

NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL JAIL AUTHORITY

March 11, 2022

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 10:08 a.m. by Chairman Mark Armentrout.

Prior to roll call, he read two notices in regards to the Authority Board. The first from Floyd County reappointing Mr. Joe Turman to serve as a member and Mr. Levi Cox to serve as his alternate. The second from Wythe County reappointing Mr. Brian Vaught to serve as member and as previously mentioned at the January meeting, Mr. Matt Hankins to serve as his alternate.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bland County:	Mr. Workman
Floyd County:	Sheriff Craig; Mr. Turman
Giles County:	Sheriff Millirons; Mr. Chidester
Pulaski County:	Sheriff Worrell; Mr. Travis
Radford City:	Sheriff Armentrout; Mr. Fleisher
Wythe County:	Sheriff Foster; Mr. Vaught

ALTERNATES PRESENT:

Grayson County:	Mr. Smith; Ch. Deputy Hash
Wythe County:	Major Cline

STAFF & GUESTS PRESENT:

Superintendent Gregory Winston
Mr. Steve Durbin-Sands, Anderson, Marks & Miller
Robert Lyons-Citizen
Bob Sumner-Citizen
NRVRJ staff: Tonya Akers, Tammy Dobbins, Tim Clark
Major Keith Fleeman, Major Daniel O'Dell, Jared Hovencamp, Lisa Ferguson and John Slate

B. ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Akers called roll and reported a quorum with eleven (11) members and three (3) alternates present.

C. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 2022 MINUTES:

Copies of the Minutes from the January 14, 2022 meeting and Personnel Committee meetings on January 28, 2022 and February 18, 2022 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 three set of Minutes be approved as presented. Mr. Workman seconded the motion.

Action: The motion passed unanimously.

D. OLD BUSINESS:

E. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Finance Committee:

Copies of the monthly financials were distributed and Mr. Workman reviewed them with the group.

Motion: Mr. Workman made a motion from the Finance Committee to approve the Financial Reports as presented.

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

Personnel Committee:

Sheriff Craig gave a brief summary representing the Personnel Committee. At recent Personnel Committee meetings, the email complaints were investigated and the majority of the complaints were unfounded. The remaining issues were turned over to Superintendent Winston to address.

Also, we have received some applications for the Superintendent position. They have begun reviewing those and will meet again in the coming weeks for discussion.

F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Superintendent Winston began by recognizing the Employee of the Quarter as Tonya Akers, Employee of the Year as Stephanie Carter, Officer of the Quarter as Jeremy Cohen and Officer of the Year as Virginia Combs. Congratulations to all of these employees and thank you for all you do.

Since this would be Superintendent Winston's last meeting, he wanted to introduce his executive staff and recognize their accomplishments. Tim Clark-Business Manager, Tammy Dobbins-Director of Finance, Lisa Ferguson-Health Service Administrator, John Slate-Director of Nursing, Jared Hovencamp-Director of Information Technology, Major Dan O'Dell-Director of Support Services and Major Keith Fleeman-Director of Security. He also recognized Dep. Superintendent John Bowman and Amanda Lester-Human Resource Manager who weren't present today as well as Major Marty Stallard who recently retired. Superintendent Winston also read through the following items that things that these men and women have facilitated through their hard work and diligence over the past 5+ years.

- Created policies and processes for critical compliance with the FLSA overtime status, pay period requirements for both security staff and nurses as well as overtime compensation
- Disallowed families from bringing underclothing to the jail for prisoners and allowing them to wear their own personal shoes inside the jailhouse
- Created Job Descriptions for all positions
- Created performance evaluations for staff
- X ray scanner
- Emergency equipment for transport vehicles (lights and AVL)
- Replaced vehicles in the fleet with high mileage and contracted for fleet leasing and fixed and discounted maintenance costs
- Put a naloxone program in place throughout the jail, including the public areas and transportation vehicles
- Deployed 15 AED units throughout the jail and public areas (an increase from 2)
- Acquired and deployed an electronic medical record system going paperless in medical
- Acquired the appropriate lab license and equipment to perform several basis laboratory studies in house
- Contracted with a mobile x-ray and imaging service to reduce prisoner transports
- Hired a full-time nurse practitioner and developed a chronic care clinic plan for prisoners with chronic illnesses
- Hired full time nurse assigned to intake to preform receiving medical exams
- Contracted for 2 additional full time mental health workers bring our weekly mental health services hours to 112 hours
- Contracted for a licensed psychiatrist for 8 hours per week, bringing provider hours up to 12 hours per week
- Assigned a safety and compliance officer to ensure compliance with all regulatory bodies
- Appointed and professionally trained the officer in records retention in accordance with the law
- Appointed and professionally trained the officer in OSHA and DOLI compliance in accordance with the law
- Appointed and professional trained the officer in ADA compliance in accordance with federal law
- Provided professional training to all full-time sworn investigators (backgrounds, death investigations and PREA investigations)
- Have 5 graduates of the VARJ Leadership Initiative and hosted a training session here.
- Joined the VARJ and the Western Regional Jail Association and have sponsored staff to attend the training
- Requested and received compensation board funding for 42 career development program positions (MJO) 35 of which are currently filled.
- Hired a professional jail chaplain
- Hired a full-time jail librarian increasing services from once per month to once per week
- Negotiated a food service contract the included 200,000 in durable equipment investment
- Negotiated an inmate telephone contract that raised our revenue from 360,000 MAG to a 1,000,000 MAG and a full-time site administrator and remote video visitation as well as mail scanning technology

- Secured contracts with three local jails to hold prisoners generating more than \$30,000 per month in revenue
- Acquired document imaging software and hardware to electronically store and access prisoner records, such as request forms, court records and classification records
- Created a system for cataloguing all staff and inmate disciplinary sanctions, internal investigations, and use of force incidents
- As part of contract negotiations, secured improved inmate accounting software that included cash deposit kiosks to reduce the instances of fraud or error
- Improved the balance of our inmate welfare fund through commissary services from \$90,000 to over \$800,000
- Improved our capital project budget for repair and replacement from 100,000 to over 1.6 million
- Negotiated a \$800,000 plus contract for renovation and improvement to the CCTV and jail security systems
- Were the second site in the commonwealth and the first jail to convene a national recognized program called "Inside Out" where prisoners are given the opportunity to study alongside colleges students with college professors for an entire semester
- Participated in a groundbreaking program called "Empowered Options" alongside Virginia Tech and the New River Valley Health district that culminated in a professional publication as well as recognition at the American Public Health Association national conference
- Implemented a Life Skills program for women, parenting class for men, substance abuse treatment programs for both men and women as well as a reading program for incarcerated parents where they are recorded reading to their children and it is given to their family with a personal message
- Completed a \$5.4 million Energy Savings Performance Contracting project that includes 8 Energy Saving Measures (including LED lighting upgrades, flush controls and domestic cold water saving, bi-polar ionization as well as BAS upgrades and improvements to the HVAC).
- Securing a sole source contract to install replacement secure shower linings in the old side of the jail using commissary funds
- Acquired a contracted insurance consultant to manage and negotiate our employee health insurance program and expanded health insurance plans to included HDHP and health savings accounts.
- Expanded our video court services from one station to 3, which are now operating 5 days a week all day and also hired a court clerk to manage the court services. We are essentially running a court services division with a dedicated clerk, supervisor and security staff.
- Enrolled in the BVP partnership grant program and were able to acquire enough body armor to ensure officer have unexpired body armor to wear during prisoner transports
- Created an electronic method for accepting application documents, text messaging for applicants, employee referral program.
- Employee recognition program for both sworn and civilian employees for quarterly and yearly that rewards them with vendor sponsored gift cards, preferred parking, plaque recognition and attendance at professional development conferences.

- Vendor and employee sponsored tangible recognition for National Correctional Officers Week.
- Created a provision for essential equipment for the staff including handcuff and duty belts.
- COVID Response--First in class for testing, quarantine and isolation in the Commonwealth. Collaboration with the HD, UV sanitation from the start using equipment we already had.

Superintendent Winston thanked these folks for all of these things they have accomplished and he appreciated each of them. Chairman Armentrout said after listening to all of these accomplishments that he thinks it's just remarkable. He congratulated the group as a staff for doing all of this and added that he believes that Superintendent Winston has been a superstar. He appreciated his time spent here and hated to see him go. It has meant a lot to have been able to work with Superintendent Winston and that laundry list that we just went through is amazing. He wishes him the very best in the future and hopes to remain friends in the coming years.

Chairman Armentrout also applauded the executive staff for everything they've done to help Mr. Winston get the jail to where it is. Superintendent Winston also recognized his Executive Assistant Tonya Akers for all of her hard work, support/assistance and keeping him on track for these last 5+ years.

Academy:

We have seven officers in the basic academy at this time with graduation scheduled for mid-April.

Population:

Our headcount today was 834. That will be going down a bit when Henry County and Martinsville move their inmates once their new jail is complete. In the past, we housed several Bristol inmates but they are now moving into the regional jail at Southwest. At this time, he doesn't intend to move forward with the (IGA) Inter-Governmental Agreement from the US Marshal Service due to staffing.

RFP's

We have put the Commissary Services RFP out for bid and also went out to the competitive marketplace to look at insurance rates for our employee health insurance.

Volunteers:

We're opening the jail up to volunteers beginning April 4th. We're not accepting weekenders at the time or we're not opening the lobby to visitation just yet.

Employee information:

Our HR Director has resigned her position. We have solicited applications for that position and we will begin interviews next week. We will be promoting a Lieutenant to replace one that recently left the jail. We have a new Nurse Practitioner that we contracted with through the same group that contracts our psychiatric services. Mr. John Slate, our new Director of Nursing has come on board. Not only is he a registered nurse but also a certified correctional officer.

New Mail Procedures:

As part of our inmate telephone contract, we will be bringing a new mail process in April. We are in the process of informing inmates and staff of the new procedures. Effective April 11, 2022, all inmate mail will be sent to a PO Box in Texas where it will be scanned in and inmates will be able to read it on the tablets. This is in an effort to drastically cut down on contraband. Legal mail will be handled a little differently. Our mail person will deliver the legal mail on a cart that will carry the mail, a copier and a shredder. The legal mail will be opened in front of the inmate, the officer will show them the contents and search it without reading the mail. We will photocopy the envelope, contents--the exact facsimile of what was received in the mail. The copies will be given to the inmate, they will sign that they received it and the original will be shredded in the inmate's presence. Mail may be delayed just a couple of days due to the extra steps but it is necessary for the security of the jail.

Security System:

Security system upgrades will begin in early April. It will be approximately an \$830,000 project that we have been saving for in our Repair and Replacement fund and will improve our security system immensely.

Improvements:

We have received quotes to install stainless steel shower linings. These are needed for repair and the stainless steel will be much easier to keep clean. This project will be around \$250,000 and will be paid for out of the inmate welfare fund and will be of no cost to the Authority.

There are just a few punch list items on the Energy Saving Performance Contract and then it will be complete.

Budget:

We do expect the starting salary for regional jail officers to go to \$42,000 once state budget is approved. Compression is going to be a local issue that we will have to deal with for sworn and non-sworn staff. In addition to that, it appears that every comp board position will get at least a 4% raise and we have 33 locally funded positions that we'll have to look at to see how to fund their raises. This will all be discussed at our budget planning sessions on March 23rd and April 6th at 10:00 am. We hope to have all of the proposals for our employee health insurance at least by the April 6th session. The final proposed budget will be presented at the May meeting for approval.

G. NEW BUSINESS:

Chairman Armentrout encouraged members to attend the upcoming budget planning sessions. Sheriff Craig will advise Chairman Armentrout when another Personnel Committee meeting is needed and he will then notify the group when it will be held.

H. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS:

I. OTHER BUSINESS OR INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

Election of Officers:

We will need to vote on a slate of officers for the Authority board at the May meeting. Currently, our Treasurer is Eric Workman who is utilizing Tonya Akers as the Secretary per the By-Laws. Richard Chidester is the current Vice Chairman and Sheriff Armentrout as Chairman.

Chairman Armentrout said that he will not be able to continue serving as Chairman moving forward. Nominations can be sent to him prior to the May meeting or we can take nominations from the floor.

Superintendent Winston thanked the Authority and Attorney Steve Durbin for their support and commitment to the organization and the jail staff. He appreciated their patience and reasonableness during the last few frustrating years that we've gone through as a team with COVID, workforce and staffing issues. We couldn't have done all that we have without the support of the board. He hopes that we've done enough to prove how much we're committed to support your localities and have always committed ourselves to service first. The board changes in composition over the years but we have a pretty solid core with our Authority board. He encouraged the members to contact him if they needed anything. He especially thanked Chairman Armentrout for everything.

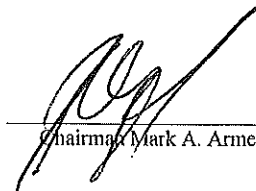
I. ADJOURNMENT:

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

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

Action: The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business to come before the Authority, Chairman Armentrout adjourned the meeting at 10:44 a.m.



Chairman Mark A. Armentrout

