

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
BOARD OF CORRECTIONS
LIAISON COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Regular MeetingJanuary 17, 2006

Location6900 Atmore Drive, Richmond, Virginia

Presiding Chairman..... Roy Cherry, Chairman, Liaison Committee, Board of Corrections

PresentSterling Proffitt, Vice Chairman, Board of Corrections
Jacqueline Fraser, Board of Corrections
Jimmy Burrell, Board of Corrections
W. Alvin Hudson, Board of Corrections
Judge W. P. Lemmond, Jr. (Retired)
Jack Dewan, Virginia Association of Regional Jails
Stuart Kitchen, Sheriff, Sussex County Jail
Tom Jones, Charlotte County Jail
Chris Webb, Blue Ridge Regional Jail Authority
Ron Elliott, Peumansend Creek Regional Jail
Bert Jones, Architecture and Engineering, DOC
Kim Lipp, Architecture and Engineering, DOC
Gary Bass, Classification and Records, DOC
Matt Savino, Video NOC Manager, DOC
Bill Wilson, Compliance and Accreditation, DOC
Donna Foster, Compliance and Accreditation, DOC

I. September Minutes

Minutes from the November 15, 2005 meeting were motioned for approval, seconded and passed.

II. Minutes Summary

- With great regret, Sheriff Kitchen told the committee of the death of Sheriff Vernie Francis' mother. The committee wishes to extend its condolences to Sheriff Francis.

- Bert Jones presented the construction updates. A handout was provided (and is included in this package) detailing the state institutional construction status. St Brides Phase I is complete and occupied. Phase II is an expansion and is moving forward on schedule and completion is anticipated for July 2007. Tazewell

medium security facility should be named in the near future. It is moving forward with a few weather delays. The Pittsylvania County project is moving on schedule with the roof expected to be completed in January which will dry in the building allowing interior work during inclement weather. The Deerfield expansion is currently on schedule, with the roof in progress now. The Governor's budget did not include the Mt. Rogers and Charlotte County projects as were requested by the DOC. The Bland and Marion replacements projects (housing units replacing trailers) were included in the Governor's budget which will marginally increase populations at both facilities. Sheriff Stuart Kitchen asked if the exclusion of the requested projects would affect the future housing capacity of state inmates to which Mr. Jones replied that there is a potential impact, but they are still trying to incorporate language that would enable the DOC to move forward with the planning phases. This will involve the Secretary of Public Safety. Jimmy Burrell asked about the completion date of the Pittsylvania project which Mr. Jones stated is May '07.

- Kim Lipp presented some budget request changes in the Master Plan. The forecasting process happens around the October/November timeframe and the capitol budget is submitted several months prior to this occurrence. Originally the Architecture and Engineering Unit included requests for the Mt. Rogers and Charlotte County projects in the budget for the Department of Planning and Budget. The forecasted state responsible inmate population declined once predictions were released in October/November. This has delayed the two major projects (Mt. Rogers and Charlotte County) by a one year timeframe, extending completion date for Mt. Rogers to 2010. The DOC then alerted the House and Senate finance committees that they would like to begin site acquisition as there is no current public awareness of the project, which can result in delays. Public reaction can and does create enough turmoil occasionally to result in a relocation. Hopefully, the request for funding consideration will materialize as there is a member of the General Assembly sponsoring the Mt. Rogers site. Predictions indicate a definite need for these prisons as forecasts predict a 2010 out-of-compliance rate of approximately 1,000 beds. The goal of the DOC is to reach a 0 out-of-compliance rate. The Charlotte County prison is due for completion in 2011 with the out-of-compliance rate still expected to be around 1,000 beds. Mr. Cherry asked what the total number of beds for the two aforementioned prisons. Ms. Lipp answered that anticipated beds for Mt. Rogers is 1,024 and Charlotte County between 1,000 and 1,500.
- Bill Wilson presented the prison population report. The out-of compliance rate was 1,867 as of 1/6/06, down 80-something from a week before. Transportation becomes difficult due to staff shortages during the holidays, thus increasing the out-of-compliance rates. There are 100 temporary work release beds at Northwest Regional Jail. Chesterfield's new jail will open around the end of February. Middle River Regional Jail and Loudoun County Jail are both expected to open in March. There are three bills currently in the legislature, all of which,

are amendments to the current codes. New River Valley Regional Jail has asked for an exemption from the jail moratorium. Richmond City Jail asked to be named as a single locality regional jail in order to be eligible for the 50% funding. Then DOC has opposed this request. Shenandoah, Page and Patrick County have asked for an exemption in order to build a regional jail in the locality.

- Gary Bass said the DOC is trying to get the out-of-compliance rates down. The jail contract bed usage has been increased. This, he feels, is beneficial to the jails because the jail gets a higher reimbursement rate. The jail re-entry programs are going well, soon to be 15 in operation. The DOC is trying to improve the screening process to more efficiently make use of the jail re-entry program. The new computer system is making progress. Due to the complexity of the time computation process in Virginia, the program has been difficult to write and function independently. He said that he hopes to have the system in operation in the next several months, and that they have several programs for the low security inmate, but nothing really for the higher security inmates. A serious challenge is medical care at low level security institutions. The DOC has requested funding for 24 hour medical coverage for the lower level security facilities to enable a larger number of inmates to be appropriate for housing in these programs. On any given day, there are 800 inmates that are appropriate for level I security and must be housed in higher security facilities due to relatively minor medical issues. Tom Jones asked about the time requirements, currently 12 months or less to serve for consideration of the work release program. He has heard that 18 months or less has been considered. Mr. Bass said that work release eligibility remains 12 months or less, but the jail contract bed program is 3 years or less to serve. Mr. Jones said that he has potential employers who do not want the cost of training someone and then losing them in 6 months. Mr. Bass said that it has been considered, but that the violation rate increases significantly after 12 months and walk-offs become more common.
- Mr. Cherry noted that Robyn deSocio was not in attendance, perhaps due to General Assembly engagements.
- Jack Dewan mentioned the legislation pertaining to the composition of the members of the Compensation Board. He was notified by numerous individuals who said they would not support the bill. In essence, the bill involves restructuring the Board. The other members in attendance were unaware of the bill.
- Sterling Proffitt discussed current legislation affecting prisons and other methods of corrections before the General Assembly, of which there are 32 house bills, 2 house joint resolutions, 16 senate bills and 2 senate joint resolutions. He is watching HB218 and HB235.

- Gene Johnson suggested that the Liaison Committee organize a meeting for the Tidewater area sheriffs and administrators to discuss disaster planning. Judge Lemmond added that he was the Air Force Liaison Officer to the Governor, of which there were subordinates in the Army and Navy as well. The chief concern of this position was to look at available resources in the event of a disaster or terrorist event. He suggested that the DOC and Tidewater area jail facilitators involve the appropriate military staff in this planning study. Ron Elliott added numerous thoughts to the suggestion such as security levels, staffing, liabilities, transportation, who to contact for assistance, coordination of classification and medical catastrophic coverage. Mr. Cherry suggested that this topic be revisited at the next Liaison Committee meeting (March 14) and issues addressed such as who would be willing to serve on the committee. Ron Elliott suggested that the Office of Homeland Security may be willing to participate in this planning as well. Judge Lemmond offered that Donnie Hunter, former sheriff of Prince George County is working in Chesterfield County under the Office of Homeland Security through a grant program.

- Mr. Johnson said that he had been told that the jails were testing for Hepatitis C and asked if this was true. The attendees agreed that they did not unless there were symptoms making testing necessary. Mr. Johnson stated that Delegate Amundson had submitted legislation (HB603) that “Requires assessment of inmates with infectious diseases to insure safety in work and housing assignments. Also requires an examination by a licensed physician within 30 days of any new work assignment.” (Quoted from legislation website: <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?061+sum+HB603>). He said that if this requires testing on all inmates within the Commonwealth of Virginia, the cost could be \$30 million. He said that he had spoken with the Delegate who said that she thought that the jails were indeed testing all inmates and that her primary concern is for first responders, stating that she has the support of the sheriffs, the state police and the local police. She would like this matter to be handled at an administrative level. His concern was that this did not protect first responders, as, once released, how would a former inmate be identified as having been tested and/or treated for a communicable disease? Sheriff Kitchen stated that most staff worked based upon universal precautions as they have been trained to do.

By motion duly made by the Chairman of the Liaison Committee, Roy Cherry, and seconded by several members in attendance, the meeting adjourned.