

**MINUTES  
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF CORRECTIONS  
QUARTERLY MEETING  
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING  
ROOM 113  
THURSDAY, AUGUST 3, 2000  
8:30 A.M.**

Commissioners Present: Bernie Heier, Chair  
Kathy Campbell  
Linda Steinman  
Bob Workman

Commissioners Absent: Larry Hudkins

Others Present: Mike Thurber, Corrections Director  
Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer  
Bruce Medcalf, County Clerk  
Gwen Thorpe, Deputy County Clerk  
Ann Taylor, County Clerk's Office

Heier opened the Board of Corrections meeting.

**AGENDA ITEM**

**1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE APRIL 27, 2000 BOARD OF CORRECTIONS MEETING**

**MOTION:** Campbell moved and Workman seconded approval of the minutes. Campbell, Steinman, Workman and Heier voted aye. Motion carried.

**2 ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

- A. Meeting Commissioner Steinman, Commissioner Heier and Mike Thurber, Corrections Director, had with County Court Judge Gale Pokorny
- B. Meeting Commissioner Heier had with Mike Thurber, Corrections Director, on Staffing Needs

**MOTION:** Campbell moved and Workman seconded approval of the additions to the agenda. Steinman, Campbell, Workman and Heier voted aye. Motion carried.

### **3 POPULATION STATISTICS**

#### **A. Population Comments**

Mike Thurber, Corrections Director, reported a 9.6 percent increase in the average daily population in the second quarter of 2000. Record high populations have been recorded in both facilities (Jail and Lancaster Correctional Facility) and averages are meeting or exceeding capacities.

Thurber also reported a 3.3 percent increase in the number of bookings for the second quarter, which is a 12 percent increase over the last quarter of calendar year 1999.

#### **B. Population Graphs**

See attachment.

#### **C. Monthly Statistical Reports**

See attachment.

### **4 OTHER ITEMS**

#### **A. Victim Information & Notification Everyday (VINE) Project**

Thurber said the Victim Information & Notification Everyday (VINE) Project is underway. Usage is anticipated to increase once awareness of the program is increased.

#### **B. Lancaster Correctional Facility (LCF) Construction Program Activities**

Thurber said construction crews were primarily occupied with the renovation of the Detox Center this quarter.

### C. Outside Contracts

Thurber reported the following:

- Corrections is working with other County agencies on bidding pharmaceutical services
- A recommendation was submitted to the Purchasing Department on vending service bids
- Wedgewood Medical began providing physician services on July 18, 2000
- The contract with Social Security Administration for the reporting of admission and release information is being finalized

#### D. County Court Judges Correspondence

Thurber said the County Court has been working with Corrections staff in the following areas in an effort to alleviate the population problem:

- Weekend releases
- Deferred fines
- Mandatory use of personal funds
- Work release offenders sitting out fines

#### E. Lancaster Correctional Facility (LCF) Activities

Thurber said location of a well field for a ground coupled air conditioning system that will serve the Lancaster Correctional Facility (LCF) at Airpark and lease arrangements are still being worked out with the Lincoln Airport Authority.

## 5 NEW BUSINESS

### A. Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) Union Negotiations

Thurber said the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) Union has voted on their contract. The results of the vote are not known.

### B. Part-Time Chaplain

Thurber said the Good News Prison Ministries has suggested adding a part-time chaplain. He said the chaplain would probably be utilized at the Lancaster Correctional Facility (LCF) at Airpark.

Campbell suggested that this service be combined with that proposed for the new Lancaster County Juvenile Detention Facility.

C. Population Study Request for Proposals (RFP)/Needs Assessment Committee

Thurber said a Needs Assessment Committee will review the RFP's and will make a recommendation to the Board on selection of a consultant to study the needs assessment and criminal justice practice in Lancaster County. The committee will also meet to review the project's progress and trends in incarceration and practices.

Thurber said the Needs Assessment Committee is comprised of the following individuals:

Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer  
Tom Casady, Chief of Police  
Denise Herz, University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) Criminal Justice  
Gary Lacey, County Attorney  
Don Killeen, County Property Manager  
Dennis Keefe, Public Defender  
Maurice Ramirez, University of Nebraska at Lincoln (UNL) Health Center  
Terry Wagner, Lancaster County Sheriff  
County Court Judge Gale Pokorny  
Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer  
Members of the Lancaster County Board of Corrections

The Board informed Thurber that Commissioners Steinman and Heier would serve as the Lancaster County Board of Corrections' representatives on the committee.

Campbell suggested representation from the District Court Judges and from the Lincoln Bar Association.

Thurber said the District Court Judges have declined representation, due to concerns of a potential conflict of interest.

Steinman suggested inclusion of the State Court Administrator.

Thurber said representatives of Jail Standards have been invited to attend, but will not serve as active participants on the committee.

D. 2000 Census

Thurber said staff worked with Census takers to poll the population in both facilities.

#### E. Work Release Costs

Thurber said Lancaster County is currently assessing work release offenders a fee of \$4 per day, although other jurisdictions within the state are charging \$8 to \$25 per day. A legal opinion request has been submitted to the County Attorney's office as to whether this fee can be increased, noting the department has calculated that allowable costs exceed \$12 per day. He estimated that if the fee was increased to \$10 per day, revenues would increase by \$70,000 to \$80,000.

#### **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

- A. Meeting Commissioner Steinman, Commissioner Heier and Mike Thurber, Corrections Director, had with County Court Judge Gale Pokorny

Steinman briefly reported on a meeting held with County Court Judge Gale Pokorny to discuss overcrowding in the jail and how the practice of sitting out fines adds to the problem. She said three additional ideas were discussed:

1. Garnishment of wages to pay fines
2. Seek legislation that would lower the daily credit amount for sitting out fines
3. Utilize a collection agency to collect fines

In response to a question from Campbell, Thurber said the City is currently receiving information on the number of City offenders and whether they are sitting out fines. He noted that approximately 30-40 percent of the individuals that are sitting out fines in the jail are City offenders

Campbell asked Thurber, Heier and Steinman to prepare a letter to the Mayor and City Council indicating that a meeting was held with Judge Pokorny as a follow-up to questions raised at the City-County Common meeting and listing the three ideas that were discussed. The letter should indicate the willingness to proceed with the first idea, which is garnishment of wages.

B. Meeting Commissioner Heier had with Mike Thurber, Corrections Director, on Staffing Needs

Heier reported that he had met with Thurber to discuss overtime costs and had informed him that the County Board has approved three additional correctional officers and one recruiter position and team building skills training for staff. He also reported that the Personnel Department has agreed to accelerate the process of getting information on qualified applicants to the Corrections Department.

**6 ADJOURNMENT**

By direction of the Chair, the meeting was adjourned.

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Bruce Medcalf  
Lancaster County Clerk