
FISCAL UPDATE Article

Fiscal Services Division

September 11, 2017



Ground Floor, State Capitol Building

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

515.281.3566

BOARD OF CORRECTIONS MEETING — SEPTEMBER 2017

Meeting. The Board of Corrections met September 8, 2017, at the Iowa Medical and Classification Center (IMCC) and was welcomed by Warden Jim McKinney. Warden McKinney mentioned the recent purchase of a bus to assist with transportation of inmates to the intake facility at the IMCC. This will assist in containing costs and free up deputies' time at the local level. Warden McKinney stated that he has been a warden for around 20 years and has seen a lot of correctional programs come and go. He thinks that the staff working with inmates on a daily basis makes the biggest difference in an inmate's stay. Several staff from the IMCC addressed the Board, outlining how they came to their career in corrections and explaining the work that they do.

Director's Report. Director Jerry Bartruff recognized Lettie Prell, Director of Research for the Iowa Department of Corrections (DOC). She will be retiring in September after 36 years of employment with the State of Iowa. Her work with assessment risk modeling is recognized nationwide. Director Bartruff also introduced Cord Overton as the new Communications Director for the DOC. Overton was previously a policy advisor for Governor Kim Reynolds.

Director Bartruff provided an update of activity and items of interest since the last meeting, including the following:

- Meetings have been held with the Department of Management about FY 2018 and FY 2019 budgets. There continue to be significant challenges and the possibility of a special session to reduce FY 2018 appropriations. The DOC continues to be cautious and fiscally responsible.
- Director Bartruff attended the American Correctional Association's state directors' conference in August. Fiscal challenges, as well as the increasing incidence of mental illness in the correctional area, are issues being experienced across the nation.
- The Complex Service Needs Workgroup established in [SF 504](#) has met once, and will meet three more times before issuing its final report to the General Assembly in December.
- There is a growing issue of elderly inmates with mental issues being discharged from their sentence but not being able to be released because there is no facility for placement available outside of the DOC.
- The Justice Action Network will be at the Iowa Correctional Institution for Women (ICIW) in Mitchellville on September 28. On that day Governor Reynolds will be giving a graduation address. The Network will also visit the Iowa Prison Industries (IPI) textile facility that is located at the ICIW.
- Iowa Prison Industries will now be doing the printing of a Department of Natural Resources quarterly publication.

Budget. Department of Corrections Financial Manager Steve Dick gave a budget update:

- The continuing emphasis on reducing recidivism is directly related to the budget, as increasing recidivism leads to a larger number of prison inmates and higher operating costs.
- There are several items in expenses for the Corrections budget that cannot be cut (such as food for inmates and facility utility costs). Personnel expenditures are the largest part of the Corrections budget, and any cuts in FY 2018 General Fund appropriations will result directly in cuts in personnel.

- Resources are being focused on higher risk individuals.
- Temporary closings during FY 2017 of Luster Heights, the John Bennett Unit, the Clarinda Lodge, and the Sheldon Residential Treatment Facility have become permanent. A total of 64 employees were affected by these closings.
- While the costs of most mental health medications are decreasing, other drug costs are increasing. Pharmacy costs can no longer be kept stable.
- The number of older inmates with severe physical and mental health afflictions is increasing.
- There has been an increase in the number of HIV-positive inmates due to the opiate crisis.
- The FY 2019 General Fund budget request will be kept status quo by request of the Governor's office, with the exception of a request for an additional \$1.0 million for pharmaceuticals. This is reflected in the appropriation for the IMCC.
- The main goal for the DOC at this point is to maintain staffing. This will not be possible if there are FY 2018 deappropriations or no salary adjustment funds for FY 2019.
- The DOC is requesting \$6.7 million in funding for capital projects. \$3.0 million of this request is for deferred maintenance at institutions and community-based corrections facilities.

Legislative Proposal. The DOC will propose legislation rewriting Iowa Code section [904.310A](#) to address the issue of inmate access to sexually explicit reading materials.

Board Discussion. The Board members stated that they appreciated the introduction of IMCC staff members during the meeting and the commitment they have to their work.

Next Meeting. The next Board meeting is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on October 6, 2017, at the Iowa Prison Industries Showroom in Des Moines. For additional information, see the DOC website: doc.iowa.gov/about-us/board-corrections.

STAFF CONTACT: Alice Fulk Wisner (515.281.6764) alice.wisner@legis.iowa.gov