maintain our accreditation files and get us moving forward with policy revisions. The Accreditation Sergeant has since decided to stay but with the additional assistance we hope to achieve ACA accreditation next year.

**HR:**

Since the last meeting we have hired 10 people and have several applicants still in background.

**IT:**

We have been waiting for some software called DataIQ that will be very beneficial to the sheriff's offices. Once installed, it will integrate/link all of the telephone calls, tablet conversations and every piece of the communication that the inmates have. All of the jurisdictions have investigators that listen to inmate telephone calls. If they recover a telephone number, they can put it into the system and it will tell you everyone from the jail that called, messaged or video chatted with that number.

**Telephone Contract:**

Our current telephone contract expires in one year so on March 21<sup>st</sup> we will go out for RFP (Request for Proposals) for telephone services. The Superintendent gave the group information on the strong possibility of approval of the Martha Wright Prison Phone Justice Act which seeks to greatly reduce if not completely eliminate telephone commissions. This would leave a large hole in our budget so we want to get ahead of that. As mentioned, we do have a year on our current contract but we want to get in the marketplace to see what the telephone vendors have to offer.

**Security Systems:**

We had a large capital improvement planned for this year to overhaul our security systems. There are some critical areas that need to be completed soon. We've had a group tour the facility and look at our installation. They've given us a presentation of the security system solution that they could do for us. The first portion to cover all of the critical elements would be \$250,000 with a projected cost over \$2 million over the entire projects. They're currently doing some projects in other regional jails so cooperative procurement is potentially an option for us.

**Budget:**

We think we've finalized the budget. We would like to schedule a budget meeting with the Finance group in the coming weeks. There doesn't appear to be a need to increase the per diem and we will maintain our projected prisoner forecast of 884 based on the state prisoner forecast.

The only expected increase in our budget will be the increase from the compensation board for officers and staff. Last year the legislature approved a 2.7% increase to the starting salaries of jail officers. COVID hit and the Governor unallotted that money. During a Special Session, the Governor proposed that budget amendment again and it was put in the budget for a 2.7% starting salary increase for jail officers. The Governor and legislature approved that and it is sitting aside

to go in effect July 2021. Out of budget committees of both the House Appropriations Committee and Senate Financing Appropriation Committee there were bills resulting in a 5% across the board increase. Due to these increases, our current starting salary of \$32,578 will increase to \$35,149. He explained some areas of compression that had to be made but beginning in July sworn staff through the rank of Lieutenant will receive a 7.7% increase and civilian staff will receive 5%.

There is a slight increase expected in our health insurance of about 14%. Last year our proposed increase was 15% and after negotiation we got that down to 8%. That allowed us extra money in the budget for this year plus additional savings in inmate pre-existing medical charges. Through that we were able to level fund the health insurance without passing that increase to the employees or the Authority.

### **Performance Contracting:**

Our energy savings performance contracting project is moving along. We've got a little more than half of the water done, most of the lighting is done, the chiller project is going and we've done some work on the roof top units. All of that is to be completed by August and we're prepared to make our first interest payment in October. With respect to the budget, we're having to go back and forecast our energy savings to offset the cost of the project. The energy savings are guaranteed but not guaranteed month to month. At the end of the year when they perform monitoring and verification is when we would be reimbursed if they fail to meet their goals. So, we have to forecast the savings of our energy and domestic cold water to pay for that in case they don't meet their M&V requirements and have to write us a check. This is highly unlikely that would occur.

### **G. NEW BUSINESS:**

We have had several inquiries from the jurisdictions in regards to having trustees again. We currently don't have the benefit of getting our inmates vaccinated against COVID. We've been in contact with Dr. Bissell and proposed that when we begin vaccinating inmates that we use the single dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine due to our population being so transient. She advised us that when the time comes that they should have enough stock of the J&J brand.

There was a lengthy discussion of our inmate workforce and who can and cannot be selected as a trusty. Superintendent Winston asked the jurisdictions to give him an idea of how many inmates they could get by with initially. He discussed beginning with Jerel Dobbins' group and have them visit different jurisdictions a few days a week. This will help the jurisdictions get their roads cleaned up and buy us some time to boost our inmate trusty population.

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

Mr. Turman introduced his guest, Dr. Linda Millsaps as Floyd County's new County Administrator. On behalf of the Authority, Sheriff Armentrout welcomed her to the meeting.

Sheriff Armentrout reminded the group that it is time to hold officer elections at the May meeting. If anyone has nominations for Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer please let him know.

Sheriff Armentrout added that he will not be able to attend the July meeting and asked Mr. Chidester as Vice Chair if he would conduct the meeting in his absence.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

With no further business to discuss, Chairman Armentrout asked for motion to adjourn.

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

**Action:** The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business to come before the Authority, Chairman Armentrout adjourned the meeting at 11:17 a.m.

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Chairman Mark A. Armentrout