

**Elk County Prison Board  
December 3, 2024**

The Elk County Prison Board met in regular session at 9:00 a.m. in the Thomas G. Wagner Conference Room at the Courthouse Annex. The meeting was called to order with the Pledge of Allegiance. Prison Board members present were Commissioners Matthew Quesenberry, M. Fritz Lecker and Greg Gebauer, District Attorney Beau Grove, Sheriff Todd Caltagarone and Treasurer Matthew Frey. Also present were Warden Scott Atwell, Deputy Warden Rodney Constable, Solicitor Rick Brown, IT Assistant Dan Rimer, and Recording Secretary Jennifer Barnett.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING: August 22, 2024**

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting was made by District Attorney Beau Grove and seconded by Sheriff Todd Caltagarone. The motion carried unanimously.

**ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA** – No Additions

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner M. Fritz Lecker seconded by District Attorney Beau Grove. The motion carried unanimously.

**COMMENTS FROM VISITORS CONCERNING AGENDA ITEMS**

No visitors were present.

**CORRESPONDENCE** – No Correspondence

**APPROVAL OF THE BILLS**

	<u>August</u>	<u>September</u>	<u>October</u>
<u>Warden</u>			
General Fund	\$135.00	\$984.31	\$0.00
<u>Jail</u>			
General Fund	\$34,442.80	\$29,430.90	\$59,810.76
Corrections Fund	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,600.00
D & A Fund	\$0.00	\$164.69	\$333.00
Work Release	\$120.59	\$344.56	\$2,910.00

A motion to approve the bills was made by Commissioner Greg Gebauer and seconded by Treasurer Matthew Frey. The motion carried unanimously.

**BUSINESS**

2. Warden's Report

Warden Scott Atwell reported on the following items:

A. Housing Information

As of 8:00 a.m. this date, the inmate population for the Elk County Prison was 31

incarcerated individuals. The average daily population for August was 30, September was 34, October was 34 and November was 27.

The facility has generated \$6,780.00 from housing out-of-county inmates since January 1, 2024.

The Prison received a payment in September of \$35.50 from the PA Department of Labor & Industry, Bureau of Disability Determination for records research. The Prison also received an incentive payment of \$400.00 in November from the Social Security Administration.

Work Release fees collected so far this year were \$12,847.32. Warden Atwell stated that there is currently one inmate on work release.

PA CareerLink is now available for the inmates. They are now able to job search prior to release. There has been minimal interest at this time.

**B. Reimbursements**

The prison was reimbursed \$480.77 from the Opioid Settlement funds for the third quarter of 2024 for the purchase of M.A.T. drugs. The total reimbursement for M.A.T. drugs received so far this year is \$5,259.11.

The prison also received reimbursement in the amount of \$24,514.59 from the Cameron Elk Counties Behavioral and Development Programs for psychotropic prescription medication and mental health assessments incurred in 2023 and 2024.

**C. New Hire, Promotions and Resignations**

Greg Wonderly was re-hired to fill a vacant part-time Corrections Officer position effective November 9, 2024. Greg is a former employee and we welcome him back.

Lee Boisvert was hired to fill a vacant part-time Corrections Officer position effective December 4, 2024.

Corrections Officer Paul Bullers was promoted to Sergeant effective September 16, 2024.

Corrections Officer Christopher Crandall was promoted to full-time status effective November 3, 2024.

Corrections Officer Lacey Johnson was promoted to full-time status effective November 3, 2024.

Richard Baltes resigned from his part-time cook position effective August 30, 2024.

Megan McMackin resigned from her part-time corrections officer position effective October 29, 2024. Ms. McMackin was accepted into the PA State Police Academy.

**D. Inmate Population**

Warden Atwell stated the female population has been averaging around four per month and the Elk County Prison is currently housing three female inmates.

Warden Atwell reported there is currently one female inmate transferred to another facility. The county is not paying for this inmate. We do not currently have any male inmates transferred out.

Warden Atwell stated the total number of inmates booked for 2024 is 261 compared to 300 at the same time last year.

Warden Atwell stated we have released 270 inmates from custody so far this year with 22 inmates released in the last month. He also stated that we have released six of those inmates to treatment in the last month.

**E. Trainings**

Sergeant Paul Bullers completed training at the PA D.O.C. Academy in September and is now the CPR, First Aid and AED Instructor for Elk County.

Corrections Counselor Astasia May-Straneva attended the state-sponsored Trauma Informed Care class that was presented at the Butler County Prison on December 2. Warden Atwell noted that all security staff has been trained on Trauma Informed Care with the exception of one, due to a scheduling conflict. Act 47 of 2023 requires all staff to have this training. The prison contracted with Dickinson Center to provide the initial training for staff. Corrections Counselor May-Straneva is now able to conduct the training for any new hire.

Matthias Wolfel, a Criminology major at Penn State University, completed his internship on 11/15. He job shadowed Corrections Counselor Astasia May-Straneva. We wish him the best in his future endeavors.

**2. Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023**

This is a directive from the Department of Human Services. This was brought to us in late

summer and outlines what we must do to get juveniles (under 21 or 18-26 if former foster care) screening and diagnostic requirements for Medicaid or CHIP. A requirement of the CAA is to have a plan in place 30 days prior or within one week after release. Warden Atwell stated there are some issues with this Act and that it may not be practical or realistic from a small jail standpoint, to be able to comply with all the requirements. Warden Atwell reached out to the PA Department of Corrections for some guidance. At this point, the state is not readily prepared for this by the January 1, 2025 deadline. The PA D.O.C. and County Commissioners Association of PA are keeping an eye on this and will update when more guidance is available. Warden Atwell said he and Deputy Warden Rodney Constable recently met with Judy Smith, the county mental health administrator. She feels we should be able to abide and comply with the majority of the directives with the Blended Case Management services that her agency provides. The timeframe for release will prove to be problematic. The other concern is that the individual must want to be involved with the services.

3. Approval of Erie County Housing Contract

A motion was made to approve the renewal of the Erie County Housing Contract at a rate of \$75.00 per day. The contract will go in effect January 1, 2025 and end December 31, 2025. The contract may be renewed for two (2) additional one (1) year extensions under the same terms listed. If an extension is requested, it may be done so verbally if both parties are in agreement. Commissioner Greg Gebauer made a motion to recommend the approval of the agreement be put on the agenda for the next Commissioner's meeting scheduled for December 19, 2024. Sheriff Todd Caltagarone seconded the recommendation.

4. Act 114 of 2024

Warden Atwell wanted to make the board aware that section 1731 (b) of Title 61 of Act 114 of 2024 has been amended. The Act now states that the members of the board may appoint not less than two and not more than four additional members to the board who must be residents of the county for which the board is established. A brief discussion ensued and the board ultimately decided not to make any changes at this time.

5. FCC Rate Cap Ruling (Update)

The FCC recently eliminated service fees when depositing money for inmate phone calls. Our current inmate phone service provider will now remove the commission on the first forty-five cents of each phone call to recoup the loss. At our current commission rate, we could see a loss of revenue up to \$350 per month. This went into effect on November 19,

2024. Warden Atwell reached out to our current inmate telephone provider with some questions regarding this change but has not received a response. He also stated we are currently waiting for a contract, with the same provider, for inmate tablets that he spoke about at the August meeting in hopes he would have the contract today to review. Unfortunately, the provider has not sent a contract yet. A brief discussion was held regarding the current commission structure, the current rates, how the inmate phone system works and new ways to generate revenue. Effective in April of 2026, it will be unlawful for the inmate phone provider to pay commissions to correctional facilities for inmate phone calls. The current contract will expire in 2026.

6. Approval of 2025 Prison Board Meeting Dates

January 16, 2025

May 1, 2025

August 7, 2025

December 4, 2025

A motion to approve the 2025 Prison Board meeting schedule was made by District Attorney Beau Grove and seconded by Commissioner Greg Gebauer.

**GOOD OF THE COUNTY**

**QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS**

**ADJOURN MEETING**

There being no further business before the Elk County Prison Board a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Greg Gebauer and seconded by Commissioner M. Fritz Lecker. The motion passed unanimously.