



Meeting Minutes
Iowa Prison Industries Advisory Board
Friday, September 20, 2019
Newton Correctional Facility

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

Absent: Megan Ellsworth.

Staff: Chad Squires.

Guests: DOC Director Dr. Beth Skinner, NCF Warden Kris Weitzell, Brad Hartkopf - Iowa ABI.

I. Call to Order.

Dr. Doug Hillman called the meeting to order at 8:55am on September 20, 2019.

II. Comments from the Warden.

Warden Weitzell gave an overview of the Newton Correctional Institution and the Correctional Release Center. She expressed great enthusiasm about the Homes For Iowa project, and explained that without the security fence in place, the program participants would all be minimum security men from the CRC.

III. Review and Approval of Previous Minutes.

Mr. Diesburg made a motion to approve the minutes for previous meetings held March 8, 2019, May 24, 2019 and June 7, 2019. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wilson and passed unanimously.

IV. Report – Private Contractor Sales.

Mr. Clark reviewed approved sales to private contractors that involve eligible IPI customers.

V. Introduction of Board Members.

Board members introduced themselves and their role on the IPI Advisory Board, and welcomed the newest board member, Andrew Bright. Mr. Bright is a manufacturing manager with Pella Corp in Carroll, IA.

VI. Review of IPI Traditional Industries – FY19.

Mr. Clark reviewed the results for FY19 versus FY18. Training hours for traditional industries increased by 7.4% versus prior year, with the largest growth coming in Ft. Dodge (textile) and Fort Madison (wood furniture).

VII. Affordable House Building Program.

Mr. Chad Squires, site supervisor for the Homes For Iowa program of IPI, provided the board with an overview of the program including the classrooms and construction. Mr. Squires later provided a tour of the site.

VIII. DOC Director Comments.

Dr. Beth Skinner joined the Board and reviewed her background prior to holding the position of DOC Director. As the previous Research Director, Dr. Skinner said she was very familiar with research pertaining to correctional industries programs, and specifically that post-release employment significantly reduces recidivism. Dr. Skinner noted that Iowa's rate of recidivism had been creeping upward, which is largely attributed to technical violations, and that Iowa's return rate for technical violations was higher than for most other states. Dr. Skinner said the Department would be reviewing these to ensure that release criteria were realistic, research based, and relevant conditions of release.

Ms. Wilson asked Dr. Skinner about implicit bias within the Department, and distributed a report of apprentice students by Race. Of 291 apprentices, 204 were reported as white (70%), higher than the DOC population, which is approximately 66% white. Ms. Wilson stated that she would like to see the racial composition for IPI program participants by job title, not just the overall statistics previously provided by Mr. Clark. Dr. Skinner noted that any report is one point in time, and that trend data is valuable in identifying areas where disparities exist. Dr. Skinner reinforced that this would be a continued emphasis for her and the Department, even after Ms. Wilson retires.

IX. Update IPI Vision and Mission Statements.

The Board had previously expressed its intent to review and possibly update the IPI Vision and Mission statements every two years. Mr. Clark distributed copies of the current statements and the Board discussed potential revisions. There was specifically a desire to better explain the program's intent to provide "training", and also that the beneficiaries of the program were many, not just customers and program participants (e.g., the citizens of Iowa). The board requested that Mr. Clark "wordsmith" the Vision and Mission statements based upon the board's discussion, and present potential revisions at the next meeting to be held in December.

X. New Business.

Mr. Clark informed the Board that IPI staff and program participants statewide would be trained under the OSHA 10 program. The DOC Safety Director had arranged the certification of DOC safety officers statewide as official OSHA 10 trainers, which Mr. Clark stated was a huge step forward for the Department and the IPI program, as well as the men and women that would hold an OSHA 10 card after release.

Mr. Diesburg related his involvement in the Momentum program in Waterloo, IA, a 6-week work force development and life skills program. Momentum was first launched in Michigan and has a success rate of 89% in placing program graduates in full-time employment. It will be launching soon in Waterloo with the help of Mr. Diesburg and others.

XI. Adjourn

Dr. Hillman asked for a motion to adjourn, which was offered by Ms. Winther and seconded by Mr. Diesburg. The meeting was adjourned at 12:04pm.

Minutes submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D Clark', written over a faint grid background.

Dan Clark, Director

Minutes approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Doug Hillman', written over a faint grid background.

Dr. Doug Hillman, Chair