

**DETENTION CENTER COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
July 26th, 2022**

The Detention Center Commission met this date at 8:30 A.M. in the Union Parish Police Jury meeting room, Union Parish Courthouse Annex, Farmerville, Louisiana. Present were: Nathan Pilgreen (Union Parish Police Jury), Brenda Abercrombie (Union Parish Police Jury), Dusty Gates (Union Parish Sheriff) and John Belton (District Attorney). Absent: Chief Bim Coulbertson (Farmerville Chief of Police). Also present: Warden Adams.

Sheriff Gates called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Mr. Belton led the group in prayer. Roll call was taken. Sheriff Gates asked if anyone in the audience would like to register for public comment to speak.

Motion made by Mrs. Abercrombie, seconded by Mr. Belton and declared adopted by unanimous vote to approve the agenda as written.

Motion made by John Belton, seconded by Mrs. Abercrombie to adopt the minutes of the Tuesday, June 21st, 2022 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

A brief discussion was held concerning the appointment of a Chaplin for the Detention Center. Fred Stewart addressed the Commission and asked that Ronnie Parks be appointed as the official Chaplin. Mr. Stewart thanked the Commission and Warden Adams for the great job in running the facility. Mr. Parks will be able to minister to the inmates and perform baptisms when inmates are saved. **Motion Mr. Pilgreen, seconded by Mr. Belton to appoint Ronnie Parks as the official Chaplin over the Union Parish Detention Center. Motion carried unanimously.**

A lengthy discussion was held concerning the Transitional Work Release Program. John Hawkins, Louisiana Employment Opportunity, addressed the Commission regarding their contract. Mr. Hawkins said they have been in business with the Union Parish Detention Center since 2015. Mr. Hawkins stated that the DOC work release eligible inmates has decreased considerably. The decrease is due in part to COVID and to court not being held.

Mr. Hawkins stated that he and Mr. Bromell do not want to be part of a dual contract situation. Mr. Hawkins further stated that if the Commission enters into an agreement with ARKLA Work Force Solutions then his company would withdraw so the Commission could work with ARKLA solely. Mr. Hawkins said it would be too difficult trying to prove which inmates were provided by ARKLA or LEO. Mr. Hawkins stated that in the three parishes he has a contract with he is the sole provider of work release inmates. He does not have an issue of dual contracts in the other parishes that he deals with. He does not know about the other parishes in the State.

Warden Adams stated that he had contacted Seth Smith with DOC and Mr. Smith stated that DOC has been behind with COVID and pretrials. He assured Warden Adams that once the

inmates are available then the Detention Center will receive a few, but at this time they aren't available.

Warden Adams further stated that Mrs. Stanley will be overwhelmed trying to handle two different groups. But he feels like she will be able to handle it if need be. Currently there are 45 work release inmates.

Mr. Dollar addressed the Commission and stated that he and Mr. Sensley own ARKLA Work Force Solutions, LLC. Their company employs people who are legal in this country and are legal to work. They do employ dark skin people. They employ a high number of Union Parish people. Mr. Dollar stated that they are working approximately 250 people. They are acutely aware of the work release program for the parish. The Detention Center has a potential to employ 100 work release prisoners if they are available. Mr. Dollar has contacted DOC and was told a contract is needed with the Commission before they can receive DOC inmates.

The Secretary/Treasurer had previously requested an opinion from Trevor Fry regarding the legality of dual contracts. Mr. Belton read Mr. Fry's response.

"I reviewed both agreements and do not see anything - based upon the language in the written agreements - that would prevent entering into contracts with both entities. With that said, I am not familiar with how the agreement works in practice. So, it could be that it operates such that it really would not be workable/make sense to have two agreements. I'd be glad to talk that through with you anytime!"

Mr. Belton said he would like to talk to Seth Smith with the Department of Corrections before a vote is taken. Mr. Belton does not want the work release numbers to decline. His decision is not against any particular entity. By tabling the matter, he will have the necessary time to talk to Seth Smith.

Motion Mr. Pilgreen, seconded by Mr. Belton to table this matter until a later date. Motion carried with the following Roll Call Vote:

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| Pilgreen | Yes |
| Belton | Yes |
| Abercrombie | No |
| Gates | Chairman – Did not vote |

There being no further business to come before the commission, Sheriff Gates declared the meeting adjourned upon motion by Mr. Pilgreen, seconded by Mrs. Abercrombie, on this 26th day of July, 2022.

**Sheriff Dusty Gates, Chairman
Paula Strickland, Secretary/Treasurer**