

**MINUTES  
BOARD OF CORRECTIONS MEETING  
THURSDAY, AUGUST 19, 2021  
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING  
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING – ROOM 112  
9:00 A.M.**

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

Others Present: Dave Derbin Chief Administrative Officer; Brad Johnson, Corrections Director; Shannon Morgan, Monica Nelson, Probation Officers, Adult Probation; Ben Houchin, Chief Deputy Sheriff; Jodi Nelson, Susan Strong, District Court Judges; Jessica Kerkhofs, Chief Assistant City Attorney; Candace Berens, Deputy County Attorney; George Dungan, Paul Cooney, Deputy Public Defenders; and Leslie Brestel, County Clerk's Office

*Advanced public notice of the meeting was posted on the County-City Building bulletin board, and the Lancaster County, Nebraska, website and emailed to media on August 18, 2021, and published in the Lincoln Journal Star print edition and website on August 5, 2021.*

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 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 MAY 13, 2021**

**MOTION:** Vest moved and Amundson seconded approval of the May 13, 2021, meeting minutes. Yoakum, Flowerday, Amundson, Vest and Schorr voted yes. Motion carried 5-0.

**II. POPULATION STATISTICS & CHARTS**

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

**a. Population Comparisons**

Johnson noted there has been a 23.5% population increase from the previous quarter with the average daily population at 84% of the operational capacity. The population today is 670 individuals and they are staying almost one week longer than in 2014. He felt LB605 (Provide, change, and eliminate penalties, punishments, sentencing, restitution, probation, parole, and crime victim provisions and provide for post-release supervision, grants, and suspension of medical assistance for inmates) may play into this number. He also stated law enforcement is doing what they can to keep bookings low, but the population in the jail is increasing.

Schorr requested group input on how to lower the jail population.

Strong said during the pandemic house arrest was used in lieu of being in the jail. She voiced her concern that house arrest may not be the best option for some individuals due to the probability of reoffending and public safety concerns. Morgan added individuals placed on supervision who would not normally have been may have had the possibility to have custodial sanctions placed upon them, therefore, the number of bookings would increase.

Johnson said vaccinations are being offered in the jail, but many inmates are refusing one.

Cooney felt cite and release was an effective way to reduce the jail population. The City and County Attorneys would work with Corrections for those who had low level offenses or high risk for infection to reduce their bonds. Also, he noted it is important to remember that many individuals are impoverished or pre-trial detainees and an effort to focus on this population is warranted.

Dungan stated over the last few months individuals charged with non-violent crimes with high percentage bonds has increased significantly. He stressed individuals who are able to get into treatment programs are less likely to be held in custody after sentencing.

Houchin said during the height of the pandemic law enforcement was not checking on people as before. Once the pandemic slowed down, those checks resumed. He expressed his frustration with individuals who chronically reoffend. Strong agreed that is difficult as judges are trying to make judgement calls to best serve both the public and the offending individuals. She stated it is sad that there is not a lockdown treatment facility with licensed mental health professionals to help individuals with their substance abuse issues.

A monthly meeting with Corrections, law enforcement, judges and attorneys will be held to find ways to reduce the jail population. Additionally, Corrections will provide a list of individuals who would be deemed a high-complication risk if they contracted COVID to the City and County Attorneys' Offices to be used for possible bond or sentence reductions.

- b. Booking and Lodging Totals**
- c. Pre-Trial and Sentence Conversion Release**
- d. Custodial Sanctions/County Reinvestment Act**

See agenda packet for more information on Items b-d.

- e. Regional Center Waiting Periods**

Johnson reviewed the waiting periods for the Regional Center (see agenda packet). He said 6 individuals from the County are currently at the Regional Center, while 22 are on a waiting list. The average waiting period is 90 days.

Johnson stated the jail is in desperate need of more correctional officers. Currently there are 130 officers and 151 positions are allowed. Candidates that have been applying are low in number and the majority are not qualified for the position. He voiced his concern about the possibility of needing to house inmates outside of Lancaster County.

- f. **Community Hospital Posts**
- g. **Felonies Sentenced to Lancaster County**
- h. **Drug Court Remand**
- i. **Violation of House Arrest**
- j. **FY21 Statistics Report**

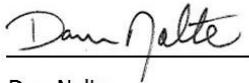
See agenda packet for more information on Items F-J.

- III. PROGRAMMING**
- IV. TRANSPORTATION**
- V. WORK CREWS**
- VI. TRAINING**

See agenda packet for more information on Items III-VI.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Amundson moved and Vest seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:16 a.m. Yoakum, Amundson, Flowerday, Vest and Schorr voted yes. Motion carried 5-0.



Dan Nolte  
Lancaster County Clerk

