

Redgranite Correctional Institution

Community Relations Board Meeting Minutes

November 14, 2017 11:00am

In attendance: Michael Meisner, Sandy Hautamaki, Dave Tarr, Kristine McElligott, Michelle Smith, Tony Smyrneos, Kyle Tarr, Matt Stake, Kathy Klemann, Joanie Klapp, Stacey Gravunder, Senator Olsen, Jeff Nett, John Weismueller, Clyde Simonson, Scott Muhle, and Julie Kastein

Welcome and Introductions

RGCI Happenings – Warden Meisner

- New Staff
 - Stacey Gravunder – Corrections Program Supervisor
 - Kristine McElligott – CMSD
 - Angela Thompson – HSU Manager
- We recently used K-9 units to search the parking lot, lobby, and visiting room to assist with curbing contraband that may be coming in with visitors. This will send a message that we are watching and patrolling these areas and it will deter those who may be thinking about introducing drugs into the institution during visits. There were no negative reports from staff or the public after the first search. We will continue these random patrols.
 - In addition to the dogs, Dave Tarr let the group know that we rely on informants, local law enforcement, and the Department of Justice to identify how drugs get into the institution and provide interdiction/prevention.
- At RGCI we have one vocational program for inmates, which is the vocational bakery program. We have room to pursue adding a second vocational program in the space that was previously occupied by our canteen. With assistance from DWD, FVTC, and the Re-entry Office, we decided that an industrial maintenance program would be the best fit. Much work needs to occur; we still need to renovate the space, hire a teacher, and identify which inmates are qualified for the program. The hope is to have the program up and running by August of 2018 with 15-20 graduates each year.
- Each year RGCI puts together a Polar Plunge team to raise money for the Special Olympics and for the last few years, we have raised more than any other institution or law enforcement agency. We would like to continue our reign on top and any of the board members are welcome to join the team. Last year we raised just under \$7000. As much as we like to brag about winning, we really just want to support all the volunteers, families and athletes that benefit from the Special Olympics each year.

HR Updates – Michelle Smith, HR Director

- Current vacancies include 25 officers, 5 sergeants, 1 electronic tech-advanced, 1 nurse clinician 4, 1 librarian, 1 teacher, 1 OOA, 1 FRW-advanced, 1 psych. supervisor, 1 social worker. The MPAA position has been filled and we will be receiving 1 new officer in December. There will be 2 more sergeant vacancies, 1 more officer vacancy and an OOA vacancy in the near future.
- Recently the DOC has changed their hiring process for officers. We will be doing our own recruiting, application process, and on-site interviews with a guarantee that candidates will be placed at RGCI after they finish their training at the academy. We have been part of the community since 2000 but most residents have no idea what job opportunities are here. We plan on doing more posters, ads, job fairs and other recruitment that will let the community know we

are looking for quality, local employees. Tours are available for anyone interested in learning more about the prison before applying.

Security Updates – Dave

- The introduction of opiates into the institutions has become prevalent throughout the United States. All institutions will be training supervisors in recognizing symptoms of an overdose and how to administer Narcan.
 - Our mailroom and warehouse staff are at risk for accidental exposures with all the incoming mail and property, so a supply of Narcan will be stored in those areas as an additional precaution.
- Officers and sergeants will now carry OC gel instead of the aerosol OC that was previously issued. The gel will have a minimal effect on others in the area when dispensed.
- We are replacing our older Tasers with new models that include a video camera that activates with arming the Taser. This will provide for videotaping instances when Tasers are used in a reactive use of force.
- We have begun locking the lobby door for the safety of all to make sure visitors to the Institution are identified before being allowed to enter.

Program Services – Stacey Gravunder, Corrections Program Supervisor

- RGCI will begin offering the Windows to Work program starting on November 21. Brent Sanderfoot will be facilitating the program. The program works with inmates a year from release, teaching employability skills and then follows the inmate a year after release. This voluntary program will meet twice a week for 6-9 months while incarcerated. Once participants leave the institution, their coach will follow them and assist the offender with housing, food, transportation and other barriers.
- Other programming being added to RGCI will be new enrichment classes that will focus on team building, conflict resolution, money management, and mental aerobics. These classes will be voluntary versus our mandatory programs such as AODA, domestic violence and Thinking for Change. The goals of the classes are to work on social skills, life skills, and cognitive skills that most incarcerated individuals did not learn as children. The classes will be available to all who wish to do more with their time here instead of sitting idle.
- To include all inmates there will also be a group for men with life sentences to be part of something as their wait for programming can be very long.
 - Matt wanted to stress the importance of understanding that most offenders do not have the same basic skills as our co-workers or clients have.

DCC Updates – Matthew Stake, Unit Supervisor Unit 813

- Agents are working on a 10-step program, which is a new way for agents and offenders to go through the probation process. The program includes doing workbooks and assignments for educational purposes and life skills building. The offenders are really in to it. The only downside is that it has recreated a lot more work for agents.
 - This area receives many offenders still in need of drug or sex offender programming which are not readily available.
- We are considering a mentoring program where institution social workers can come out to the community to see what agents do and then agents come to the prison to understand what social workers do.

Questions/Round Table

- Joanie Kapp, from the Village Board, asked if there was a prison ministry.

- RGCI has a chaplain to organize and provide, with the help of many volunteers, spiritual opportunities. Last weekend we held a prison fellowship seminar on fatherhood. Brother Bob's Outreach program comes to the institution regularly including playing sporting events against the inmates. Religious services and studies are held weekly for all religious groups.
- Senator Luther Olsen asked about RGCI's current overtime situation.
 - In the previous week, we needed to hire for 150 jobs, but we only had to pre-force two of those 150. If there are not enough staff or if they have all worked doubles already then we have the option of cutting back certain operational areas. Most staff work well covering and taking shifts.
 - What is the goal to get the overtime down?
 - We now have more avenues of recruitment than just the one posting on wisjobs.com. Other institutions have done their own recruitment and were able to fill all their vacancies.
 - What are some of the reasons for the vacancies?
 - Staff are taking advantage of the ability to retire while others promote. Some don't really know what it's like until they are here doing the job and they find out it's not really what they want.
- Jeff Nett, Waushara County Sheriff, asked about population trends.
 - Population of the prisons continues to rise.
 - Opinions of the group for the increase included drunk driving laws and the continued increase of drug related crimes and resources to help are diminishing.
 - Sheriff Nett also noted the increase of offenders in the jail that need mental health services, which could also be contributed to drug use.
- John Weismueller, Waushara County Investigator, inquired about the use of the OC gel.
 - The strength or potency is still the same as other forms of OC. It works best when directed on the eyes and effects last longer and are more difficult to wash off. The OC allows staff to gain inmate compliance with fewer injuries to both. It has definitely been a deterrent.
 - The Tasers the supervisory staff carry has also been a deterrent as well for uncooperative inmates.
- Kathy Klemann, Waushara County Victims/Witness Assistance, let the group know DA Scott Blader accepted a position at the US District attorney's office effective November 13.
- Scott Muhle, Theda Medical Center security, would like the institution to continue the communication between both facilities so everyone knows what to expect and prepare for, especially inmates coming with armed escorts or band it use.
- Dave Tarr, Security Director asked if there have been any concerns with our calls to EMS. Sheriff Nett let him know there have not been any issues now that our control can talk directly to the EMS personnel.
- Chief Kyle Tarr, Redgranite Police Department, gave his appreciation to the institution and staff for continuing to work well together. They are also keeping an eye on offenders that have been released and are working with other government agencies/departments to stop crimes before they happen. The DA's office is always helpful. The village is working on replacing the bridge on Pine River Street in the spring. There will be meetings after the first of year with institution and emergency services regarding what will be done while under construction.
- Warden Meisner offered a tour for anyone interested today or at a later date.