



Richland County Council  
Detention Center Ad Hoc Committee  
**MINUTES**  
March 21, 2023 – 4:00 PM  
Council Chambers  
2020 Hampton Street, Columbia, SC 29204

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COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Derrek Pugh, Chair; Overture Walker, and Cheryl English

OTHERS PRESENT: Yvonne McBride, Gretchen Barron, Jason Branham, John Thompson, Anette Kirylo, Tamar Black, Michelle Onley, Leonardo Brown, Crayman Harvey, Kyle Holsclaw, Angela Weathersby, Ashiya Myers, Chelsea Bennett, Stacey Hamm, John Thompson, Susan O’Cain, Lori Thomas, Patrick Wright, Brittney Hoyle-Terry, Dale Welch, Jennifer Wladischkin, and Abhijit Deshpande

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Councilwoman Cheryl English called the meeting to order at approximately 4:00 PM.
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
  - a. November 17, 2022 – Mr. Walker moved to approve the minutes as distributed, seconded by Ms. English.  
  
In Favor: Pugh, Walker, and English  
  
The vote in favor was unanimous.
3. **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA** – Mr. Walker moved to adopt the agenda as published, seconded by Mr. Pugh.  
  
In Favor: Pugh, Walker, and English  
  
The vote in favor was unanimous.
4. **ELECTION OF CHAIR** – Mr. Walker moved to nominate Mr. Pugh as Chair, seconded by Ms. English.  
  
In Favor: Pugh, Walker, and English  
  
The vote in favor was unanimous.  
  
Mr. Pugh thanked his colleagues for their confidence in him to lead the committee.
5. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**
  - a. Alvin S. Glenn Detention Center Update  
  
**RECAP** – With resources and support from the Administration, Detention leadership began an aggressive improvement plan for the following key concerns:

- Staffing Update:
  - Hiring initiatives
  - Personnel needs remaining
- Facility Updates:
  - Medical Health initiatives
  - Food Provider (Physical Structure enhancement)
  - Telecommunication Provider
  - Technology initiatives (Needs remaining)
  - Officer/Detainee Safety, Security, and Wellness initiatives
  - Physical structure enhancements (dormitories)

### **HIRING INITIATIVES**

- To improve the recruiting process for detention officer staff, ASGDC has and is willing to use various tools to attract candidates, such as radio ads, job fair participation, employment websites, and job placement organizations, as well as conducting on-site weekend interviews.
- Administration recognized the importance of retention and recruiting and has implemented the following strategies:
  - Salary increase for entry-level officers
  - Referral Bonus
  - Retention Bonus
  - Overtime option remains to ensure appropriate staffing levels

### **MEDICAL PROVIDER**

- Following the departure of the former medical provider, WellPath, on June 12, 2022, the department acquired Advance Correctional Healthcare (ACH)
- ACH is a two-fold medical provider that provides medical and mental health services. Such services aid the detention center in ensuring detainees receive the best comprehensive medical care while in custody. The provided mental health service has significantly changed the method and philosophy of how to manage mentally ill detainees.

### **FOOD PROVIDER**

- Summit Food Service has been with the department for 16 years. Most recently, the food service provider was audited by DHEC and received a satisfactory grade.
- After the implementation of a corrective action plan, ASGDC staff and Administration determined the kitchen needed a complete overhaul due to wear and tear.

### **TELECOMMUNICATION PROVIDER**

- The department switched detainee communication providers from Amtel to ViaPath.
- Compared to the former communication contractor, ViaPath can provide tables that offer beneficial services such as:
  - Attorneys can meet with their clients from remote locations
  - Families can meet with detainees from remote locations
  - Detainees can access the Law Library
  - Recreation services (i.e., movies, games, reading materials)

### **TECHNOLOGY NEEDS/INITIATIVES**

- After a careful review of the facility's operation, leadership determined that technology improvements were required to improve efficiency:
  - Use body scanners for all employees before entering the most secure area of the facility.
  - Software to store "PowerDms" (policies & training materials)
- Two additional key security pieces of technology are required:
  - The current camera system is outdated, and camera coverage is insufficient.

- The internally created jail management system cannot support the department's demands. Necessary data cannot be retrieved to assist with routine reporting or requests for documentation in response to legal matters.

### **PHYSICAL STRUCTURE ENHANCEMENTS**

- Following a reassessment of the facility's infrastructure, a survey of the facility for potential vulnerabilities, and feedback from security staff and outside constituents, ASGDC leadership is committed to improving the physical security of the facility and ensuring a safe working environment. These changes will include:
  - Remodeling ASGDC Kitchen.
    - Kitchen cooler & freezer door replacement
  - Installation of heavy Lexan break-resistant glass throughout the facility.
    - Utilized for constant detainee observation
  - Installation of service ports (flaps) to general population units/rooms
    - Utilized for quickly isolating/containing detainees in their designated room
    - Will reduce the usage of a lockdown unit, previously known as Special Housing Unit (SHU)
  - Remodeling Special Housing Unit
  - Remodeling All Units (First two units/SHU & Yankee)
    - Units will receive a complete overhaul of up-to-date standards (i.e., plumbing, painting, installation of correctional equipment [toilets & sinks] & electrical light fixtures).
  - To ensure the safety of all employees and detainees, ASGDC strengthened the security practices to eliminate the introduction of contraband into the facility. Practices include:
    - The use of a body scanner for all employees before entering the most secure area of the facility
    - Increased facility "shakedowns."
    - Acquired more security equipment (handcuffs, leg irons, etc.)
    - Reviewing 364 policies
    - Software to store "PowerDms" (policies & training materials)
    - Created an Accreditation committee with American Correctional Association facility auditors and quality assurance employees who review, update, and ensure best practices are incorporated within the facility.
    - Created a "tip line."
    - Posted signage throughout the facility regarding no smoking areas & contraband
    - Increased collaboration with Richland County Sheriff's Department

### **WHERE ARE WE NOW?**

Mr. Brown stated we are actively hiring for a Detention Center Director.

### **DIRECTOR OF DETENTION CENTER**

- Under limited supervision, the purpose of this position is to plan, coordinate and direct all detention center personnel programs, operations, and activities of the County Detention Center; to oversee daily jail administration and operations; to ensure the safety and security of detainees/inmates, staff, and the citizens of Richland County; and to ensure compliance with standards established by the South Carolina Department of Corrections and all governing regulations; and to perform related law enforcement as required. This position plans, organizes, and implements programs within major organizational policies, reporting program

progress to the County Administrator through reports and meetings. Prepares and oversees the departmental budget and provides accurate and clear records on facility incidents. This position reports directly to the County Administrator.

- Requires a Bachelor's degree in criminal justice, law enforcement, social science, or a closely related field from an accredited institution with a graduate degree preferred.
- Preferably, 10 years of progressively responsible management experience in law enforcement. Experience serving as a Jail Administrator or Assistant Jail Administrator is highly desirable.

#### **DETENTION CENTER COMPLIANCE DIRECTOR**

- Under limited supervision, the purpose of this position is to reduce, mitigate, and manage all risk factors associated with operating and maintaining a detention facility by ensuring all aspects of detention center operations are performed in compliance with local, state, and federal laws. This position is tasked with developing and/or implementing policies that ensure the detention center remains in compliance with all applicable laws and standards. This position is responsible for creating and/or maintaining metrics for tracking compliance and responsible for performing routine internal performance audits. This position instructs and/or helps coordinate and facilitate in-service training classes to ensure detention center personnel compliance with policies, standards, and applicable laws. This position is responsible for overseeing compliance standards for third-party entities operating within or visiting the detention center, to include food service providers, health care providers, and all visitors to the facility. This position reports directly to the County Administrator.
- Requires a Bachelor's degree in criminal justice, law enforcement, risk management, ethics, compliance, or a closely related field from an accredited institution with a graduate degree preferred.
- Preferably, five years of progressively responsible management experience in law enforcement. Experience serving as a Jail Administrator or Assistant Jail Administrator is highly desirable.

#### **THE WEDGE (LOCKING SYSTEM):** <https://youtu.be/OPrZvRB6HIg>

Mr. Brown stated detainees currently compromise the locks by jamming them with items. This product allows for the cleaning out of debris and setbacks. There is also a device that makes noise anytime a lock is tampered with. Then you have a visual cue of whether the lock is locked. He noted this is something the County is looking to move forward with.

Ms. English thanked Mr. Brown and the staff for continuing to move forward and to make positive progress to ensure the safety of the Detention Center staff and detainees.

Mr. Pugh inquired how many facilities staff has spoken with about the new locking system.

Mr. Crayman Harvey, Interim Detention Center Director, responded he attended a 2-day forum with 43 detention center directors wherein the system was discussed. He noted many of the detention centers want the product. Unfortunately, they need more resources to purchase the product.

Mr. Pugh inquired as to the cost of the system.

Mr. Brown replied the cost would be approximately \$2.5M. It could be more because some compromised doors in the detention center must be modified or replaced.

Mr. Pugh inquired if we are going facility-wide with the product.

Mr. Brown responded we are looking to address all of the compromised units.

Mr. Walker inquired about the number of detention officers needed for the facility and the challenges to reaching that ideal number.

Mr. Brown stated that our challenge is not unique to Richland County. Law enforcement is struggling with hiring qualified individuals interested in doing the work. Law enforcement, on the detainee side, is a challenge because they are also detained with the detainees for 12+ hours a day. He noted we had not requested information from other State agencies or correctional institutions, but his understanding is that if you were to poll, you would find they are not fully staffed. He indicated we have tried to address salaries, and there has been an increase in staffing, but many other agencies are taking the same steps. We are trying to differentiate ourselves by the level of service we provide in a quality facility. You can come to Richland County and make a decent living, but more importantly, you can feel safe and secure.

Mr. Walker inquired if Mr. Brown feels the current level of compensation is competitive.

Mr. Brown replied that you could make a decent salary through the Alvin S. Glenn Detention Center based on the longevity we built into the pay plan. You may not be able to do it in year one, but the longer they are with us and the more education/certifications they get, the more they will be able to earn. He believes the plan will allow an individual to come in and make a living if they choose a career path at the detention center.

Mr. Walker inquired about how recently the DHEC grade was received. He noted that the last time he heard about a DHEC grade, it had been reported in the media, but the grade had been received several months before the report.

Mr. Brown responded by the time the media reported the information, the detention center had already received another grade, which was an "A."

Mr. Harvey responded the most recent DHEC grade was received on February 2, 2023.

Mr. Branham inquired if we have a percentage of compromised units and the timetable for installation.

Mr. Brown indicated that any doors that can be "stuffed" with paper or the locking system maneuvered are the ones we will be addressing. The installation will begin on August 21, 2023, and we will go unit by unit afterward.

Mr. Harvey stated 448 doors are affected, which is approximately 90% of the facility. Most detention centers that take on this type of project utilize the segregation unit. He noted we are going above and behind by doing 90% of the facility. We are moving from isolation to room confinement. If we need to modify someone's movement, we can do so in their room instead of taking them to a segregation unit.

Ms. McBride stated she knows how hard it is to get individuals to work in detention facilities. She has worked in a secure facility before, which is like you are incarcerated. She inquired if there are also efforts to hire social workers or counselors.

Mr. Brown responded a component of our medical provider, Advanced Correctional Healthcare, is social work. He noted we did not have that component before but do so now. Regarding social workers for the County, we do not have individuals working in the detention facility.

Mr. Brown noted they had received calls and concerns regarding a recently reported incident that individuals thought was Richland County but was not. The news report stated "Richland County area" and alluded to an unfortunate incident where someone passed. The individuals were concerned because they thought Richland County was not reporting it and was trying to hide something. The report was not about Alvin S. Glenn Detention Center.

### **STAFFING LEVELS**

- After Recruiting & Retention Initiative (Working Detention Officers):
  - May 2022 – 65
  - June 2022 – 61
  - July 2022 – 67
  - August 2022 – 67
  - September 2022 – 78
  - October 2022 – 82
  - November 2022 – 94
  - December 2022 – 92
  - January 2023 – 98
  - February 2023 – 96
  
- Interim Director: 1
  - Division Managers – 4
  - Watch Commanders – 11
  - Assistant Watch Commanders – 26
  - Detention Officers On Board – 95
  - Total Security – 136
  - Detention Center Vacancies – 105
  - Allied Universal (Auxiliary Post) - 38

Mr. Harvey stated the way to change the staffing level is to change the culture of what a detention center looks like to produce a new breed of staff. One of the things is to make sure the facility is safe. Most of the detention centers expressed the same sentiments at the recent forum. All of the initiatives being implemented are to ensure safety. Once we guarantee safety, people will come to work at the detention center.

Mr. Walker stated it was brought to his attention that the Sheriff's Department was considering no longer transporting detainees from the facility to magistrate court. It is his understanding detention center staff transports detainees to Circuit Court. He inquired if the Sheriff's Department is still transporting the detainees to magistrate court and, if not, what impact that has had on the detention center staff.

Mr. Harvey indicated the Sheriff's Department is not transporting to magistrate court. The detention center has taken on that task. He noted it has affected staffing coverage. The transportation team consists of 5 employees who are on the road all day transporting detainees to court or medical appointments. Captains and Lieutenants supplement transporting duties.

Mr. Walker inquired when the Sheriff's Department ceased transporting detainees.

Mr. Harvey responded it was approximately 4 or 5 months ago.

### **INFRASTRUCTURE**

- The County Administrator and County Council have approved critical areas of the jail to receive upgrades to ensure staff and detainees are safe and receive the

- required services required by law.
- The Kitchen was one of the first infrastructure project(s) that was approved for renovation. The renovation of the unit dormitories (Yankee Unit) was the second approved project, and most recently, the new door locking system.

**THE KITCHEN** – Mr. Harvey presented a depiction of the detention center kitchen before and after the renovations. They are still awaiting the new equipment.

**DORMITORIES SINK/TOILET REPLACEMENT** – Mr. Harvey stated replacing the porcelain sinks and toilets with stainless steel is underway. The plumbing had to be rerouted; therefore, all the concrete had to be knocked out.

### **RESPONSE TO SCDC**

- Inspection was conducted on October 24, 2022
- Several initiatives were underway before the SCDC inspection
  - Revamping of ASG Classification System
    - Closing of Specialize Housing Unit (SHU) – November 17, 2022
    - Created Behavioral Management Unit
    - Created a Medical Unit
    - Created Mental Health Unit
    - Created Older Population Unit
  - ASG’s 338 Policies were under review for updates and revision
  - Improved conditions of confinement for detainees
- Management is confident that the follow-up visit and Action Plan submitted to SCDC will be acceptable.

Mr. Pugh inquired if the medical providers have a specific process to evaluate the detainees to ensure proper classification. In addition, is ASG’s policies going to mirror the medical provider’s policies?

Mr. Harvey stated approximately 70% of detention center populations are mentally ill. He noted we are fortunate to have created a housing unit for them. Most detention centers segregate the mentally ill, which exasperates the illness. We have medical providers, licensed social workers, and psychiatrists inside the units analyzing and assessing detainees during admission. In addition, there is a security supervisor in the unit.

Mr. Walker inquired if detention center personnel found a way to screen the detainees that may have gang affiliation and keep them separated.

Mr. Harvey noted gangs are real. Law enforcement cannot stop them on the street, and they certainly cannot stop them, but we can ensure they do not cross paths. The salary initiative allowed them to hire an Emergency Response Team. The team will have gang training where they can interrogate and identify what persons are in gangs. When the detainee comes to intake, a screening is conducted to determine what gang they are affiliated with. The goal is to avoid mixing gangs because mixing gangs is not good for gang members or staff.

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- ASG In-service Training has been re-established
  - Two days out staff (contractors, administrative staff, and security)
- ASG Program Department
  - GED Graduates
    - Possibly 12 Graduates by the next testing period
    - Will have a ceremony for graduates in the month of May

- Life Skills reestablished
  - Sponsored by Richland County Library-Literacy for Life program
    - 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort – 10 detainees

Mr. Pugh thanked Mr. Harvey, Mr. Brown, and everyone who has had a hand in trying to make sure Alvin S. Glenn is up to par. He indicated he had an opportunity to visit, and he could see some headway.

6. **ADJOURNMENT** – Mr. Walker moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. English.

In Favor: Pugh, Walker, and English

The vote in favor was unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:00 PM.