

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
BOARD OF CORRECTIONS  
JAIL REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING**

Regular Meeting.....December 4, 2017

Location .....6900 Atmore Drive, Richmond, Virginia

Presiding.....Sheriff Vernie Francis, Chairman

Present.....William T. Dean, Board of Corrections Member  
Olivia Garland Ph.D., Board of Corrections Member  
Sheriff Charles Jett, Board of Corrections Member  
Heather Masters, MD, SFHM, FACP, Board of Corrections Member  
Rev. Kevin Sykes, Board of Corrections  
Bobby Vassar, Board of Corrections  
Steve Goff, Board of Corrections  
Brian Sutherland, Board of Corrections  
Phillip Figura, Board Counsel, Office of the Attorney General  
Patrick Wilson, Richmond Times Dispatch  
Paul Haymes, Department of Corrections  
Ron Hall, Department of Corrections  
James Bruce, Department of Corrections  
Rebecca Hancock, Department of Corrections  
Donna Foster, Department of Corrections

Phyllis Randall joined the meeting by conference call.

The meeting was called to order and Chairman Francis presided, welcoming all attendees.

**The November Minutes were not brought before the Committee for approval. This will be added to the January agenda.**

**2018 Meeting Calendar**

The attendees discussed the 2018 meeting calendar, deciding to basically adhere to the Board of Corrections' meeting calendar dates which are typically the third Wednesday of the designated months.

**I move that the Jail Review Committee meet on the third Wednesday of each month at 10:00 am when possible.**

Upon a *Motion* by Sheriff Francis and duly seconded, the attending members voted unanimously to *Approve* the above recommendations, as did Ms. Randall.

Board of Corrections  
Correctional Services Committee  
November 15, 2017

The Jail Review Committee (JRC) will meet on the dates already voted by the Board members, but will also meet on the following dates:

February 21, 2018  
April 18, 2018  
June 20, 2018  
August 15, 2018  
October 17, 2018  
December 19, 2018

The full 2018 calendar is attached.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

### **Presentation by Brian Sutherland**

Mr. Sutherland prepared a presentation that included confidential information, therefore opted to present a limited version of this presentation.

- Review of best practices utilized by North Carolina, Ohio and Oregon;
- Isolation of *Minimum Standards for Jails and Lockups* most likely to impact jail death investigations;

Mr. Dean also identified high impact standards and was in agreement with Mr. Sutherland adding that in recent training that he attended, there was a focus on psychological autopsy, a recently adopted tool being utilized primarily in suicide cases.

### **Presentation by Steve Goff**

Mr. Goff opted to withhold his presentation until further notice due to confidentiality concerns.

### **General Discussion**

Chairman Francis expressed concern that operational funding is insufficient for the Jail Review Investigation team to fully perform their expected duties. They have been told that there is no funding for office supplies, a state provided vehicle, confidential office space, travel expenses etc. Ms. Randall suggested a motion to go before the full Board requesting increased funding by the appropriations committee for the General Assembly. Sheriff Jett asked for guidance from the Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) - Director's Office and the VADOC Budget Office to consider the absorption of the Board/Jail Review Committee Investigative Team's funding to provide for funds to function in their assigned duties. This could potentially help to free up some of the operational expenses and prevent concerns about insufficient funds for the necessary operational expenses of these employees.

**I move that the review committee send to the full Board, a request to ask the General Assembly Appropriations Committee to consider additional funding to the two part-time positions that were assigned to the Board of Corrections for the purpose of reviewing the four duties of the Board.**

Upon a *Motion* by Ms. Randall and duly seconded, the attending members voted unanimously to *Approve* the above recommendations.

Chairman Francis added that he also has concerns about the ability to have a candid discussion among the members of the Jail Review Committee, while protecting the identities of innocent people and their families. He asked for potential legislative consideration to change Code of Virginia §2.2-3711(A18) to enable the committee to close the meeting to the public with open and transparent reports being made to the full Board of Corrections upon finalization. Mr. Bruce agreed to recommend language for consideration by the legislature.

The attendees determined that an informal phone call to notify the administration of a facility where an incident occurred and is pending review is highly recommended.

Because it has proven difficult to find private office space at the VADOC Headquarters, the jail Review staff have requested alternative options. In addition, local facilities are located throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia making commutes to VADOC headquarters non-productive and time consuming, therefore the Jail Review staff has requested consideration by the Board of Corrections to allow them to telecommute when not in travel status.

**I move that the Jail Review Committee Staff is approved to work off-site in accordance with existing Virginia Department of Corrections' Telecommute policy.**

Upon a *Motion* by Sheriff Jett and duly seconded, the attending members voted unanimously to *Approve* the above recommendations.

#### Other Comments

There being nothing further, the meeting was *ADJOURNED*.