

**NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL JAIL AUTHORITY**  
**March 10, 2023**  
**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 Richard Chidester.

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	Carroll County:	Sheriff Kemp
	Floyd County:	Sheriff Craig
	Giles County:	Mr. Chidester; Sheriff Millirons
	Grayson County:	Sheriff Vaughan; Mr. Smith
	Pulaski County:	Sheriff Worrell; Mr. Sweet
	Radford City:	Mr. Fleisher
	Wythe County:	Sheriff Foster; Mr. Vaught

<b>ALTERNATES PRESENT:</b>	Wythe County:	Mr. Hankins; Major Cline
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<b>STAFF &amp; GUESTS PRESENT:</b>	Superintendent Kimberly D. Haug
	Mr. Steve Durbin-Sands, Anderson, Marks & Miller
	Tonya Akers, Tim Clark-NRVRJ
	Citizens: Robert Lyons, Bob Sumner, Lena Perry and Pastor Mike Johnston

Prior to roll call, Chairman Chidester read a notice from Wythe County Board of Supervisors reappointing Mr. Brian Vaught as member and Mr. Matt Hankins as alternate to the Authority board for a one-year term ending December 31, 2023.

**B.     ROLL CALL:**

Mrs. Akers called roll and reported a quorum with eleven (11) members and two (2) alternates present.

**C.     APPROVAL OF JANUARY 2023 MINUTES:**

Copies of the Minutes from January meeting were mailed to each member. Chairman Chidester asked if there were any additions or corrections to the Minutes as presented.

**Motion:**           Sheriff Millirons moved that the January 12, 2023 Minutes be approved as presented. Sheriff Foster seconded the motion.

**Action:**           The motion passed unanimously.

**D.     OLD BUSINESS:**

To be discussed in the Superintendent's report.

**E. FINANCIAL REPORTS:**

Mr. Sweet reviewed the financial reports with the group. He pointed out a few things in the budget versus actual. He mentioned the per diem increase this year from \$28.65 to \$36.65 and with that increase, the Finance group had promised to track it in real time and report back.

Currently we're at 50% revenues to date with accruals at 69%. YTD we should be at 67% so our revenues are up 2 % but if you apply that over to expenditures on a cash basis system vs the accrual, the cash basis is at 59% it too should be a 67%. So, we're tracking less on expenditures than what the burn rate should be this time of year. He then broke it down by jurisdictions of what they were tracking even with the \$8 per diem increase vs the 67% we should be tracking at this point in the year.

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

Mr. Vaught said when we discussed the new per diem, we had talked about doing a comparison so we could see where we would be if we hadn't had the increase. Mr. Sweet said Wythe County is paying \$24,000 more based upon the per diem increase yet it's tracking less than they would have spent based on the approved budget for a lot less inmates. Mr. Sweet said the jail is stabilized with the adjustment and it's not overly impacting the member jurisdictions.

Mr. Chidester said with the exception of Bland everyone is tracking under the anticipated budget. He asked if this was because of reduction in the amount of people being incarcerated or DOC picking up their inmates. Superintendent Haug said she thinks the majority of it is because of DOC and they continue to take them weekly. But our regular booking/releasing for the jurisdictions is remaining pretty steady.

Mr. Smith asked if things stay positive is there any consideration in the new budget to lower the per diem down and work back to the jurisdictions' favor? Mr. Sweet said that's why he's trying to break this down by jurisdictions. For instance, even though Grayson County's per diem went up \$8 they are saving 12% year to date for what they budgeted for this year. We want to make sure the regional jail stays sustainable especially if we can take any expense saving and reinvest them into lowering liabilities, increasing efficiencies, solving systemic issues (staffing or transportation) etc. Each jurisdiction has a different expectation. Mr. Smith said he understood that but it's costing more to do business with less prisoners. What if we go back to the number of prisoners we had before? Mr. Sweet said what we lose in volume, we make back in margin. When volume goes up, we can decrease our margin. He added that's what we had promised. As the Authority Treasurer and also the County Administrator, he's never going to take the perspective from our member jurisdiction out of the equation. We want to make sure we're looking out for the best interest of the member jurisdictions' finances and balance that with the needs of the regional jail. Our jail is only as healthy as the finances of our jail. He assured the group that he would employ that balance to the best of his ability. That's why he's taking this effort to explain what we did, why we did it and how it is working out. We will pivot in the future if and when we need to.

Mr. Chidester asked if there were any other questions. Hearing none, he asked the secretary to call the roll.

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

Mr. Sweet said there were some additional interest earnings from the LGIP. Due to the liabilities that not having certain technologies in the jail imposes we were looking at putting in capital expense of approximately \$70,000 for a digital rounds system. We have enough monies from unanticipated earned

interest and a little residue from the Repair and Replacement fund to do that project this fiscal year or we could wait and budget that for next year. It's the Finance Committee's recommendation to not belabor that if we have another source of revenue to cover that expense.

Superintendent Haug explained how the digital round system works. This is a pipe system that doesn't require us to rewire the jail. There will be buttons strategically placed in all of the housing areas. When the officer does a round, they hit the button with the pipe. Once finished, they place the pipe in the modem which downloads the round. From the liability standpoint, this will be fantastic for us. We will be using the hand-held scanners in the areas of the jail with good WIFI such as medical and booking but the pipe system in the back will be sufficient for our rounds.

Attorney Steve Durbin said from a liability perspective, what he sees this system doing is instant accountability by putting systems in place to protect you. If someone doesn't do a round that day...you would know that day and action could be taken.

Mr. Vaught asked the annual maintenance fee. Mr. Sweet said the total cost is \$68,999 and the yearly maintenance is approximately \$13,000. That fee includes the software, cloud storage and repair. Superintendent Haug said the battery life on the pipes is approximately 10 years.

Mr. Vaught said he thinks it's a good investment and he'd recently seen the system in use at another jail.

**Motion:** Mr. Vaught made the motion to use the interest earned and repair/replacement residue to enter into contract the Guard One pipe system upon pending legal review.

Mr. Hankins asked a question about the maintenance agreement. How quickly would they come to fix something. Mr. Durbin said there were three levels of response time and he's currently working with them to get better clarification. Mr. Hankins would also like to know the consequences if they don't show up when there is a critical need.

**Action:** The motion passed unanimously

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

Superintendent Haug began her report by announcing the unexpected passing of Captain Osie Miller with thirteen years of service here. Members of our staff attended two funeral services, one in Logan, WV and one in Christiansburg. Superintendent Haug thanked the members for their condolences and offers to help. Montgomery County sent five officers up to work during those services and we've responded with a thank you note and candy.

Our count this morning was 626 and our ADP has been running around 650.

#### **Door Project:**

The door project is underway and we are a couple of weeks in. We've been in to see a sample door and as of now they haven't run into any serious glitches. If it continues going smoothly, it shouldn't take the full six-month period they said they would. She said if any members wanted to go back to see the doors that Capt. Bobbitt would take them after the meeting.

**Programs:**

We're beginning our substance abuse program again. We've started with a small group of 10 inmates and hope to increase that slowly. We've also discussed adding some more bible studies programs as our staff trends up.

**Staffing:**

Our teams are running about 5 more people on each shift from where we were 6 months ago. We've had two retired officers come back to work for us part-time. Their knowledge and work in warehouse and maintenance has been a huge help. There are six in background and ten signed up for testing. We're moving in the right direction.

**Transports:**

After this next academy, the Superintendent plans to pull two more officers over to the transportation department. They are currently still half staffed compared to past years but we are working to correct that. Also, Superintendent Haug had recently emailed to the sheriffs regarding reimbursement information on the occasion that a jurisdiction may need to transport inmates to the jail. Copies were passed out for the group to review and discuss.

Mr. Chidester said we recognize that it's still the jail's responsibility to the greatest extent possible to do these transports. That's what both he and the Superintendent want to happen. His anticipation of all this is while some reimbursement would be nice, the main concern is the officers having to bring inmates to the jail and not being in the jurisdictions.

There was lengthy discussion on the hourly rate, mileage rate and how those numbers were chosen. It was decided that even though the approach seems logical, that we should table the matter until the May meeting. Mr. Sweet said we need to look at changing from an averaged standpoint of these rates to a better balance between the regional jail and the sheriffs' departments.

Mr. Vaught asked in the future could they please send email to the entire board not just the sheriffs. Mr. Sweet said the intent was to be respectful of the sheriffs because they are the ones managing these transports and that it was just a starting point. Superintendent Haug said she apologized and we'll do that in the future.

**G. NEW BUSINESS:**

**H. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS:**

There were two citizens in attendance today. Ms. Lena Perry and Pastor Mike Johnston discussed the possibility of bringing a bible study into the jail. Superintendent Haug said she's a huge advocate for inmate programs but during COVID our staffing dropped dramatically. Some of her main focuses over the last few months has been retention and recruitment so we have the necessary staffing to get our programs up and running again. We want to have the jail to be back to full service which includes having all of the programs offered to our inmates again. We currently have a men's bible study offered to male inmates in the evenings and she is hoping to begin one for our female inmates. She added that programs were vital and effective so we're working hard to get back to that point.

Superintendent Haug is scheduling a meeting with Ms. Perry, Pastor Johnston and Sgt. Trueheart our Programs Director to discuss it further. She added that we're currently looking into a re-entry program and interested in beginning a substance abuse program again but slowly implementing things back.

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

Mr. Chidester said we would hold our election of officers at the May meeting and he needed volunteers for the Nominating Committee. He requested that anyone was interested to please email him by next Friday or he would select a committee.

Mr. Smith also mentioned the PUSH Ministry had attended the Grayson County Board meeting and they wanted to help with the re-entry and the jail's transportation issues. Superintendent Haug had met with a representative earlier in the week and said they were currently located in Carroll, Galax and Grayson. When we give a released inmate a courtesy ride to a jurisdiction, this group would be there to meet the inmate and have some resources available for them if they need housing, etc. Superintendent Haug had suggested that they meet the inmates here at the jail when they have a release date of 1-2 months out just to see what resources that they may need in advance.

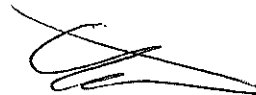
**J. ADJOURNMENT:**

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

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

**Action:** The motion passed unanimously

The meeting was adjourned at 11:27 a.m.



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Chairman Richard Chidester

