



IOWA BOARD OF CORRECTIONS AGENDA  
Friday, June 7, 2024, 10:00 a.m.

LOCATION: DOC Central Office, 510 E 12th Street, Des Moines

TOPIC	PRESENTER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Call to Order</li> <li>    • Approval of April 5, 2024 Minutes (<b>Action Item</b>)</li> </ul>	Rebecca Williams, Chair
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Next Board meeting will be Friday, August 2, 2024              DOC Central Office, 510 E 12th Street, Des Moines              (A meeting notice will be posted on the DOC website: <a href="https://doc.iowa.gov/">https://doc.iowa.gov/</a>)</li> </ul>	Rebecca Williams, Chair
Welcome	Dr. Beth Skinner, Director
Budget Update	Steve Dick, Financial Manager
Inmate Telephone Fund ( <b>Action Item</b> )	Steve Dick, Financial Manager
Legislative Update	Michael Savala, General Counsel
ICIW Farmland Sale ( <b>Action Item</b> )	Michael Savala, General Counsel
Religious Organizations	Nick Lamb
Public Comments <sup>1</sup>	Public
Open Discussion	Board Members
Adjournment	Board Members

The Board of Corrections' agenda is posted on the DOC Web Site at <https://doc.iowa.gov/> on the Board of Corrections page.

This meeting will be live-streamed via the Department's Youtube Channel for members of the public that would like to observe. You can also view previous Board of Corrections meetings at this site. Link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCItY2PABjitQpT4Op2w3kTw>

<sup>1</sup> Please note, during the public comment period on the agenda, members of the audience may address the board for a period not to exceed two minutes. The board reserves the right to reduce this time based on the number wishing to speak. Acknowledgement and an opportunity to speak will be at the discretion of the chairperson.



## IOWA BOARD OF CORRECTIONS MINUTES Friday, April 5, 2024

**Board Members Present:** Chair Rebecca Williams, Vice Chair Webster Kranto, Trent Keller, Jim Kersten, Denise Bubeck, Jay Nelson

**Board Members Absent:** Alexa Perez

**Staff Present:** Director Skinner, Paul Cornelius, Nick Lamb, Steve Dick, Bob Fairfax, Sarah Fineran, Dr. Michael Riley, Warden Steve Weis, Warden Mike Heinrichy, Warden Adam Yetmar, Darin Cox, Susie Pritchard

**Visitors Present:** David Bovenmyer, Dawn Bovenmyer, Peter, Susan Smeldon, Trang Nguyen, Iowa CURE, Sarah Villsaldo, Lyle Johlas, Amanda Littrell, Bert Friederick, Tami, Heather Wagner, Mario, Michelle Alfano, Kym, Connie, Tami, Roberta Gilbert, Phylcia King, Larry Smith, Aaron, Zach Palmer, Shelly, Nancy Miller

### **Call to Order, Chair Rebecca Williams**

- Chair Rebecca Williams called the meeting to order.
- Chair Williams asked for a motion to approve the February 1, 2024 meeting minutes. Board Member Jay Nelson made a motion to approve. Board Member Trent Keller seconded the motion. All present members were in favor of approving the minutes, ***motion passed.***
- (A meeting notice will be posted on the DOC website: <https://doc.iowa.gov/>)

### **Welcome - Director Beth Skinner**

- Welcome to Chief of Staff Paul Cornelius. He has 22 years of work experience with the Fifth District Community Based Corrections team working with various aspects of the organization. He also worked for the Department of Transportation working on strategic planning. He is excited to see the good things happening with corrections and take on this new role.
- Chair Williams asked about the Chief of Staff role and if this is a new position with the DOC? Cord Overton was previously the Chief of Staff. Following his departure, the position became a communications director. With current operations, it was determined that the Chief of Staff would be the best fit for the DOC. Paul will supervise a change manager, communications specialist and legislative liaison in an effort to ensure the DOC is operating in accordance with their priorities.
- Front Line Supervisor training was recently held at Newton. Major topics included were emotional intelligence and difficult conversations. These are the supervisors working with front line staff.
- DOC staff recently met with the National Institution of Corrections for our strategic wellness plan. DOC staff have difficult jobs and need support and wellness to ensure success.
- Interviews for the Newton Correctional Facility warden position were held recently. Thank

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**Creating Opportunities for Safer Communities**

- you to Board Member Denise Bubeck for participating on the interview panel.
- Applicants for the Director's executive assistant are being screened and interviews will take place soon.
  - There was a moment of silence on March 26th and the DOC flag was lowered to honor the memory of Robert MacFarland and Lorena Schulte.
  - Director Skinner and Chief of Staff Cornelius recently traveled to Fourth District to meet with District Director Kip Shanks and their staff. They were able to tour the facility. Staff in the District are very passionate about their work. Fourth District operates a transitional housing house.
  - Director Skinner was confirmed for another four year term on April 2nd. She is honored to continue to lead this Department and the staff with the support of the Governor, legislature and Board of Corrections members. There is a very bright future for the Department of Corrections.
  - Vice Chair Kranto congratulated Director Skinner on her confirmation.
  - Ms. Bubeck also congratulated Director Skinner. Ms. Bubeck was present for the confirmation and it was notable that the support was bipartisan from the legislature.

### **DOC Training Plan - Director Beth Skinner**

- Staff has been very responsive to the many surveys that have been sent to them in recent months. One was important for developing the DOC Training Plan.
- There are five main modules for the DOC Training Plan:
  - Trust (communication, emotional intelligence, accountability)
  - Courage (conflict management, conflict resolution, leadership)
  - Flexibility (change management, staff wellness)
  - Innovative Mindset (problem solving, collaboration, creative thinking)
  - Professional Judgment (time management, handling stress, thinking outside of the box, creative thinking, effective listening)
- Vice Chair Webster Kranto asked who was responsible for providing training? The framework was developed by Guidehouse through in-house surveys. The DOC Learning Center will now take the framework and develop the training.
- Ms. Bubeck asked who will deliver the modules? Staff who are experts in certain areas will be part of the curriculum development as well as experts in the field.
- Mr. Nelson asked if the training is available to all staff? All staff will receive this type of training. This is similar to Core Correctional Practices, in which all staff receive the training regardless of position.
- Chair Williams asked if this will be implemented upon hire? And how will existing employees receive the training? The academy curriculum may be revised to add some of these materials into the new employee training. Some of the material will be more advanced and would need to be reviewed to determine if it is appropriate for new staff.

### **Budget Updates - Steve Dick, Fiscal Manager**

- As of February, the DOC is 66% through the budget year. The DOC is at 65.8% of their available funds at this point. Funds were reviewed including FY2023 carryforward funds from the CBCs.
- This will be the last year the CBCs receive quarterly allotments of their appropriations.
- Vacancies have decreased through the fiscal year and it is hoped that the legislature's approval of the \$24/hour start rate at all prisons will positively impact this count.
- Capital projects were reviewed.
- Funds from the first farmland sales have been received and are set aside for infrastructure needs. The Clarinda kitchen project is a priority and other projects will be prioritized accordingly.

- The first Senate proposal for the FY2025 budget mirrors the Governor's recommendations. The House version is expected to come out next week to include correctional officer pay, inflationary adjustments and additional Central Office positions.
- Vice Chair Kranto asked about facilities without air conditioning? This continues to be placed on the major maintenance request list. As these have not been approved, these would be projects that could be reviewed for farmland sales funds. This particularly impacts ASP and MPCF. Vice Chair Kranto asked if this will for sure happen with farmland sales? Any expenditures from farmland sales will need to be approved through the Governor's office and DOM, but they will be considered.
- Board Member Jim Kersten asked how much the farmland sale brought in? The NCCF farmland brought in \$1.8M. There is another piece at NCCF that will sell shortly. There are additional tracts at CIW, NCF, ASP and ISP. Mr. Kersten asked how much in total was expected in sales? This is difficult to estimate, but hoping for upwards of \$40M based on other observed sales. Is there any kind of a report breaking out how these expenditures are anticipated because some facilities have needs in the form of education? The DOC could develop a list. This is also difficult to project and subject to change depending on the market. It is required that these expenditures are applied to vertical infrastructure.
- Ms. Bubeck verified that the Senate proposal matches the DOC requests? They match the Governor's proposed budget. Ms. Bubeck noted that this has not been the case for all Departments.

#### **Warden Approval - Nick Lamb, Deputy Director Prison Operations (Action Item)**

- Deputy Director Lamb thanked the DOC staff for the sacrifices they make on a daily basis as well as the citizens of Iowa. Thank you to Ms. Bubeck for her assistance in interviews of candidates. Based on this process, it is Deputy Director Lamb's pleasure to recommend Adam Yetmar for the position of Warden of the Newton Correctional Facility. Mr. Yetmar began his career in 1998 as a correctional officer at Fort Dodge Correctional Facility. He has a degree in Organizational Leadership. Most recently he has been the Deputy Warden of the North Central Correctional Facility. He has also served as Acting Warden of the Newton Correctional Facility.
- Mr. Yetmar thanked the Board, Director Skinner and Deputy Director Lamb for the opportunity to have worked recently at Newton Correctional Facility. It has been a very positive experience working with this population and staff. He sees endless possibilities and great things on the horizon.
- Mr. Trent Keller motioned to approve Adam Yetmar as Warden of the Newton Correctional Facility. Mr. Nelson seconded the motion. All present members were in favor of approving the minutes, ***motion passed.***

#### **Public Comments - Public**

- Michelle Alfano is hopeful for this year and Warden Yetmar. She believes it will be positive to have him at Newton. She has been thinking about what the Board can do. The Board previously stated that their hands are tied when it comes to the MDT. She asked that the Board either write a letter or make contact with AG Bird related to the MDT and how they are forwarding so many cases for review. Her loved one will have to wait seven years to be seen by the Attorney General. She asked that the Board voice concerns about the number of families who repeatedly come to them with concerns and ask why the wait is so long. Time elapsed and comments ended.
- Amanda Littrell is a formerly incarcerated individual with eighteen years of experience. Since releasing in 2018, she has been involved in various organizations. She asks that Director Skinner allow the Oakdale Choir to be allowed back in the Oakdale prison. She believes the choir helps both inside and outside singers and makes the correctional officers'

lives safer. Interested parties may learn more about the Choir through a YouTube video on the Greetings from Iowa page and a short video by Dan Cohen recently won an award at the Cinema on the Bayou Film Festival. This video was also shown at a Cedar Rapids Film Festival. Feel free to reach out to Ms. Littrell for more information.

- Heather Wagner is the president and founder of Iowans Unafraid. She represents those on the sex offender registry who ask for her to be their voice and those in prison for crimes of a sexual nature. She and her husband are both survivors of sexual offenses. She believes volunteer visits have a positive impact on incarcerated individuals and civil commitment has a negative impact. She states that officers entice incarcerated individuals into committing new crimes to result in more prison time. She states those with sex offenders are overlooked for medical care because of their offenses. Their website is [iowansunafraid.org](http://iowansunafraid.org).
- Chair Williams thanked those who spoke and stated that the Department will follow up with individuals prior to the next meeting.
- Zach Palmer is a case manager in reentry and is the child of a former offender. He states now is the time to ensure that phone calls are free for offenders. The cost of phone calls is a burden on incarcerated individuals and should not be a barrier between parents and children. Offering free calls would have numerous benefits to the family and community.
- Larry Smith stated there was a discrepancy in the minutes regarding comments from the November 2023 meeting and statements made in this meeting related to funds available for air conditioning in the prisons.
- Pastor David Bovenmyer believes three branches of Iowa are working together to violate the intent of the civil commitment law. The DOC, BOP and AG are working together to deny the possibility of parole to dozens of eligible prisoners. He believes this is an interdepartmental issue and not the responsibility of any of these individuals. He asks that Director Skinner develop a group to review the issue. Director Skinner has stated previously she would look into this. He believes the Board members are concerned about the delay as well. He asks that the civil commitment criteria be reviewed.
- Dawn Bovenmyer discussed their friend who is incarcerated and pending civil commitment review. She states that the civil commitment process requires individuals to stay incarcerated longer than necessary. She reiterated Pastor Bovenmyer's statements regarding review of the process. She appreciated that Director Skinner presented on the training program and encouraged the thinking out of the box mentality to review this matter.

### **Open Discussion - Board Members**

- Mr. Keller thanked Ms. Bubeck for participating in the warden interview process. He also thanked Dr. Skinner for the training update because training is necessary. Thank you to Steve Dick related to the farmland sales. He is hopeful that the air conditioning will be funded. Congratulations to Adam Yetmar on his new position, and thank you for everything he has done for the DOC.
- Mr. Kersten agreed with everything that Mr. Keller said. Thank you to the Director and the DOC team. Good luck to the new Chief of Staff.
- Mr. Kranto has been on the Board for approximately six years. Even then the air conditioning topic has been brought up and it has been kicked down the road. He is glad to see that this may be resolved. The temperatures in these units are inhumane and will hopefully be resolved.
- Ms. Bubeck stated it was a privilege to be on the interview team. There were very good candidates and it was a difficult decision. Warden Yetmar stood out with an outstanding experience that will benefit the Newton team. She is excited to have him there. The training plan sounds good.
- Chair Williams thanked Ms. Bubeck for participating in the interviews. Ms. Bubeck was the first to respond and was therefore involved in interviews. She asks the other Board

- members to consider other options for how to conduct these in the future.
- Mr. Nelson seconded Mr. Kranto's assessment of the air conditioning at the facilities. This is both a safety issue for offenders and staff. Congratulations to Adam Yetmar. This is a good choice and he will do a good job.
  - Mr. Keller also put emphasis on Dr. Skinner's reappointment. She is doing a wonderful job and placing people in the right places. Keep up the good work. The Board is here to support and help the Department.

**Adjournment - Board Members**

- A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Kersten, which was seconded by Vice Chair Kranto. The meeting was unanimously adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Johana Herdrich, Executive Officer