

Minutes

MEETING OF BOARD OF INSPECTORS FOR THE POTTER COUNTY JAIL February 7, 2025, Gunzburger Building

CALL TO ORDER - Paul Heimel, Chair

ROLL CALL –Members Stephen Minor, Kevin Siska, Paul Heimel, Andy Watson, Nancy Grupp, Robert Rossman, all present. Warden Angela Milford, Deputy Warden Ricky Hurler and Administrator Jessica Giebel, all present.

PUBLIC COMMENTS - none

MINUTES – January 3, 2025; K. Siska moved to approve; N. Grupp seconded; all in favor.

GUEST SPEAKERS – none

REPORT FROM WARDEN –

- There are currently 26 inmates, zero serving on weekends, 5 females in other facilities. Some 16 inmates are on psychotropic medication.
- The Encartele Technology (Phone and Internet Proceeds) Fund has a balance of \$31,206.80.
- Correction Officers had training on report writing, universal precautions, mail handling and bomb threats.
- D&A and church services are being provided at the jail on a regular basis

COMMITTEE REPORTS –

Personnel Committee: no updates

Facilities Committee: no updates

Operations/Policies & Procedures: no updates

OLD BUSINESS – none

NEW BUSINESS –

Benjamin Kafferlin from Kafferlin Strategies joined the meeting through video connection to discuss his team’s finding and recommendations as part of the county’s broader Strategic Management Planning Program operational and financial review. Mr. Kafferlin said they found that the facility was in excellent condition as far as maintenance and day-to-day operations. He noted that the jail is the largest single expenditure in the county, totaling \$1.8 million dollars in 2023.

Mr. Kafferlin emphasized that significant matters, such as the question of whether Potter might consider closing its jail and partnering with other counties to house offenders, should be approached cautiously with assistance from professionals in that field, and with significant involvement of the president judge and jail management. He added that state funding might be available to cover the expenses of a feasibility study.

The Kafferlin Report also suggested that cost savings might be achieved through negotiation for health care services, such as telehealth, and pre-trial diversion by the court system. Warden Milford responded that multiple health care cost-savings measures are already in place, including the use of local contracted medical staff and the county's affiliation with PIMCC.

GENERAL DISCUSSION – A general discussion was held among board members as to whether to recommend to the Board of Commissioners that the jail study be conducted. Judge Minor expressed concern about the impact of closing the jail, including transportation and other logistics, cost, visitation, and other issues. He suggested the matter be approached cautiously, methodically and with thorough communication. The judge also recommended that the commissioners confer with the experiences of other counties that have opted to closer their jails/prisons.

DA Watson responded to the Kafferlin Report references to economics and pre-trial diversion stating that many measures have put into place and improvements implemented in recent years.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – none

NEXT MEETING – March 7, 2025 – noon

ADJOURNMENT – S. Minor moved; K. Siska seconded; all in favor.