

**MINUTES**  
**Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting**  
**Wednesday June 08, 2022**  
**County Hall Building**  
**12 Court Street, Keene, NH 03341**

**Conference Call Information**  
**Phone Call-in Number: +1 646 558 8656**  
**Meeting ID: 409 748 8803**  
**Pin #: 6031233**

**Commissioners:** Jack Wozmak, Chair; Robert Englund, Vice-Chair; Terry Clark, Clerk

**Staff:** Assistant County Administrator Bouchard.

**Guest(s):**

**I. Public Comments**

Upon recognition from the Chair, a Public Comment on topics of interest may be made, not to exceed three (3) minutes in length. - No public comments were received.

**II. Elected Officials & Department Head Updates**

To receive, as informational, departmental updates requiring Commissioner review, participation, approval, and impactful departmental and operational issues. – No comments were received.

At 8:30 AM, the Commissioners opened the meeting with all Commissioners present.

At 08:32 AM, the Commissioners took up Master Agenda Item #991 and began the first of the 2022 semi-annual tours of the Department of Corrections facility

**III. Scheduled Items**

Master Agenda Item #991: Department of Corrections – Semi-Annual Report  
**Action Expected: To conduct the Department of Corrections' first Semi-Annual 2021 inspections as required by RSA 30-B 12.**

At 8:33 AM, the Commissioners began their statutory inspection of the county jail. They inspected the F-Block housing unit. More specifically, the floors were a point of attention, noting that the now near 13-year-old flooring is showing its wear and tear. The flooring in all housing units is slated for replacement within the next ten months. The housing unit and individual cells were clean and in good repair. Inmates receive sheets and multiple blankets (depending upon temperature seasonally). Inmates have open fee-based telephone access and mail access.

The R&D (Receiving and Diagnostic) housing unit was inspected wearing masks. The inmate classification process during the 10-day stay in this unit was reviewed along with COVID practices.

The maintenance/boiler room was inspected, and the geothermal system was extensively reviewed. This section is in excellent condition, having recently had renovations and revisions to the geothermal system.

D-Block (minimum security) housing unit was inspected, and the general comments regarding cleanliness and condition noted in F-Block are also true for this housing unit. The Commissioners reviewed the Tablets that are available for inmates to use to allow them access to

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excellent reading materials. The tablets have generally (but not completely) replaced the physical library books.

D-Block inmates also have the opportunity to utilize video visitation (for a fee). They can schedule visits from either the video visitation rooms within the facility or from a person's home.

K-Block was inspected. K is the maximum-security housing unit. Again, clean and in good repair. It was orderly and quiet.

The Laundry section was inspected. The inmate laundry area was very clean and orderly using inmate labor. Inmates receive two full sets of clothing changes each week, with some exceptions for more changes depending upon the circumstances.

The kitchen was inspected, and the Commissioners met with the Food Service Director. There was a general discussion about food supply delays, food shortages, and the on-site vegetable and herb garden that produces several types of vegetables to have economical fresh vegetables for the facility. On average, between 500-600 meals each day are made for inmates, staff, and visitors. The kitchen was very clean and orderly.

The Commissioners conducted two private interviews with inmates (one male, one female) to determine how they viewed the conditions and treatment at the facility. Both inmates have histories of addiction from initial exposure to opioids due to established medical care. They were complimentary regarding their treatment and the conditions at the jail. The interviews went on for a significant length of time.

The Commissioners conducted two private interviews with two select employees (one male and one female) regarding their work environment, culture, and conditions. The interviews were uniformly positive.

At 11:35 AM, the Commissioners concluded their inspection of the jail and returned to the conference room to continue with the agenda for the weekly Commissioners' meeting.

Superintendent Iosue was then recognized and provided the following information.

Iosue said that a new Case Manager starts today. They worked in a MAT program in Florida and decided to move back to NH. He said the transition should go very smoothly as they were previously at the facility as interns.

Iosue then handed out the following document for review and discussion and spoke to the information contained in the handout.

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Semi-Annual Report – June 8, 2022

**Federal Inmate Numbers**

The Federal Inmate population has been running well ahead of budget.

- Budgeted at 35
- Avg. YTD approximately 44.6 (through 22 weeks, 5/31/22)

**Officer Mental Health and Wellness**

- An area of increasing importance and focus
  - COVID 19
  - Loss of MSG Harrell
- Peer Support Program:
  - Grant-based program
  - Model: Peer Support Team Leaders
  - Goals/Objectives:
    - Change the culture (“change the oil in your car”)
    - Increase awareness among all staff of those that might be vulnerable and in need
    - Develop resources for Crisis Intervention response (for more discrete, measurable events, stressors, traumas)

**COVID 19 Summary and Update**

- Cases: March 2020-present
  - Staff:
    - Approximately 60% of the staff have had COVID at least once
    - Approximately 55% of staff are currently “vaccinated and up-to-date” per CDC and DHHS guidelines
  - Inmates:
    - Total inmate cases undetermined
    - 2 outbreaks (Sept 2021 and Jan/Feb 2022)
  - Fiscal impact: not quantified, but is quite significant between 1) extended officer absences (req quarantine time) and related overtime and 2) COVID Hazard Pay
- Current protocols:
  - No more screening/temps in the lobby if fully vaccinated
  - Masks optional for all fully vaccinated staff and volunteers (exception of any interactions with inmates still in their quarantine phase)

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**Facility/Maintenance Dept**

- LED Project completed
- Dayroom flooring/tiling:
  - Target date late fall to November
- Geothermal/Multistack: Capital Project Update
  - Initial work on the multi-stack was completed at the end of April
  - temp coming back from the bore field has been as low as 60 degrees.
  - The chilling tower is still expected at the end of June.
- Geothermal: Geo field pumps issue:
  - There are six pumps/drives for the bore field
  - approaching end of life
  - Current quote (Farrar) to rebuild 3 of the six motors - \$16,000.00
  - Geosystem: long-term economy

**Staffing/Personnel**

**Staff Feedback Project and Staff Culture:**

- Spring 2021 staff survey
- Summary of changes:
  - Clarity and transparency to Officer Promotion Criteria and Rank Structure
  - Greater transparency in organizational strategic planning and decision-making
  - Union as an opportunity; partner
  - Officer of Month
  - Perfect Attendance Award
  - Commanders Barbecue, Clinical Services Ice Cream Social, Ugly Holiday Sweater Contest
  - Casual Friday
  - New Uniforms

**Updates on Staffing Challenges:**

- Correctional Officers:
  - 44 positions
  - Current vacancies (not counting per diems)
    - Floor coverage vacancies: 10 (includes Croteau)
    - Current (projected near term) vacancies (on paper): 3 (as of mid-June, following new officer starts and resignations)
    - Floor coverage vacancies are projected to be at or below four as of July 24, 2022
    - Per Diem Officers
- Did our interventions work?

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- MSO/Nursing\*:
  - three full-time vacancies (of 5 LPN/RN positions)
  - Hired Traveling Nurse; start date: April 21<sup>st</sup>
  - Recruitment efforts past 2-3 years:
- Food Services:
  - 5.4 FTEs
  - 1 (.8 FTE) vacancy
  - Recruitment challenges in the current job market and with position structure
  - Recommend At least one of the .8 FTE Prep Cook positions to a full-time position.

The Commissioners discussed an incident in F Block with several Federal inmates last week that was handled very quickly, and no one was injured.

Iosue spoke about the introduction of a new style of uniform that incorporates tactical polo shirts that the staff has very well received.

Iosue said that staffing is slowly improving with some of the progress due to staff referrals and hiring bonuses.

**IV. County Administrator**

Bouchard reported that Coates had reviewed a possible multi-unit rental in Keene that could provide housing for several traveling nurses for the regional healthcare organizations. More discussions will be had in the coming weeks.

**V. Old Business - None**

**VI. New Business - None**

**VII. Consent Agenda Items:**

Vote to accept the Weekly Manifests and Minutes of June 01, 2022. **Commission Englund moved to accept the consent agenda and was seconded by Commissioner Clark. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

**VIII. Calendar**

Action Expected: To accept the calendar as informational and to make necessary changes/additions.

**IX. General Discussion for Commissioners**

Master Agenda Item #673: Commissioners - State Cost Shifting Letter and Restorative Justice Program

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**X. Nonpublic Sessions - None**

**XI. Adjournment**

**At 12:01 PM, Commission Clark moved to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Commissioner Englund. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

Recorded and edited by:  
J. Wozmak  
Board of Commissioners, Chair

And

R. Bouchard  
Assistant County Administrator

Reviewed and submitted by:  
Terry Clark  
Clerk, Board of Commissioners