



Meeting Minutes
Iowa Prison Industries Advisory Board
Friday, June 1, 2018
Clarinda Correctional Facility, Clarinda, IA

Present: Dr. Doug Hillman, Sheila Wilson, Jennifer Gardner, Bonnie Winther, Tim Diesburg, Dan Clark.

Absent: Terry Goodman.

Staff: Randy Gibbs, Stephen Weis, Adam Maher.

Guests: Robert Carr (former board member), Brad Hartkopf (Iowa Association of Business and Industry)

I. Call to Order.

Prior to the meeting, Mr. Carr was thanked for his many years of service to the state and the Iowa Prison Industries Advisory Board, and was presented with a mini-trunk made by men at the Iowa State Penitentiary. Mr. Diesburg was introduced as the new DOC representative.

Warden Gibbs gave an overview of the Clarinda Treatment Complex and discussed some of the challenges facing the CCF team, including the closing of the MHI and minimum security CCF Lodge. The warden reviewed other tenants in the complex, including the Clarinda Youth Academy and Zion Recovery Services. He also discussed CCF's newest project – beehives!

Also prior to the meeting, the Board visited the operations of Novae Corp (H&H), which manufactures cargo trailers at CCF and in the City of Clarinda. The company provides private sector employment opportunities to 50-80 men incarcerated at CCF.

Dr. Doug Hillman called the meeting to order at 11:10am on June 1, 2018.

II. Election of Board Vice Chair.

Ms. Gardner nominated Mr. Diesburg as the IPI Advisory Board Vice Chair, a position that became vacant with the departure of Mr. Carr. Ms. Wilson seconded the nomination. During discussion of the nomination, Mr. Diesburg thanked the Board for its consideration and agreed to serve if elected. Mr. Clark informed the Board that Mr. Diesburg's career with the DOC spanned more than 30 years as an officer, IPI supervisor, and statewide apprenticeship coordinator. A vote was taken and Mr. Diesburg was unanimously elected to the Vice Chair position.

III. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting.

Ms. Gardner made a motion to approve the minutes from the Board's teleconference meeting held March 28, 2018. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wilson and approved unanimously.

IV. Prison Industry Enhancement (PIE) Program – Discussion.

The Board discussed the PIE program, including whether men and women serving a life sentence should be eligible to participate. Ms. Winther felt that incarcerated individuals being released soon should be given the first opportunity to participate. She stated her belief that private companies need to pay their civilian workers higher wages and then there would be no need for PIE programs, and that research shows that these companies are making a profit and can afford to pay more. Ms. Winther felt that men at CCF serving a life sentence would be a security risk if they worked at H&H. She also expressed her displeasure that the Iowa Code provides worker compensation coverage for men and women employed by private companies in the PIE program.

V. Offender Assignments – Discussion.

Ms. Wilson read a statement to the Board calling for equal opportunities and noted the disproportionate incarceration of minorities in Iowa prisons. She made a request that IPI review offender allowance levels for different racial groups. Ms. Wilson stated that by her count, 15 of 50 H&H employees were African American, including 3 welders. She stated that she had not seen this level of minority participation elsewhere.

(Note: on November 3, 2018, Ms. Wilson provided the written text of her statement and asked that it be included in the minutes:

Iowa Prison Industry Board has a responsibility to make certain that all qualified offenders are benefiting from programming on an equal opportunity basis.

I believe that through internal discussion, we will be able to achieve this in a way that benefits offenders releasing to the Iowa community.

I don't think this is a Black thing, but a human thing. We have a legal, ethical and moral obligation to make sure that we do the right thing and I know each of you feel the same or you wouldn't be sitting here.

Given the disproportionate incarceration rates within Iowa, we have an obligation to figure out how we can obtain the statistical information we need to have a discussion that is not haphazard.

I am requesting that we review our current recruitment, application and hiring process. Furthermore, I am requesting that we review the prevailing wages for each position to insure that every job title is reflective of our offender racial composition.

I am confident that if we take these positive steps, we can address whatever issues come our way and confirm that we are doing everything we can to provide offenders with the skills they need to obtain stable employment upon release with the goal of reducing recidivism.

Sheila A. Wilson

Iowa Board of Parole Member

Mr. Diesburg stated that in his experience as a supervisor at IPI, the racial makeup of IPI program participants matched the ethnic makeup of the institution. Mr. Clark noted that offenders have many avenues for complaints if they believe they are being discriminated against, including a formal grievance

process, an offender council, the state ombudsman, and the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, among others, but that he had not received such complaints. Mr. Diesburg stated that IPI needs to ensure there is no "buddy system" that could exclude certain groups of individuals, and Ms. Wilson stated her belief that IPI should be proactive in ensuring racial discrimination is not taking place within the IPI program. Mr. Clark thanked the Board for its discussion and agreed to take the issue under advisement.

At 12:41pm Ms. Winther departed the meeting.

VI. Prison House Building Program - Update.

Mr. Clark gave a brief update on the Prison House Building Project. SF2225, offered by Sen. Mark Lofgren of Muscatine, failed to pass during the recently concluded session. Mr. Clark was unsure whether the same bill would be introduced during the next session, but indicated that there was wide support for the program. Funding for the required infrastructure seemed to be the main hurdle.

VII. New Business.

There was none.

VIII. Adjourn

Dr. Hillman asked for a motion to adjourn, which was offered by Ms. Gardner and seconded by Ms. Wilson. The meeting was adjourned at 12:49pm.

Minutes submitted by:



Dan Clark, Director

Minutes approved by:



Dr. Doug Hillman, Chair