

**MINUTES
BOARD OF CORRECTIONS MEETING
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2020
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING
ROOM 113 - BILL LUXFORD STUDIO
10:15 A.M.**

Board Members Present: Deb Schorr, Chair; Sean Flowerday; Roma Amundson; Rick Vest, and Christa Yoakum

Others Present: Ann Ames, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer; Brad Johnson, Corrections Director; and Dan Nolte, Lancaster County Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 a.m. A copy of the Open Meetings Act was posted on the wall at the back of the meeting room.

AGENDA ITEM

I. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FOR NOVEMBER 7, 2019

MOTION: Vest moved and Yoakum seconded approval of the November 7, 2019 meeting minutes. Vest, Yoakum, Flowerday, Amundson and Schorr voted yes. Motion carried 5-0.

Johnson reviewed a PowerPoint presentation that covered various aspects of the Corrections Department (see agenda packet).

II. POPULATION STATISTICS & CHARTS

III. PROGRAMMING

IV. TRANSPORTATION

V. WORK CREWS

VI. TRAINING

Johnson noted a 4.5% increase in incarcerations. He also covered statistics of various sentences, holds for jurisdictions and bond releases.

There has been an increase in possession cases the previous five years and methamphetamine (meth) is the driving factor. Johnson emphasized that if a person with a meth addiction wants to make a change, there needs to be support and programs available to assist that person. Some deterrents in place appear to be working, i.e., not having easy access to cold remedies in pharmacies and increased security at anhydrous facilities.

According to Johnson, bookings are down.

Johnson reviewed custodial sanction statistics.

Johnson felt SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) is having a positive impact on Regional Center housing.

Johnson said the number of felonies sentenced has an impact on the jail population. He informed the Board that twenty-one (21) felons will serve 5,021 days for meth and meth related behavior.

Johnson noted that the length of stay has increased 18.6% since 2014 and that LB 605 has contributed to the increase as people are now serving longer sentences for the same crime.

The population growth in Lancaster County accounts for some of the increasing growth in jail numbers but not all of it. In one instance, a person was sentenced to five one-year sentences and will serve at least two and a half years in the County facility. Before legislative changes, this person would have been housed in the Nebraska Penitentiary.

With the passage of LB 605, no misdemeanor sentences are served at the State.

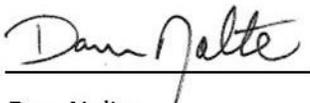
Graphs showing the incarceration rate per one hundred thousand were discussed (see agenda packet). Johnson said the female jail population is growing and that much of that can be attributed to meth. He added that fewer people are coming into the jail but they are staying longer.

Vest wondered if all solutions to reduce the jail population have been exhausted. He mentioned caseworkers, volunteers and other things being done to assist people.

Amundson inquired if more diversionary activities are needed.

Johnson replied that mental health comes into play and that there is not enough support once an individual is released. He said some need more treatment upon release or they will re-enter the system. He said a lot of problems start early (18 months to 3 years of age). Poor parenting, parents not committed to education, substance abuse and other factors affect children at an early age and cause issues that lead to incarceration down the road. Johnson said he sees grandkids in the jail that also had parents or even grandparents who were incarcerated at one time.

MOTION: Amundson moved and Vest seconded to adjourn the Board of Corrections meeting at 10:59 a.m. Amundson, Vest, Flowerday, Yoakum and Schorr voted yes. Motion carried 5-0.



Dan Nolte
Lancaster County Clerk

