

Meherrin River Regional Jail Authority Board

Special Called Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 5, 2022

The Meherrin River Regional Jail Authority Board held their special called meeting in the Meherrin River Regional Jail Board Room.

I. Call To Order

Members Present are as follows:

Leslie Weddington, Brunswick County Administrator
Bernard Jones, Brunswick County Board of Supervisors
Captain Joseph Lopresti, Captain Brunswick County Sheriff's Office
Duck Adams, Dinwiddie County Sheriff
Bill Chavis, Dinwiddie County Board of Supervisors
Kevin Massengill, Dinwiddie County Administrator
Bobby Hawkins, Mecklenburg County Sheriff
Wayne Carter, Mecklenburg County Administrator

Others in attendance are as follows:

Crystal Willett, Superintendent
Brendan Hefty, Hefty, Wiley & Gore, P.C. via Conference Call
Jennifer Derrenbacker, Finance Director
Shelley Slaughter, Executive Secretary

II. Approval of Agenda

Bill Chavis made a motion to approve the July 5, 2022 agenda. Wayne Carter seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion.

III. New Business

A. Policy Governing Participation by Members in Meeting by Electronic Communication

The Policy Governing Participation by Members in Meeting by Electronic Communication was presented for review. This policy allows members to participate in meetings electronically providing certain conditions are met, which are listed in the policy. The statute requires that the public body must adopt a written policy to allow members to participate electronically. Leslie Weddington made a motion to approve the Policy Governing Participation by Members in

Meeting by Electronic Communication. Bill Chavis seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion.

B. FY23 Budget Amendment

The Finance Committee met last week to review and discuss the FY23 Budget Amendment. At the last MRRJA Board Meeting, it was approved to move forward following the State Budget with a \$42,000 starting salary for Jail Officers and a 5% increase for all Jail employees. At that time we decided to do a benchmark study with all Regional Jails in July/August after the State Budget went into effect to see where their starting salaries would be. After the budget hearing with the Comp Board 2 weeks ago, Jails started releasing their starting salaries. Southside Regional Jail's starting salary as of July 1, 2022 for uncertified officers is \$45,000 and Riverside Regional Jail's starting salary as of August 1, 2022 for uncertified officers will be \$46,800. Southside Regional Jail poses a larger threat because they are the closest to us. We have had several of our officers over the years resign to work for Southside Regional Jail. Southside Regional Jail's average daily population is approximately 130 offenders.

We met with the Finance Committee last week, rather than waiting to do the benchmark study, to discuss our starting salaries as we feel we need to be more aggressive to stay competitive. Since Southside Regional Jail released their new starting salaries, we have lost 1 employee that has been with Meherrin River Regional Jail since 2012. We also have 2 other officers that have submitted their 2 weeks notice and will be going to Southside Regional Jail.

Sheriff Duck Adams interjected with concern regarding external job postings and the hiring of a Lieutenant from the Department of Corrections. He was also concerned with the fact that the Lieutenant had not previously attended the Basic Jailor Academy. Superintendent Willett reiterated that the Board approved the Jail to post these types of positions externally due to the lack of internal applicants. DOC certification does not meet the criteria of DCJS therefore they must attend the Basic Jailor Academy in order to become certified. This employee had several years of experience but per DCJS requirements had to attend the Basic Jailor Academy to become certified.

In order to be competitive with Southside Regional Jail, we are recommending today that we increase our starting salary for uncertified officers to \$45,000. The amended budget would also allow for compression for our certified officers, as well as those that have been with Meherrin River Regional Jail since day one. When the FY23 Budget was adopted, we were very conservative with revenues. We included a starting salary of \$42,000 because that was the one constant that the Comp Board explained in all communications received from them and from the letter received in December 2021. The 5% increase for all employees across the board was not included in the revenue from the Comp Board however the MRRJA Board approved this increase in expenses. When the language came through from the Comp Board after the State Budget was adopted, we were able to include the 5% increase in revenue. Because of this increase in revenue we are still within the budget that was previously adopted. The jurisdictional requirements that were previously adopted were \$8,219,543.56. With the new starting salary for Jail Officers at \$45,000 and including the revenue that we are estimating to receive from the Comp Board, the jurisdictional requirements will be \$8,141,734.50, which is a \$77,809.06 decrease from what was previously adopted with Brunswick saving \$24,556.17,

Dinwiddie saving \$16,064.43 and Mecklenburg saving \$37,188.46. With this amendment, uncertified Officers will start at \$45,000 and once certified will increase to \$47,052. Our seasoned certified Officers will receive a compression raise to increase their salary to \$49,104.

The Finance Committee and the Superintendent recommend adopting the FY23 Amended Budget with a starting salary of \$45,000 for uncertified Officers and \$47,052 for certified Officers, as well as allowing for compression, for a total of \$19,805,794.66. Bernard Jones made a motion to approve the FY23 Amended Budget as presented. Leslie Weddington seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion.

IV. Next Meeting

The next Board meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, August 25, 2022, at 12:30 p.m. at the Meherrin River Regional Jail Board Room. Lunch will be provided.

V. Adjourn

There being no further business, a motion was made by Wayne Carter to adjourn the meeting. Bernard Jones seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion.