

Community Relations Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 15, 2018

In attendance: Sandy Hautamaki, Andy Wesner, Troy Lenz, Stacey Gravunder, Jeff Nett, Kyle Tarr, Michel Lejeune, Tony Smyrneos, Caitlin Reinke, Clyde Simonson, Karen Marone, Kathy Klemann, Matt Stake, Scott Muhle, and Julie Kastein

Introduction of attendees

RGCI Updates – Deputy Warden Hautamaki

- Special Olympics – RGCI was the top law enforcement team for the fourth year in a row raising \$10,022. We've been invited to participate in the Opening Ceremony of the Summer Olympics held on June 7 and will be sending two of the plunge team members, Ken Quick & Patti Trochinski to represent us.
- On March 19, board members from Independence 1st were here for a 2-part story on the Durable Medical Equipment refurbishing program at RGCI run by Badger State Industries. The story was run on WBAY TV.
- National Crime Victims' Rights Week was held during the week of April 8-14 with a victim speaker presentation on April 13 for both staff and inmates.
- Mid-State College of WI Rapids toured the institution on April 12 and met with inmates in the RYTE program.
- Ripon College toured on April 26 and also met with the RYTE program inmates.
- Disturbance Plan Meeting was held with community partners and Todd Nehls of DMA on April 17.
- RGCI held its first Veterans Expo on April 18.
- On April 23-24, Crisis Intervention Training was held and presented by Dr. Jeff Garbelman at the village hall. Staff from RGCI, Redgranite police department, and other institutions participated in this helpful training.
- The Bells of the Bluff hand bell choir performed at RGCI for inmates on April 28.
- DAI has two new Asst. Administrators – Melissa Roberts and Doug Percy
- Chris Trinrud (BSI Tech) received the HOPES award at the Prevention of Suicide WI for her efforts in Helping Others Prevent and Education about Suicide. This is a group of suicide loss survivors who spearheaded WI's suicide prevention efforts for 19 yrs. Chris is also one of the DOC's QPR trainers.
- The Industrial Maintenance Mechanics vocational program plans continue to move slowly. Bids will need to be taken on remodeling the old canteen area and we are in the process of hiring the program's teacher. Credits received while incarcerated can be used towards an Industrial Maintenance mechanics diploma and associate degree from FVTC.

- Corrections Employee Recognition Week was held last week, which involved some extra treats and fun things for staff, including a brat fry delivered by administrative staff.
- May is Trauma Informed Care Month and May 22 is TIC Day. RGCI will have several training modules available for staff to watch with a more extensive training provided on May 18 by Dr. Huenke. RGCI community service workers made “love bugs” for the Redgranite daycare kids.

Vacancy Update - Deputy Warden Hautamaki

- Current vacancies include: 40 officers (36 after May 20), 4 sergeants, an electronic technician security – senior, a librarian, a psychologist supervisor, an office operation associate, a program assistant – confidential, an inventory control coordinator – advanced, a nurse clinician 2, three social workers, three correctional food service leaders, three psychological associates, and a financial program supervisor.

Recruitment Efforts – Captain Wesner

- In January we hung posters around the county promoting two opportunities for local interviews for correctional officers. We had lots of interest but when many applicants were told they would have to attend a 7-week training in Madison they were unable to accept the position. The warden received permission to host a local academy here at RGCI starting on July 10 to help local applicants with family or pet obligations. We are holding open interviews at the job center in Wisconsin Rapids today to try and fill this local academy. Applicants can choose to work at either Redgranite, Oshkosh, Columbia, Fox Lake, Dodge or Waupun Correctional Institutions. Community members were encouraged to send us anyone that might be interested in working in corrections. Tours are available for anyone who would like to see the institution before applying.
- Additionally we have contacted 15 high schools asking them to post and promote our recruitment. Radio ads have been placed, many staff have shared social media posts, and staff have attended job fairs in Wisconsin Rapids and Berlin hoping to spread the word about careers at RGCI.
- To help alleviate some of the overtime during this time of high vacancies, we have collapsed a posts in the library, warehouse, and weight room. Visiting hours for all Tuesday and Thursdays have been cancelled temporarily to free up three positions on second shift each day.
- Weapons requalification has been postponed until fall and groups that would normally meet monthly have been asked to meet less frequently.

Vets Expo & Records Updates – Stacey Gravunder, Program Supervisor

- Veterans Expos are held annually at different institutions throughout Wisconsin. Locations are chosen and rotated based on number of incarcerated veterans. This is the first expo at RGCI as we currently houses 91 inmate veterans. The expo, which is not done in any other state, allows inmates to meet representatives and learn about the many benefits available to them. At RGCI, there were 21 different vendors from county, state and federal veterans' agencies available for the 44 inmates who attended. Vendors provided information regarding housing, financial aid for school, and other reentry concerns. RGCI also held a separate session for 10 of its veteran staff. In addition to the expo, Waushara County VA Representative Bill Rosenau comes in monthly to help inmates with questions and other agencies come to RGCI to assist inmates as they near their release dates. Feedback received from inmates regarding the expo was positive and appreciative.

Management Services Updates – Troy Lenz, Food Service Administrator

- The first plants are being set in the institution garden today, while the greenhouse has been going strong for about a month. With a good harvest, any additional food not used for meal preparation will be donated to local food pantries. The garden employs eight inmate workers who plant, water, weed, and harvest, which allows them to gain skills that may be used upon release. The University of MN donated honey crisp apple trees to the institution, so additional apple trees were purchased and planted for cross-pollination.
- RGCI paper medical records will soon be transitioning to electronic medical records (EMR). This will affect all records for medical, dental, clinical, and medication delivery.
- The business office is busy as the end fiscal year draws near.

Roundtable

Captain Wesner thanked Waushara County for their assistance especially for the use of their K-9 units. We have been using the dogs more often during visiting times to curb the amount of contraband/drugs that are being brought into the institution. In addition to the dogs, the visitor screening process has been more thorough in hopes to eliminate the visitors willing to bring in drugs. Captain Wesner also thanked Chief Tarr and his staff for always being available to respond when drugs or other criminal situations occur.

Scott Muhle from ThedaCare reported the hospital staff appreciate how polite the RGCI staff are the bring inmates to the hospital regularly.

Matt Stake let the group know that he will be spearheading the formation of the Waushara County Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee. The committee's focus will be public safety. There will be more to come regarding this exciting new committee.

Kathy Klemann informed us that Steve Anderson was appointed to Waushara County DA and the transition going well.

Karen Marone attended as she is the new assistant district attorney for Waushara county.

Clyde Simonson attended with his replacement Caitlin Reinke who will be taking his place as Redgranite Elementary School principal after his retirement at the end of the school year. He let the RGCI know he has appreciated the communication sharing between the school and institution.

Michel Lejeune, the Associate Warden from Oxford Correctional Institution represented Oxford's new Warden, Matthew Marske.

Sheriff Jeff Nett announced that a new K-9 officer would be added to the department on Thursday. Recruitment issues continue to be a concern for the Waushara County Jail as there is a lot of completion from surrounding counties. Veterans are flagged as they come to the jail and can meet with VA representative Bill Rosenau. Mental health and drug dependency continue to be the main cause of concern for the offenders at the jail.

Chief Kyle Tarr reported that there have been three contraband convictions for visitors trying to bring drugs into the institution. The intel received from RGCI staff helps to get those convictions. As word gets out that we are getting tough on contraband, it will keep people from attempting to bring it in. With the help of RGCI community service workers, the Redgranite Police department distributed crocheted hats and mittens made by inmates to area schools and in particular to a family who lost their home to a fire. Chief was appreciative as always of the use of our range and the combined training his staff is allowed to participate in. Some of RGCI staff have ridden along with the RCPD which helps our staff understand the law enforcement side.

Stacey Gravunder informed the group of a recent lawsuit that requires all institutions to review sentencing to make sure all inmates' release dates are correct. This will be a long, time-consuming process. With the creation of the step program, inmates are given an opportunity to advance through the disciplinary process as a reward for good behavior or adjustment. In addition to extra privileges and property, inmates are now able to attend programming aimed at helping them stay out of restrictive housing. The programs are voluntary, but have been well received by those attending as it gets them out of their cell during the day.