



# **BERKS COUNTY**

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## **CORRECTIONAL FACILITY**

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Steering Committee**  
**Berks County Correctional Facility**  
**April 14, 2022**  
**1:00pm-3:00pm**

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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  
Brittany Frankowski, Executive Assistant to Ronald Seaman  
Christian Y. Leinbach, Commissioner  
John Adams, District Attorney

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### **Public in Attendance**

Karen Shuey, Reporter, Reading Eagle  
Jane Palmer, Wyomissing, PA  
Liz Cates, Bern Twp, PA  
Crystal Kowalski, Wyomissing, PA

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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**

1. Call to Order  
Commissioner Barnhardt called the meeting to order at 1 pm.
2. Public Comment on Specific Agenda Items  
There was no public comment on agenda items.
3. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

Commissioner Barnhardt asked the Steering Committee if there were any questions or comments regarding the previous meeting minutes. Receiving none, the Steering Committee approved the previous meeting minutes.

4. Project Status Update by CGL Companies, Inc.

a. Review of Schedule

Rick Davidson shared the project schedule with the Steering Committee. He discussed the current status of the work being performed in concurrence with the schedule. All work is progressing in accordance with the schedule. No changes have been made to the timeline.

b. Action Item Follow-Ups

*Existing Action Items*

- CGL to develop a draft statement on the project's goals for sustainability for Steering Committee review. *Statement will be approved at the April 19 Budget/Operations meeting.*
- Babette to follow up with Puente on the specific scope items for their proposal to the county. *Scope of Work will be delivered to Commissioner Barnhardt April 15.*
- Stephanie to share recommendation of mission statement and tagline with commissioners. *Brand items will be reviewed for final approval at the April 19 Budget/Operations meeting.*
- Website is being developed and a draft will be shared with the steering committee in May. *The website is in process but not ready for draft review until after brand items are approved.*

*New Action Items from March 31 meeting*

- Chloe to provide information of facilities to be toured as part of programming phase. *Chloe will provide packet of information week of April 18.*
- Committee to provide any questions to Chloe in advance of facility tours. *Committee to review information packets and prepare for questions and specific items of focus.*
- Chris to interview new stakeholder group – Reading Berks Conference of Churches. *Complete*
- Steering Committee to review sustainability statement for affirmation at the April 14 meeting. *Steering Committee did not have any changes. Statement will be approved at the April 19 Budget/Operations meeting.*
- Babette to move forward with preferred logo and begin compiling brand tool kit items and templates. *Pending approval at the April 19 Budget/Operations meeting.*
- Babette to get sample audio file from Puente. *In Process*

c. Review of Deliverables

The Steering Committee reviewed the statement on sustainability and did not have further changes. Commissioner Barnhardt will add it to the April 19 Budget/Operations meeting agenda for formal approval. Once approved, Stephanie will provide to the public and the information will be included on the project website.

**Action Item:** Commissioner Barnhardt to add to April 19 Budget/Operations Meeting agenda for approval.

d. New Business

i. Needs Assessment Update

CGL presented an update to the Needs Assessment. A recommendation of 960 beds was made, compiled from modeling data, policy impacts and peaking and classification factors. The Steering Committee will review the presentation in order to provide comment at its next meeting. The recommendation of number of beds will be taken to the full Board of Commissioners at a later date.

**Action Item:** Steering Committee to review presentation for comments at the April 21 Steering Committee meeting.

**Action Item:** CGL to provide further clarification on Slide 18 of the Needs Assessment presentation with the assistance of County data, Inmate Snapshot Bails. A clear definition of "no bail" will be developed.

ii. Committee Member Discussion

Ron Seaman will be stepping down from the Steering Committee. The Budget/Operations Committee will approve replacement of Ron with Pamela Shupp Menet at their meeting on April 19.

**Action Item:** Commissioner Barnhardt to add approval of Pamela Shupp Menet to Steering Committee to April 19 Budget/Operations Meeting agenda for approval.

5. Communication Update

The website will be presented at a future date pending final acceptance key brand items.

6. Executive Session

There was no Executive Session

7. Public Comment

Commissioner Leinbach made several comments during the Needs Assessment presentation. He inquired on the population number and how the data incorporated population growth in specific

age groups. He also asked for further information regarding the increase in the length of stay within the facility.

A discussion with the Steering Committee commenced to explore the reasons for the increase in the length of stay, mental health increases, and decrease of overall population numbers. Steering Committee member, Bob Williams, indicated the county should highlight the progress that has occurred in reducing the numbers at the jail.

Karen Shuey asked a follow up question to the Needs Assessment presentation with regard to juvenile detention. DA, John Adams, assisted in the answer explaining Juveniles are currently sent out of the county. Commissioner Barnhardt commented the next step in the process will be to evaluate the juvenile population into the program.

Crystal Kowalski recognized the work done to date in the Needs Assessment; she asked about timing in finalizing the report and when it would be available to the public. Crystal provided comment to the previous study completed in 2018 and inquired on the number of beds for pretrial summary offenses.

Jane Palmer thanked the group for its thorough Needs Assessment research and commented on continued efforts around reform.

#### 8. Adjournment

Warden Smith made a motion to adjourn at 3:02 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Barnhardt.

Next Meeting: April 21, 2022.