

**MERCER COUNTY PRISON BOARD**

Pete C. Acker, President  
Bruce Rosa, Vice President  
Daniel P. Wallace, Secretary  
Stephen Sherman II  
Matthew B. McConnell  
Timothy M. McGonigle  
Scott E. Boyd



**MERCER COUNTY PRISON**

Erna L. Craig, Warden  
Mac McDuffie, Deputy Warden/Security  
Joseph Reichard, Deputy Warden/Operations

55 Thompson Road  
Mercer, PA 16137  
Telephone: 724-662-2700  
Fax: 724-662-1047

**COUNTY OF MERCER**

Prison Board President Pete Acker called to order the March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Mercer County Prison Board meeting with roll call:

**Members Present:**

President Pete Acker, District Attorney  
Vice President Bruce Rosa, Sheriff  
Stephen Sherman, Controller  
Matthew McConnell, Commissioner  
Timothy McGonigle, Commissioner  
Scott Boyd, Commissioner

**Members Absent:**

Secretary Daniel Wallace, President Judge

**Others Present:**

Erna Craig, Warden  
Mac McDuffie, Deputy Warden of Security  
Joe Reichard, Deputy Warden of Operations  
Amy Landfair, Parole Officer Supervisor  
William McClure, IPP Director  
Jen Hamilton, Human Resources Director  
John Logan, Fiscal  
Sharin Robb, Administrative Assistant  
Melissa Klaric, Sharon Herald

**Approval of Minutes:**

Prison Board President Pete Acker asks for a motion to approve the February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022 meeting minutes. Commissioner Matthew McConnell makes the motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Timothy McGonigle. Voice vote was unanimous, motion carried.

**Wardens Report:**

Warden Erna Craig begins by stating that the daily population for February was 153 with 86 commitments and 81 releases. She states there were 148 video arraignments conducted for the Common Pleas and the Magistrate Courts.

Warden Craig continues by stating that up until last year, the Mercer County Jail was being utilized to hold

intoxicated individuals. She states that the board collectively agreed that this was no longer going to be an issue as situations occurred where it was up to the jail staff to determine if an individual was sober enough to be released or not. Warden Craig states that the solution to this was either let the 48 hour detainer expire or have the Magistrate issue a court order for their release in order to relieve the staff of any liability. She states that an incident occurred over the past weekend where she was told that a couple magistrates actually had a different perspective on those types of situations. Warden Craig states that she would just like verification that the order still stands as she does not believe that her staff should have to determine somebody's intoxication level. President Pete Acker states that by statute, the police do have the right to put detainees in jail however they are supposed to fill out the committing paperwork and then fax over information on their charges. He states that the issues arise when the officers are off duty for the 48 hours and the charges never get sent over to the jail. President Acker agrees with Warden Craig in regards to the jail staff shouldn't be responsible to determine sobriety and states that he will reach out to the Police Chiefs and MDJ's for more clarification.

Warden Erna Craig recalls her terminology at a previous meeting and would like the board to know that it was her who made the term "bids for beds". She states that the DOC has made it perfectly clear that they are not accepting bids and it's not a lottery system set up. Warden Craig states that county jails have a specific form to be submitted requesting a certain number of beds. She states that when she contacted the DOC for further information, she was told that the form will be used from now on and that it allows them to have real time data regarding immediate needs thus creating a schedule that maximizes the available slots and aligning it with the county's needs. Warden Craig states that when other county jails were asked about this new policy, it was found out that many Wardens did not know about it officially as only their Records offices were contacted. She states that some of the jails admitted that even if they only have two inmates going to state, they will still submit for eight beds which is concerning. Warden Craig continues by stating that eight inmates departed yesterday (Monday) for the state which left 18 inmates still awaiting transport. She states that the total cost for each state inmate per day is \$119 which derives from the DOC. Warden Craig states that the total cost to hold state inmates from November, December and January came out to be \$188,020. She states that another transport is scheduled for eight more inmates later in March but that will still leave ten inmates. Warden Craig states that those ten inmates are here awaiting Gags and appeals and won't be sent to state until possibly May. Warden Craig states to the board that the \$119 per day does not include medical expenses either. Parole Officer Supervisor Amy Landfair asks for a list of inmates who are still in need of a Gag Hearing and states that she will make sure they get scheduled. Prison Board President Pete Acker states that the appeal process may not be able to get cut shorter as the inmates have 30 days to file but he will still inquire with Judge Wallace.

Warden Craig states that PrimeCare recently made an offer to a new mental health worker to replace the one that was terminated last month. She states that this candidate is not a licensed mental health worker but instead a mental health clinician who is currently working towards her license. Warden Craig states that PrimeCare was contacted regarding the appropriate pay for that position which comes out to less than what a licensed worker would be. She states that the current licensed position makes \$66,560 but a clinician would make \$52,500. Warden Craig states that the clinician only needs two more years to become licensed and each year until then she will receive a \$5,000 pay raise. Warden Craig states that the jail does need two mental health workers but only needs one needs to be licensed. Commissioner Matthew McConnell makes comment that the salary change would have to first get approved at the commissioners meeting. Prison Board President Pete Acker states that the new position should be put on the agenda for next month's Prison Board meeting to be discussed further.

Warden Erna Craig states that on March 1<sup>st</sup>, the jail has internally gone back to normal operations. She states that all housing units are operating normally, visitations have resumed and the mask mandate is now voluntary. Warden Craig asks the board to gradually lift restrictions regarding new commitments. She states that there are currently 20 new officers that have only worked with the pandemic population of an average

of 165 inmates and that she would like to slowly get them used to the higher population. Warden Craig states that she would like to resume the work release program as well starting around April 1<sup>st</sup>. Deputy Warden Reichard asks the board if vaccination status is something they can require when selecting inmates for work release. Deputy Warden McDuffie makes comment that PrimeCare no longer does the one shot Johnson and Johnson shot but instead is now only doing the two shot Pfizer. Deputy Warden Reichard states that about 95% of the inmates on work release is given the job through the jail so it would be an incentive if having the vaccine was required. Prison Board President Pete Acker comments that the commissioners should take that decision to the County Solicitor.

Prison Board President Pete Acker asks for a motion to approve the Wardens Report. Commissioner McGonigle makes the motion and it was seconded by Commissioner McConnell. Voice vote was unanimous, motion carried.

**IPP Report:**

IPP Director William McClure begins by stating the numbers were down for the month of February. He states there was a total of 656 clients which included 51 referrals, 73 completions and three failures/revocations which were based on five revocation hearings. Director McClure states that savings to the county totals \$185,879 which was based on 2,249 jail bed days saved. He states that community service completed 619 hours which came to a \$4,488 savings to the county. Director McClure continues by stating that treatment court did not have any applications in February however they did accept one who applied previously. He states there were 327 drug screenings completed with 24 positives which were mostly residuals.

IPP Director McClure continues by stating that the CSAP grant will be expiring September 30<sup>th</sup>. He states that he was recommended by Tiana Smith, PCCD liaison, to apply for the funding for JAG Local Initiative which would need completed by March 31<sup>st</sup>. Director McClure states that this would give IPP up to \$250,000 funding beginning October 1<sup>st</sup> of this year until September 30, 2024. He states that the funding would be used to pay for the Direct IP Supervisor, a treatment court coordinator, COG groups, and for two staff to get trained into the LSCMI's.

Prison Board President Pete Acker asks for a motion to approve the IPP Report. Commissioner McConnell makes the motion and it was seconded by Controller Stephen Sherman. Voice vote was unanimous, motion carried.

**Selection of New Warden:**

Prison Board President Pete Acker asks the board for a recommendation of a new warden effective June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022. Commissioner Matthew McConnell makes the recommendation of Deputy Warden Mac McDuffie and it was seconded by Commissioner Boyd. Voice vote was unanimous, motion carried.

**Old Business:**

None.

**New Business:**

None.

Prison Board President Pete Acker asks for a motion to go into executive session. Commissioner Matthew McConnell makes the motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Scott Boyd. Voice vote was unanimous, motion carried.

Prison Board President Pete Acker asks for a motion to adjourn the Prison Board meeting. Commissioner

McConnell makes the motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Timothy McGonigle. Voice vote was unanimous, motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel Wallace". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "D".

Judge Daniel Wallace  
Mercer County Prison  
Prison Board Secretary