

NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL JAIL AUTHORITY
March 8, 2024
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 10:03 a.m. by Chairman Richard Chidester.

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Bland County:	Sheriff Ramsey; Mrs. Burton
	Carroll County:	Sheriff Kemp; Mr. Martin
	Giles County:	Mr. Chidester; Sheriff Millirons
	Grayson County:	Sheriff Vaughan; Mr. Smith
	Pulaski County:	Mr. Sweet; Sheriff Worrell
	Radford City:	Mr. Fleisher
	Wythe County:	Sheriff Foster; Mr. Vaught

ALTERNATES PRESENT:	Floyd County:	Ch. Deputy Harris
	Giles County:	Mr. Martin
	Wythe County:	Mr. Hankins; Ch. Deputy Cline

STAFF & GUESTS PRESENT:	Superintendent Kimberly D. Haug
	Dep. Superintendent Chris Loan
	Major Daniel O'Dell
	Mr. Steve Durbin-Sands, Anderson, Marks & Miller
	Tonya Akers, Tim Clark—NRVRJ
	Jake Petzold-DOC Spec. Programs Manager-Restorative Housing

Chairman Chidester welcomed the group. Prior to roll call, Chairman Chidester read a notice from Wythe County reappointing Mr. Brian Vaught as Authority member and Mr. Matt Hankins as the alternate member each for a 1-year term.

Sheriff Vaughan introduced our guest Mr. Jake Petzold from the Department of Corrections. Mr. Petzold is a former NRVRJ officer now serving as the Special Programs Manager of Restorative Housing for DOC. He was in the area, stopped by for a visit and Sheriff Vaughan invited him to attend today.

B. ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Akers called roll and reported a quorum with fourteen (14) members and three (3) alternates present.

C. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 2024 MINUTES:

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

Motion: Mr. Vaught made the motion to approve the January minutes as presented. Sheriff Foster seconded the motion.

Action: The motion passed unanimously.

D. OLD BUSINESS:

Chairman Chidester asked Superintendent Haug to update the group on current projects. We've finished the door project and are currently on our roof project. We are currently approx. 75% done with Phase 1 and hope to be finished by April. The RFP process for Phase 2 of the roofing is done. The top two vendors have been selected and once Phase 1 is complete, we will meet with them again to make sure we have their best offers for consideration

E. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

The Superintendent thanked everyone who reached out to their representatives on the jail's behalf regarding partial reimbursement for the door project. She received a letter stating that the Governor's office has flagged our request for consideration. While there is no guarantee it is definitely a step in the right direction.

Transports:

We're still having some problems with transports and apologize for any issues that the jurisdictions have had this month. The jail has been dealing with several hospitalized inmates and our transport officers being pulled to cover their stays. Superintendent Haug appreciates the jurisdictions working with us and being patient. She added that we're aware of it, we're working on it and hope to continue going in the right direction.

VARJ:

The VARJ conference will be held at the end of March and a few employees will be attending.

3-Year Audit:

The audit is scheduled for the week of April 22nd. Our last two inspections have gone extremely well and we feel this will too.

Transports continued:

Sheriff Millirons asked that whenever the jail knows they aren't going to have a transport officer, please call the jurisdictions. He knows they are supposed to call but it's not being done. If he is aware of the situation then he can make arrangements. Superintendent Haug said she would reiterate it to Sallyport that the jurisdictions need to be called.

Chairman Chidester asked if it was always necessary that we send two officers to the hospital. Superintendent Haug said it depends on the hospital and sometimes it depends on the inmate. We like to do it if at all possible and the hospitals prefer it.

F. FINANCIAL REPORTS:

Copies of the monthly financials were passed out and reviewed in detail by Mr. Sweet.

Sheriff Vaughan asked if there was any discussion in Finance regarding the approved general assembly budget of a 3% raise for state supported employees. Mr. Sweet said it was discussed but we're waiting until it is signed. Once we receive more confirmation, we'll factor that into the budget.

Mr. Smith asked when the localities would know the per diem for next years budget. Mr. Sweet said we hope to have that out at the next meeting but it would be fine to plug in this year's number and we'll notify the board if there is a change. Mr. Vaught said when we upped the per diem to \$36.65, we were running around 400-600 inmates and asked if that had increased. Mr. Sweet said last month we were tracking 617 and this month 619 inmates. He added at our current per diem we're making payroll and paying our bills. That's the variable effected by inmate count which tends to be a moving target. It is the one variable we actually control but it's subject to all of the other variables that attribute to the average daily population.

Sheriff Vaughan asked what the state was currently paying for their inmates. Superintendent Haug said it was approximately \$14 per day.

Mr. Sweet said Pulaski County is looking to implement their first work report program that has potential as a diversion program to possibly lower their population. Mr. Vaught asked if that was something we could look at running through Community Corrections to do regionally. There was a lengthy discussion on the matter and also programs that Giles and Grayson are currently doing.

Chairman Chidester asked if there were any questions or comments regarding the financial report. Hearing none, he entertained a motion to approve.

Motion: On behalf of the Finance Committee, Mr. Sweet recommends approval of the monthly financial reports as presented.

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

G. NEW BUSINESS:

Sheriff Foster asked where we stand on inmates being brought to the jurisdictions for trash pickup. Superintendent Haug said we're still in the same position and are actually trying to eliminate all of our inmates from the kitchen. We have a DOC run about every week and are very limited on inmates left behind that would qualify for trusty status. We're so low that we haven't had an outside trusty here at the jail in quite some time. Lt. Hamilton and Officer Cochran takes care of the lobby, front office cleaning and trash pickup.

Mr. Vaught said this is what causes his board the most heartburn with the per diem increase. It seems like they are paying more per inmate but are getting less in services from the regional jail. They don't get trustees and have the problems with transportation. He said every member of his board gets weekly calls regarding trash pickup and finds it hard to believe that we can't find 4-5 people to go out with an armed

officer to pick up trash. Superintendent Haug said no, not anyone that she feels safe sending out. Our trusty pod is pretty small right now with only four that currently work in the kitchen.

Major O'Dell said when Superintendent Haug took over our out of compliance list (90 days after being sentenced waiting to go to DOC) was around 180. Our update this week was less than 20 with 11 more inmates leaving for DOC next week. The problem we have is sentenced inmates are typically going to DOC. The ones that stay here the longest are for medical reasons because it's harder to get a medical bed at DOC. Superintendent Haug said that of those 20 on the out of compliance list, not all of these are people that you want to put out on the street for trash pickup due to their charges.

Major O'Dell added that even if we looked at sending unsentenced inmates out after a stringent background check, you never know what's over their heads or what type of sentence they are facing. Superintendent Haug said the liability of sending unsentenced inmates out is huge and she doesn't know that this board wants to take that on.

Mr. Sweet said Pulaski County BOS receives those complaints as well so they have developed the 1 Bag Challenge Program. It's been very successful with over 1,000 bags of trash and a couple of hundred tires being collected. It's been a really good program but it needs to be ongoing so their thoughts are to parlay the 1 Bag Challenge with the work report program to basically make their own trusty inmates. They won't be dressed in orange out picking up trash but will be doing it until they can find gainful employment. The program puts them to work and also helps solve this ongoing challenge of litter on the sides of the road.

Mr. Smith asked who was actually picking up the trash. Mr. Sweet said Pulaski County citizens are doing the 1 Bag Challenge. The goal is to pick up at least one bag however one citizen has actually picked up over 100 bags of trash. Several different trash piles around the county have been cleaned up. Prizes have been awarded and it has morphed into a community embraced program.

Chairman Chidester said everyone in Giles that is sentenced to probation is also court ordered to participate in the Assign-a-Highway program. The county supplies the bags and if the person is physically capable, they get assigned a section of road to clean up. Once they've finished, they contact the county for the area be checked then PSA picks up the bags on their regular routes.

Superintendent Haug said the jail would be willing to put some statistics together for the members to share with their jurisdictions regarding the trusty issue. She would also be glad to come meet with them if need be and to share the out of compliance lists if that would be helpful. Mr. Vaught said any paperwork the jail could put together would be appreciated.

Sheriff Vaughan said on his way in this morning he talked with some long-term employees. One 20+ year employee said it's the best it's ever been. Sheriff Vaughan commended the Superintendent for what she's doing saying there will always be bumps in the road but he appreciates her and thinks she's doing a good job.

Mr. Sweet asked how often the sheriffs get together to talk and the answer was just here at Authority meeting. He would be happy to host the sheriffs after the May meeting for fellowship, to problem solve and best practice share. He thinks it would behoove this organization and strengthen the entire law enforcement community in the New River Valley and Mt. Rogers District. Mr. Sweet wanted to solidify his offer to all of the sheriffs and their designees to host a catered law enforcement focuses luncheon after the May 10th Authority meeting for them to meet, problem solve, strategize and fellowship. He will coordinate with Sheriff Worrell for the logistics and send out the details.

Chairman Chidester said we should present next year's budget at the May meeting for possible approval and hopefully we can get that sent out prior to the meeting to be reviewed.

Chairman Chidester said we will also have the Election of Officers at the May 10th meeting. In the past, we've had a Nominating Committee and it hasn't seemed to be productive. The By-Laws don't require a Nominating Committee and as always nominations will be taken from the floor at the meeting.

H. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS:

I. OTHER BUSINESS OR INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

J. ADJOURNMENT:

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

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

Action: The motion passed unanimously

The meeting was adjourned at 10:57 a.m.

Chairman Richard Chidester