



# MIDDLE RIVER REGIONAL JAIL

Serving Staunton, Waynesboro, Harrisonburg and  
the Counties of Augusta and Rockingham

December 7, 2021 2:00 p.m.

Augusta County Government Center  
18 Government Center Lane  
Verona Virginia 24482

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

Upon determination of a quorum, Mr. King, Chairman, called the December 7, 2021 Middle River Regional Jail Authority Board meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

### Members Present:

Stephen King, Rockingham County Administrator (Chairman)  
Timothy Fitzgerald, Augusta County Administrator  
Michael G. Hamp, Waynesboro City Manager  
Steven Rosenberg, Staunton City Manager (Vice Chairman)  
Eric Campbell, Harrisonburg City Manager  
Jennifer Whetzel, Augusta Assistant County Administrator  
Cameron McCormick, Waynesboro City Finance Director  
Phillip Trayer, Staunton City Finance Director  
Larry Propst, Harrisonburg City Finance Director  
Patricia Davidson, Rockingham County Finance Director  
Kelly Warner, Harrisonburg Chief of Police (via WebEx)

### Members Absent:

Matthew Robertson, Staunton City Sheriff  
Bryan Hutcheson, Rockingham County Sheriff  
Donald Smith, Augusta County Sheriff  
Steve Von Shilling, Interim Waynesboro City Sheriff

### Facility Staff:

Jeffery Newton, CJM, Superintendent, Middle River Regional Jail  
Eric Young, Director of Operations, Middle River Regional Jail  
Lori Nicholson, Director of Support Services, Middle River Regional Jail  
Jeannie Colvin, Finance Director, Middle River Regional Jail  
Jeff Gore, MRRJA Legal Counsel  
Tina Reed, Recorder, Middle River Regional Jail  
Suzette Anthony, Middle River Regional Jail

**Others Present:**

Tyler Moses, IT MRRJ  
John Lilly, Chief of Programs, MRRJ  
Leslie Powell, Chief of Security, MRRJ  
Tony Heflin, Chief of Support Services, MRRJ  
Todd Lloyd, Chief of Operations, MRRJ  
Andi Banks, Harrisonburg City Manager  
Betsy Hendrick, PB Mares  
Tyler Farnsworth, PB Mares  
Jimmy Wimer, Captain, Rockingham/Regional Jail  
Misty Cook, Augusta County Finance Director  
Randi Huggi (WMRA)  
Jordan Simal (News Virginian)  
Nitch Narduzzi, Citizen  
Andrea Collins, Citizen  
Eric Geary, Citizen  
Amanda Dameron, Citizen  
Hannah Wittmer, Citizen  
Ruth Jost, Citizen

Approximately 10 MRRJ staff attended via WebEx  
Approximately 17 citizens attended via WebEx

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Whetzel made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 5, 2021 meeting. Mr. Campbell seconded the motion. Approval was **unanimous**.

**3. CITIZEN COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

Board was asked why expansion was still being discussed and what was being done regarding current staffing level at the jail. Mr. King reiterated this is a renovation project not an expansion. There will be no additional beds. There is a need for upgrades to the existing facility. Mr. Newton states that staffing levels are a concern however each day staff review and staff are reassigned as needed.

**4. COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS OR LEGAL COUNSEL**

Mr. Campbell introduced Mr. Banks. He will serve as interim City Manager of Harrisonburg after December 31, 2021. Mr. King thanked Mr. Campbell for his service to the MRRJA Board and appreciates the association their localities have had.

**5. FINANCE REPORT**

- a. **FY 2021 Audit Findings** – Ms. Hedrick with PB Mares reviewed the Financial Audit Report for FY 2021. Ms. Hedrick stated the results from the audit was an unmodified opinion with no deficiencies noted. Ms. Davidson made a motion to accept the results of the audit by PB Mares; Mr. Propst seconded the motion. Approval was **unanimous**.
- b. **FY 2022 Budget Update** – Ms. Colvin stated that the only budget item that is consistently running over is the overtime however due to vacancy savings the budget is anticipated to remain within parameters.

- c. **Reconsideration of Bonus for Non-Sworn Staff** - Mr. Newton requested the Board to reconsider and approve the \$3,000 bonus for the non-sworn staff. He stated the bonus should apply to all employees because all employees came to work during the COVID crisis. Due to the nature of the work, the non-sworn jail staff including the medical, administrative and records staff do not have the ability to work from home. Mr. Campbell made a motion to give all non-sworn, full-time staff a one-time \$3,000.00 bonus and part-time staff a \$1500.00 one-time bonus using vacancy savings. Bonus will be on the December 2021 payroll. Ms. Whetzel seconded the motion. Approval was **unanimous**.
- d. **Additional Positions Funded in FY 2022 Budget** - Mr. Newton requested the Board approve the advertising for the positions that were previously funded in FY 2022 budget. These positions are needed and necessary as the jail moves forward. Positions are: Deputy Superintendent, 2 Nurses, IT Technician and Accounting Technician. Mr. Rosenberg asked for clarification on the role of the Deputy Superintendent. Mr. Newton reviewed the planned duties and role changes as we move forward. Ms. Davidson made a motion to fill all four positions; Mr. Hamp seconded the motion. **Approval as follows:**
- |                   |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| • <b>Aye:</b>     | <b>Nay:</b>        |
| Stephen King      | Timothy Fitzgerald |
| Eric Campbell     | Jennifer Whetzel   |
| Steve Rosenberg   | Phil Trayer        |
| Patricia Davidson |                    |
| Michael Hamp      |                    |
| Cameron McCormick |                    |
| Kelly Warner      |                    |
| Larry Propst      |                    |
- e. **Munis Financial Software Update** – Ms. Colvin reviewed with the Board that the required to implement the Munis Financial Software is ahead of schedule and in order to complete the implementation MRRJ needs to fill the Finance Director and Human Resources Director positions earlier than planned. The positions were originally anticipated for the FY 2023 budget. MRRJ requests the authorization for both positions to be filled April 1, 2022. There would be no budget amendment needed for change as there is funding available in vacancy savings. Ms. Davidson made a motion to approve advertising these two positions to be filled as of April 1, 2022. Mr. Campbell seconded the motion. **Approval as follows:**
- |                    |             |
|--------------------|-------------|
| • <b>Aye:</b>      | <b>Nay:</b> |
| Stephen King       | Phil Trayer |
| Eric Campbell      |             |
| Steve Rosenberg    |             |
| Patricia Davidson  |             |
| Michael Hamp       |             |
| Cameron McCormick  |             |
| Kelly Warner       |             |
| Larry Propst       |             |
| Timothy Fitzgerald |             |
| Jennifer Whetzel   |             |
- f. **Bank Resolution for Munis** – Moving forward MRRJ staff need to have a bank resolution adopted by the Board to authorize the establishment of a bank account. MRRJ intends to use the same bank currently used by Augusta County. This authorization will allow MRRJ to complete Munis Financial Software work. A standard Authorization Resolution is included in the meeting packet. Approval is needed to move forward with the change-over of signatures.

Mr. Hamp made a motion to authorize the Superintendent to sign the resolution. Mr. Trayer seconded the motion. Approval was **unanimous**.

## 6. REPORTS AND BRIEFING

Major Young reviewed the following reports:

- **Population Report** – Major Young reviewed the Executive Summary. As of December 7, 2021, there are a total of 765 offenders being housed by MRRJ. 730 are in-house and 35 are on HEI. Currently there are 137 inmates ready for the DOC.
- **Community Corrections Report** – Major Young reviewed the Executive Summary. As of December 7, 2021 there are 35 offenders on HEI/HEM.
- **Staff Vacancy Report** –At this time there are 36 Officer vacancies. At this time, we can safely cover through schedule adjustments, overtime, etc. All daily functions are being completed.
- **Programs Report** –Major Nicholson reviewed the Executive Summary.
  - **Education Programs:** GED, 1 Male passed one of four subjects.,
  - **New Program:** “Re-Wired” a program for addiction recovery has begun. There are 14 male participants and 12 female participants.
  - **Thought Process and Behavior Programs:** (Dialectical Behavior Therapy) this program is being replaced with a program called Real Life. Started on September 21 for the women and October 1 for the Men. Both classes have 10 seats. 8-Males, 4-Females enrolled.
- **Superintendent’s Report** – Superintendent Newton review the Executive Summary
  - Middle River Regional Jail continues to offer COVID-19 vaccine to staff and the inmate population. (366 inmates are vaccinated) Periodic clinics have been conducted since June 2021.
  - MRRJ has about 60% of staff that report being vaccinated.
  - MRRJ has been asking new intakes vaccine status, since March 3, 2021, as a part of the initial medical assessment. Of more than 2,338 inmates processed only 381 indicated that they had taken the vaccine; of those 381 only 226 could be verified through the Virginia Department of Health.
  - MRRJ has experienced some positive cases of COVID-19 in the inmate population dormitories. Both vaccinated and non-vaccinated inmates have tested positive.
  - MRRJ has experienced some staff testing positive for COVID-19. Some of these positive cases have been identified during the weekly monitoring checks and others have been reported by staff prior to reporting to work. Both vaccinated and non-vaccinated staff have tested positive.
  - As authorized by the MRRJA Board at the June 1, 2021 meeting, MRRJ has executed the Deed of Easement requested by the Augusta County Service Authority. MRRJ Board attorney reviewed the Deed of Easement before signing.
  - Population trend chart enclosed shows the jail population has trended lower in November 2021. This is a traditional decline that occurs during the November/December Holiday Season. While DOC indicated they will return to a more regular and routine transfer schedule, MRRJ has not transferred a significant number of inmates.
  - **Operational procedures:**
    - MRRJ continues to maintain a step-down screening process for new intakes that was implemented February 1, 2021.

- MRRJ continues to maintain a staff monitoring program effective February 15, 2021. All staff rapid tested for COVID-19 once per week.
- MRRJ has experienced challenges in obtaining Covid 19 rapid test kits. Previously they were provided by the Health Department at no cost, MRRJ now has to obtain test kits on the open market. A 30-day supply is costing \$2,000.00.

**7. OLD BUSINESS - Jail Renovation:**

Superintendent Newton noted that the estimated cost of the renovation has increased from \$14.5 million to \$16.3 million. Mr. Gore stated that the original motion will need to be changed to reflect the additional expense.

Mr. Fitzgerald made the following motion:

- Due to increases in the construction cost estimates provided by the Authority's engineering consultants, I move that the total not-to-exceed project amount, plus issuance, financing (including capitalized interest), debt service reserve and operating reserve costs, as previously approved by the Authority Board on June 1, 2021 be increased from \$14.5M to \$16.3M. This amount is consistent with recent cost estimates provided to the State Board of Local and Regional Jails, which approved the reduced project scope in the Authority's revised Community Based Corrections Plan on November 17, 2021. Ms. Whetzel seconded the motion. **Approval as follows:**

- **Aye:**  
Stephen King  
Timothy Fitzgerald  
Steve Rosenberg  
Patricia Davidson  
Michael Hamp  
Cameron McCormick  
Jennifer Whetzel

**Nay:**  
Phil Trayer

**Abstain:**  
Eric Campbell  
Kelly Warner  
Larry Propst

**8. NEW BUSINESS:**

- **Member Jurisdiction Resolution Concerning Renovation** – Superintendent Newton discussed the work of staff, Bond Counsel, MRRJA Legal Counsel and the Financial Advisors in developing the draft resolution. Each Member Jurisdiction will need to take action on the proposed resolution. A draft generic resolution was provided with your read-ahead packet. Questions should be addressed to Bond Counsel.

**Chief Warner had to leave the meeting at 3:07 p.m.**

- **Election of Officers** – Mr. King noted the Harrisonburg City Manager would have served as the next Board Chair; however, due to Mr. Campbell's resignation Mr. King is willing to serve as Vice-chair until the Harrisonburg City Manager is selected.

1. **Chair** – Mr. Campbell nominated Mr. Hamp to serve as Chair. Ms. Whetzel seconded the motion. Approval **unanimous**.
2. **Vice-chair** - Mr. Hamp nominated Mr. King to serve. Mr. Rosenberg seconded the motion. Approval was **unanimous**.

3. **Secretary/Treasurer** - Mr. Propst nominated Ms. Davidson. Mr. Fitzgerald seconded the motion. Approval was **unanimous**.
4. **Appointment of Clerk** - Mr. Fitzgerald made a motion that Ms. Reed continue as Clerk. Mr. Rosenberg seconded the motion. Approval was **unanimous**.

- **Authority Board Meeting Dates for 2022** - Mr. Rosenberg made a motion to accept the proposed meeting dates as recommended. Mr. Hamp seconded the motion. Approval was **unanimous**.

**9. CLOSED SESSION**

Mr. Rosenberg made a motion to go into closed session; seconded by Mr. Campbell. The vote of the Authority members to go into closed session was **unanimous**.

Middle River Regional Jail Authority Board entered closed session pursuant to:

- The legal exemption under Virginia Code §2.2 3711(A)(8)  
Advise of legal counsel regarding contract


Mr. Fitzgerald made a motion to go out of closed session; seconded by Mr. Hamp. All ayes to certify only discussion of legal advice regarding contracts was discussed.

Roll Call Vote as follows:

Stephen King (Chairman)	Aye
Steve Rosenberg	Aye
Timothy Fitzgerald	Aye
Michael Hamp	Aye
Eric Campbell	Aye
Jennifer Whetzel	Aye
Patricia Davidson	Aye
Larry Propst	Aye
Phillip Trayer	Aye
Cameron McCormick	Aye

**The next Authority Board meeting is scheduled for February 1, 2022 at 2:00 p.m.  
Location: Augusta County Government Center South Board Room.**

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Stephen King, Chairman