



Meeting Minutes
Iowa Prison Industries Advisory Board
Friday, December 7, 2018
Iowa Correctional Institution for Women, Mitchellville, IA

Present: Dr. Doug Hillman, Sheila Wilson, Jennifer Gardner, Terry Goodman, Megan Ellsworth, Tim Diesburg, Dan Clark.

Absent: Bonnie Winther.

Staff: Justin Opfer, Ann Pollock, Mike Lynch.

Guests: Warden Sheryl Dahm.

I. Call to Order.

Prior to the meeting, Warden Dahm provided an update regarding ICIW and the importance of the IPI program to women incarcerated there. She explained that MLO women from Unit Y were allowed to work at the IPI facility, which was a new practice and much appreciated by IPI.

Also prior to the meeting, the Board toured the IPI operations at Mitchellville.

Dr. Doug Hillman called the meeting to order at 9:45am on December 7, 2018. (Ms. Wilson was absent for the beginning of the meeting due to a family emergency but joined shortly thereafter.)

Newly appointed board member Megan Ellsworth was welcomed, and Ms. Ellsworth reviewed her background and experience at DMACC, which included working with ex-offenders.

II. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meetings.

Mr. Goodman made a motion to approve the minutes both from the Board's June 1, 2018 meeting in Clarinda, as well as the September 14, 2018 meeting in Ft. Madison. Mr. Diesburg seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. (Note: the June 1, 2018 minutes were reconsidered later during the meeting after Ms. Wilson returned, and they were subsequently approved with a modification).

III. Dates and Locations for 2019.

(Ms. Wilson joined the meeting at this point.) Mr. Clark had earlier polled board members for available dates during 2019, and the following dates and locations were offered for the Board's consideration:

March 8, 2019	Fort Dodge Correctional Facility
June 7, 2019	Anamosa State Penitentiary
September 20, 2019	Newton Correctional Facility
December 6, 2019	IPI Showroom

Mr. Diesburg made a motion to accept these dates and locations. The motion was seconded by Mr. Goodman and approved unanimously. Mr. Clark said he would send calendar appointments for the four meetings, and that call-in phone numbers and videoconferencing would be made available for all meetings.

IV. IPI Farms – reconsideration of renting NCF farm.

Mr. Lynch presented to the board an overview of Jed Kinion's duties at the Newton farm as currently operated, and then the same if a "heifer only" program were implemented. Heifers would entail somewhat less attention as compared to the current cow-calf operation, and this would free up some time for Mr. Kinion to undertake other work training projects. Mr. Lynch expected this change would improve the farm's financial sustainability and provide opportunities for four men incarcerated at Newton, as compared to an average of one today.

Within the next month or so, heifers would be transferred from the Anamosa farm to Newton, and pregnant cows from Newton to Anamosa. Mr. Lynch said that livestock revenue would remain about the same.

Mr. Clark stated that approval for private sector work was in process and would likely be completed by the end of January. This would allow IPI to perform subcontract welding and other work for private companies that have been unable to hire enough qualified civilians.

A motion was offered by Ms. Gardner to implement the heifer program as described by Mr. Lynch, and to review the resulting offender hours and financial statements at the board's meeting in September 2019. The motion was seconded by Mr. Diesburg and passed unanimously.

V. Approval of New PIE Subcontracting – Scranton Mfg.

Mr. Clark reviewed the application for a new subcontracting operation at the North Central Correctional Facility in Rockwell City, which was initiated by a need for Scranton Manufacturing (New Way Trucks) in Scranton, IA. The company is a leading manufacturer of garbage trucks and related vehicles, and has been unable to hire enough qualified civilians. The company's backlog is nearly 6 months and they have a need for welding, fabrication and related metalworking occupations. Mr. Clark described the production of a recent prototype for the company, and that two of the three qualified welders at NCCF hoped to join the company upon release (one had previously worked for Scranton, and the second lived in Ft. Dodge).

Mr. Goodman made a motion to approve subcontracting at NCCF, and the motion was seconded by Mr. Diesburg. During discussion, Mr. Clark explained that incarcerated men that wanted to work in this private sector venture would be required to enroll in the Welding Apprenticeship program that the DOC offers, which entails certification by the American Welding Society. The motion passed unanimously and the subcontracting program is approved.

VI. PIE and individuals serving a life sentence.

There was concern expressed that IPI doesn't become overly reliant on "lifers" nor prevent men and women that will someday be released from participating in the IPI program. Mr. Clark proposed an addition to DOC policy that would formalize a practice followed at most IPI locations. Mr. Goodman made a motion to adopt the policy language, which was seconded by Mr. Diesburg.

During discussion of the motion, Mr. Goodman stated that he opposed lifers holding any private sector jobs, that these should be for men and women scheduled for release. Mr. Diesburg described his experience as a correctional officer and IPI supervisor, stating that lifers provide stability to a department, and help mentor and train new offenders. In his time at Anamosa, Mr. Diesburg said the percentage of lifers was capped at the ASP population percent.

Ms. Wilson asked Mr. Clark if he knew the percentage of lifers and IPI program participants at ICIW, NCCF and FDCF. Mr. Clark provided some estimates but stated he would need to have ICON reports run to provide numbers with any confidence. Ms. Wilson stated that she would like to see the data before approving the motion under discussion, and offered a motion to postpone consideration until specific data was provided by Mr. Clark. This motion was seconded by Ms. Ellsworth, but failed 2-4.

The motion to amend DOC policy OP-WI-01 in regards to lifers in the IPI program was discussed further and reworded slightly as follows:

IPI will ensure the proportion of program participants serving a sentence of life without the possibility of parole does not exceed the approximate proportion for eligible men and women at each host institution.

The motion passed 4-2. Ms. Wilson requested that Mr. Clark provide data for each IPI operation and its host institution, and that this report be presented to the Board annually.

Mr. Clark informed the board that the aforementioned DOC policy OP-WI-01 was due for a routine update, and that the DOC and IPI would be making other modifications as a normal course of business. This review would likely take several months, to be followed by formal approval by the Board of Corrections, which has policy making authority for the Iowa DOC. Bottom line, a revised policy OP-WI-01 was quite a few months away, and Mr. Clark said there would be no changes in IPI's practice preventing lifers from participating in the PIE program until the policy was updated and approved by the Board of Corrections.

VII. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meetings (amended).

Ms. Wilson had been called away when the board approved the minutes from the June and September meetings. Upon review Ms. Wilson asked that the June minutes be amended as follows:

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 H&H Plant Manager Tyler Gray's 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.

Mr. Goodman made a motion to approve the minutes as amended above for the Board's June 1, 2018 meeting in Clarinda. Mr. Diesburg seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

VIII. Equal Opportunity Within the IPI Program.

Ms. Wilson expressed her disappointment that the board had not received the racial breakdown for each of the jobs within IPI, something she said had requested for nearly two years. Mr. Clark stated that IPI has nearly 50 different job titles and nine locations (450 possible combinations), and that manual compilation of this data, which would likely be requested on a regular basis, would detract from the security operations of IPI staff. Instead, Mr. Clark recommended the board utilize a previously supplied ICON report, which is automatically generated and reports data for each IPI location in total.

Ms. Wilson stated that she was withdrawing her request, and that the DOC Director would now be required by policy to provide this data, so she would wait to receive the data from the DOC. Ms. Wilson said she is interested in racial breakdown for each job, not the overall breakdown for each IPI location.

IX. New Business.

Mr. Clark informed the board that the Great River Regional Waste Authority had requested that IPI and the DOC sell approximately 69 acres of farm ground near the Iowa State Penitentiary in order that the GRRWA be able to someday expand its landfill operation due to capacity needs. An appraisal had been completed and a summary copy was provided. Mr. Clark explained that the Iowa Board of Corrections was authorized to make real estate transactions and that the proposed sale would likely be considered at the BOC meeting in February.

X. Adjourn

Dr. Hillman asked for a motion to adjourn, which was offered by Mr. Diesburg and seconded by Mr. Goodman. The meeting was adjourned at 11:55am.

Minutes submitted by:



Dan Clark, Director

Minutes approved by:



Dr. Doug Hillman, Chair