



# WESTERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL JAIL AUTHORITY

*Serving the City of Salem and Counties of Franklin, Montgomery, and Roanoke*



## MINUTES

JANUARY 7, 2021 @ 9 A.M.

Western Virginia Regional Jail  
5885 West River Road  
Salem, VA 24153

***The Western Virginia Regional Jail Authority Board Meeting was held via electronic communication as a result of the state of emergencies declared by the Governor of Virginia and the President of the United States.***

### A. CALL TO ORDER

1. Welcome and introductions—Mr. Jim Guynn, Authority Counsel

Mr. Guynn called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. Mr. Guynn wished everyone a Happy New Year and welcome Judge J. Christopher Clemens to the January Board meeting.

Members present: April Staton, Todd Clingenpeel, Bill Jones, James Taliaferro, Rosie Jordan, Hank Partin, Kim Haug, Craig Meadows, Angela Hill, Steve Fijalkowski, Mary Biggs, Eric Orange, Brent Hudson, Steve Turner, Rebecca Owens, Richard Caywood, Paul Mahoney, Bill Overton, Duane Amos, Chris Whitlow, Ronnie Thompson, and Brian Carter

Members absent: Randy Foley, Martha Hooker, and Timothy Tatum

Others present: Bobby Russell, David Cox, Deb Parks, Jim Guynn, and Jodi Bishop

### B. OATH AND SWEARING IN OF AUTHORITY MEMBERS

1. Oath and swearing in ceremony—Judge J. Christopher Clemens - Circuit Court Judge – 23rd Judicial Circuit

Judge Clemens thanked the Authority Board for the opportunity to attend via ZOOM and administer the oath of office for the Western Virginia Regional Jail Authority Board. Judge Clemens administered the oath of office to the Board members present via ZOOM for their terms of office beginning January 7, 2021 and ending December 31, 2021.

### C. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. Election of officers— Mr. Jim Guynn, Authority Counsel

Mr. Guynn opened the floor to nominations for Chairman. Mr. Bill Jones nominated Mr. James Taliaferro. The nomination was seconded by Mr. Chris Whitlow. Mr. Guynn moved to close nominations for Chairman. Mr. Ronnie Thompson seconded the motion. There being no further nominations, Mr. James Taliaferro was elected as Chairman by unanimous voice call vote.

Chairman Taliaferro wished the board members a Happy New Year and proceeded to open the floor for nominations for Vice-Chair.

Mr. Ronnie Thompson nominated Mr. Chris Whitlow. The nomination was seconded by Mr. Craig Meadows. Ms. Rebecca Owens moved to close nominations for Vice-Chair. Mr. Bill Jones seconded the motion. There being no further nominations, Mr. Chris Whitlow was elected Vice-Chair by unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Chris Whitlow nominated Mr. Craig Meadows as Secretary. The nomination was seconded by Ms. Rebecca Owens. Mr. Bill Jones moved to close nominations for Secretary. Mr. Ronnie Thompson seconded the motion. There being no further nominations, Mr. Craig Meadows was elected Secretary by unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Craig Meadows nominated Ms. Rebecca Owens as Treasurer. The nomination was seconded by Mr. Chris Whitlow. Mr. Bill Jones moved to close nominations for Treasurer. Sheriff Hank Partin seconded the motion. There being no further nominations, Ms. Rebecca Owens was elected Treasurer by unanimous voice vote.

#### **D. REQUESTS TO POSTPONE, ADD TO, OR CHANGE THE ORDER OF AGENDA ITEMS**

Chairman Taliaferro requested to add an item under New Business; to discuss the appointment of a Superintendent to the Western Virginia Regional Jail. No issues or concerns were raised. The requested item was added to the agenda for discussion.

#### **E. RECOGNITIONS, RESOLUTIONS, AND AWARDS**

There were none.

#### **F. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Chris Whitlow moved approval of the minutes. Mr. Bill Jones seconded the motion which was approved by unanimous voice vote.

#### **G. REPORTS & BRIEFINGS**

##### **1. Financial reports for November 2020—Deb Parks, Business Manager**

Ms. Parks reviewed in detail the financial reports for November 2020.

Superintendent Russell reported our inmate population has been down due to COVID and the holidays. Our ADP was good in November and are numbers are increasing. We will start to receive additional federal inmates over the next several weeks which will assist with our numbers.

Superintendent Russell reported we are in line to receive the COVID vaccine in the coming weeks.

Superintendent Russell reported with the assistance of Chairman Taliaferro, we have established a Rate Stabilization Fund. We will continue to keep an eye on our inmate population as we approach the end of our budget year. We do have a safety net in case our numbers should fall.

2. Superintendent's report—Bobby Russell, Superintendent

Superintendent Russell welcomed the members to the January WVRJ Authority Board meeting and wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Superintendent Russell reported the Roanoke County and the WVRJ Finance Departments received the GOFA Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for 2019. Superintendent Russell thanked Ms. Owens and the Roanoke County Finance Department as well as Ms. Parks and the WVRJ Finance Department for their hard work and dedication. Chairman Taliaferro reiterated Superintendent Russell's sentiments and stated on behalf of the board, we greatly appreciated all your efforts and hard work.

**Operations:**

Our operations have slowed down a bit due to the COVID virus and the holidays. We have stabilized our outbreak with the assistance of the Virginia Department of Health. Our numbers are now below 10. As inmates arrive, they are tested, placed in quarantine for (14) days, and managed accordingly.

Superintendent Russell thanked the Sheriffs and local jails for allowing our facility to have some "breathing room" during our outbreak.

Our Birth Certificate Program is still going well. We have processed (46) Birth Certificates in the month of December.

We had our annual Fire Marshal Inspection on December 10<sup>th</sup>, no issues or concerns to report.

The equipment and hardware for the DR Project arrived and was installed the last week of December. No issues or concerns to report. We are scheduled to "go-live" with the DR Project on January 19<sup>th</sup>. Superintendent Russell thanked the City of Salem for allowing the WVRJ to utilize the Electric Department to store our equipment.

Our new ManagerPlus Software Program went live on January 4<sup>th</sup>. The new program is a cloud based platform to eliminate the need for additional hardware and data storage. The new cloud based version allows for easy accessibility from anywhere with the use of a mobile device. It is much more user friendly than the previous version.

Our GTL Phone/Tablet Project is going well. The on-site technicians had been working hard to prepare as much as possible before the cable crew arrived. The crew ran cable to areas of the jail that were not wired for inmate phone lines or cable connectivity. This includes various

Program rooms and Indoor Recreation areas. The GTL Phone/Tablet Project is scheduled to "go-live" on January 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Monthly Population Report**

Our population on **January 8<sup>th</sup>** as follows:

Franklin County	197
Montgomery County	203
Roanoke County	201
City of Salem	77
Alleghany	27
Roanoke City	1
Bedford County	1
Henry	1
D.O.C. Inmates	2
Federal Inmates	67
Total Population	<b>779</b>

For the month of **December:**

Average Daily Population.....	755
Average Length of Stay .....	88

Superintendent Russell stated our video arraignments are going well. The system has been a great asset to the judges and courts during the pandemic. We are still able to conduct business on a daily basis, the inmates do not have to leave the facility to attend their court hearings and/or risk the chance of acquiring and/or transmitting the COVID virus.

**H. NEW BUSINESS**

1. Statement of Economic Interests/Financial Disclosure- Bobby Russell, Superintendent

Superintendent Russell stated each year we are required as part of our annual Financial Audit to keep on file the Economic Interests/Financial Disclosures of each board member. Each board member is to submit their Economic Interests/Financial Disclosures to the Authority Board Clerk by February 1<sup>st</sup>. He stated during our last Financial Audit it was brought to our attention several of the disclosures arrived after the February 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. Superintendent Russell stated our Authority Board Clerk, Ms. Bishop will be distributing an email later today with specifics on submitting the disclosures.

2. Appointment of a Superintendent to the WVRJ- James Taliaferro, Chairman

Chairman Taliaferro stated on behalf of the WVRJ Authority Board, we want to thank Superintendent Russell for all he has done for the WVRJ. We greatly appreciate him and all his hard work.

Chairman Taliaferro stated, Superintendent Russell will retire as of March 1, 2021. As a Board, we will need to decide quickly on how to move forward in search of a replacement for Superintendent Russell.

Chairman Taliaferro recommended to form a (4) member search team (one member from each jurisdiction) to conduct the initial screenings and interviews before presenting recommendations to the Board. The Board as a whole will conduct a second round of interviews before voting on a new Superintendent.

Sheriff Eric Orange, Sheriff April Staton, Mr. Chris Whitlow, and Captain Kim Haug volunteered to be a part of the search team for a new Superintendent for the Western Virginia Regional Jail.

Chairman Taliaferro stated the search would most likely extend regionally as well as nationally and it would take some time to coordinate everyone's calendars. He stated he would like to nominate Deputy Superintendent David Cox to serve as the Interim Superintendent if a new Superintendent is not in place by March 1<sup>st</sup>.

The nomination was seconded by Sheriff Eric Orange. Ms. Rebecca Owens moved to close the nominations for Interim Superintendent. Mr. Chris Whitlow seconded the motion. There being no further nominations, Deputy Superintendent David Cox was chosen to serve as Interim Superintendent by unanimous voice vote.

Ms. Owens stated in the past when a staff member is appointed as an "Interim", he or she receives a pay adjustment due to the extra duties that will be placed upon them. She stated she would like to recommend a pay adjustment for Deputy Superintendent Cox while he serves as Interim Superintendent. Chairman Taliaferro stated he agreed with Ms. Owen's recommendation for a pay adjustment for the Interim Superintendent position. He requested to present the recommendation at the February 4<sup>th</sup> Board meeting for further discussion.

#### **I. CITIZENS' COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

There were none.

#### **J. REPORTS AND INQUIRIES OF AUTHORITY MEMBERS**

Mr. Craig Meadows inquired on how the board members' Oaths of Office will be signed off on since we conducted our swearing in via ZOOM this year.

Superintendent Russell stated he will pick up the Oaths of Office from each jurisdiction then meet with Judge Clemens to have him sign off on all the Oaths.

#### **K. ADJOURNMENT**

The next Authority meeting will be held February 4, 2021 at 9 a.m. at the Western Virginia Regional Jail, 5885 West River Road, Salem, Virginia. There being no further business, Chairman Taliaferro adjourned the meeting at 9:40 a.m.