



# BERKS COUNTY

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## CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Steering Committee**  
**Berks County Correctional Facility**  
**February 23, 2022**  
**10:00am-Noon**

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**Steering Committee Members**

Kevin Barnhardt, Commissioner and Chair  
Jeffrey Smith, Warden  
Robert Williams, retired Chief APO/JPO  
Ronald Seaman, Chief Administrative Officer  
Stephanie Weaver, Public Relations Officer

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**County of Berks Staff in Attendance**

Jessica Blauser, Executive Asst to Commissioner Barnhardt  
Traci Rhoads, Administrative Asst to Warden Smith  
Paul Bradshaw, Assistant County Solicitor  
Cody Kauffman, First Assistant County Solicitor

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**Public in Attendance**

None

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**County of Berks Owner's Representative,  
CGL**

Rick Davidson, Project Director  
Chloe Jaco, Director of Programming  
Chris Monsma, Needs Assessment Coordinator  
Babette Macy, Communications

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**REVIEW OF AGENDA**

Rick Davidson, CGL Project Director for the County's Owner's Representative team, opened the meeting with a review of the agenda and inquired on any public comments to date on the agenda. Jessica Blauser, Executive Assistant to Commissioner Barnhardt, stated there has not been any public comment nor were there any public in attendance for the meeting. Rick indicated the CGL team had been in receipt of the letter the Commissioners received from county residents regarding sustainability for the project. Rick expressed his understanding of the letter. He suggested the committee and CGL discuss the specifics of the letter and form a response from the steering committee on the issue. Commissioner Barnhardt gave input into the importance of responding to the public in instances such as the sustainability letter. Ron Seaman, Chief Administrative Officer for the County, also provided context on how the County typically responds to issues of similar nature.

***Action Item:*** CGL to develop draft statement on the project's goals for sustainability for steering committee review.

## **INTRODUCTIONS**

Chloe Jaco, Director of Programming for the County of Berks Owner's Representative project, suggested the people in attendance introduce themselves and give their connection to the project. The steering committee, staff, and CGL team members provided their introductions. Commissioner Barnhardt emphasized Bob Williams' role on the committee and his value to the committee as we move forward through the process. Bob shared his background with the CGL team members and offered his assistance.

## **PROJECT SCHEDULE**

Rick provided an overview of the schedule for the project through July 2022. A brief background was summarized to the work CGL performed in 2021 and the connection to the proposed work moving forward. Rick emphasized the key milestone dates and asked for input from the committee.

## **INTERNAL PROJECT COMMUNICATION**

Rick and Commissioner Barnhardt discussed the internal communication structure for the project. Rick shared the specific roles of the CGL team and the appropriate connection to County staff moving forward. Jeffrey Smith, Warden, commented on the structure and how Traci Rhoads would be assisting him with the project. Rick inquired on the timing of how communication occurs between the steering committee and the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Barnhardt outlined the process along with the involvement of the Prison Board. He emphasized the public would have opportunities to comment at all the steps in the process. Rick indicated the importance of a transition team to assist with the project as it moves forward. He indicated CGL would work with the Warden to determine the individuals that would participate in this piece of the project.

***Action Item:*** CGL Team and the Warden work to develop the Transition Team.

***Action Item:*** CGL Team will work with Jessica Blauser to distribute and publicize weekly agenda and meeting minutes.

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION**

Babette Macy, Communication Director for the project, briefed the steering committee on the proposed communication plan. She went over the timeline for the next few months and shared the respective deliverables the steering committee would review. Babette shared their work to date which included drafts of the mission statement, tag line, and new branding elements for the project including a logo. The steering committee gave input on all the drafts. Babette indicated her team would take their feedback and return to the committee with revisions for their approvals.

Babette began the discussion of a project website. She shared how the website would be a tool to inform the public. She inquired on the large Latino population of the county and the goals of the committee for communicating the website in both English and Spanish. The steering committee unanimously agreed the website should have both English and Spanish with the translation of Spanish being a direct translation. Ron Seaman shared the County has been working to translate other County documents. They are currently working to determine the preferred dialect for the translation services and will update Babette once the decision has been made. Babette shared the outline for the website

and took comments from the committee on the information they would like to see on the site. Stephanie Weaver, Public Relations Officer, shared information on decisions made recently with other city department webpages. She stressed the correctional facility website should connect graphically to the branding on the current website. Stephanie also felt a stand-alone site would be best with a link from the County's jail page. The committee discussed the opportunity for the public to engage with the website and encouraged Babette to have a "contact us" place on the site. Babette indicated she would continue to work with Stephanie on the development of the website. She said she would provide updates as the process proceeds and ask for their input along the way. She indicated a draft of the site would be available by May for the committee's review and comments before going live.

Babette briefly touched base on the public outreach plan. She indicated Jessica Blauser and Commissioner Barnhardt were working to get a list of proposed stakeholders for her review. Babette shared her team is gathering information and reviewing calendars for key stakeholders. She explained that the goal would be to go to the respective organizations' regularly scheduled meetings, rather than set up special meetings to update them on the project. She indicated she would continue to coordinate with Jessica and Stephanie on this process moving forward as well update the committee on a weekly basis.

***Action Item:*** Babette to update the Steering Committee on the Mission Statement, Tagline, Branding Materials.

***Action Item:*** Ron to update Babette on the preferred Spanish dialect.

***Action Item:*** Jessica and Commissioner Barnhardt to send public stakeholder list to Babette.

### **NEEDS ASSESSMENT UPDATE**

Chris Monsma from the CGL Needs Assessment team gave an update to the steering committee on his stakeholder interviews. He complemented the Warden and Traci Rhoads on the thoroughness of the data that has been made available. He shared with the committee his experience with other counties on similar requests and how the Warden's information is significantly better than he usually receives. He explained how this data will allow for a more informed assessment for the committee's review. Chris indicated the meetings were going well and he had been able to meet with many in person and will follow up with some virtually.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

### **ADJOURNMENT**

11:58 am

Next Meeting: March 3, 2022