

**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE (DOC/Garner)
MINUTES**

Regular Meeting – December 2, 2014 at 5:00 pm
Newtown Municipal Center, Shared Meeting Room #1
3 Primrose Street, Newtown CT 06470

Members Present: E. Patricia Llodra, First Selectman; Police Chief Michael Kehoe, Newtown Police Dept.; Warden Henry Falcone, Garner Correctional Facility; Michael Kelley; **Members Absent:** Stephen Sedensky (State's Attorney); Gino Faiella (Board of Education); Jay Mattegott (Nunnawauk Meadows); Rob Manna (Board of Fire Commissioners); and Joy Previdi; **Other's Present:** Bruce Clark (Pootatuck Fish and Game Club) and Andy Gorosko from The Bee.

The First Selectman convened the meeting at 5:10 pm.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Mr. Kelley motioned to approve the minutes of June 3, 2014 meeting. The motion was seconded by Chief Kehoe and unanimously approved.

GARNER CORRECTIONAL FACILITY UPDATE – Warden Falcone provided the following updates:

Population: Total Inmates (520); Mental Health Inmates (239); General Population (190); Youth Development Unit (15); and Unsentenced Inmates (95). Ms. Llodra said she received a letter dated 11/3/14 from Commissioner Semple listing the population as 748. Warden Falcone said this may be the capacity but is not the population and will look into this further.

Youth Development Unit: Warden Falcone explained that inmates in this program range from ages 18 to 21 years and are considered SRG (Security Risk Group) gang members with Special Educational needs. Most were transferred from MYI (Manson Youth Institution) in Cheshire. The commissioner of DOC felt that these inmates need special education and should be separated from the regular population in order to remove any peer pressure and to help them with special educational needs. Ten inmates have graduated with their GED since its inception a year and a half ago. The program is successful.

Incidents: Overall the number of incidents are historically low, although there have been three incidents since the first of December.

Radon System: The new Radon system is in place and levels are well below the 4.0 requirement. When the ground freezes, they will check to make sure levels are safe.

Security System: The new computer security system is installed and up and running well.

Staffing: Staffing is currently at 85% due to retirements and transfers. They are performing regular monthly command drills. Scott Semple is now Commissioner of DOC.

Garden: The facility's gardens produced approximately 4,000 lbs. of produce this past year. Ms. Llodra expressed the Town's appreciation for their generosity of the produced donated to the Faith Food Pantry, Social Services and the Senior Center. The facility is planning to expand the gardens next year.

DOC Populations: Chief Kehoe asked if DOC forecasts a continuing downward slide in prison populations and if this reduction is due to budgetary deficits, and if so, where will there be a balance between safety and budget constraints. The Warden said all decisions go through stringent reviews. It is the Commissioner's mission to reduce the populations with safety as his first priority. Checks and balances are in place. He is currently looking at a program in Ohio where level 1 and level 2 inmates, who are eligible for community release, get set up in a housing program. The program would allow them to go out to work and then report back. The commissioner is reviewing Ohio's program to see how this is working; it may be mirrored here in Connecticut. They would use Webster in Cheshire to house these inmates. The Warden said this program would not apply to Garner inmates. Garner's numbers are low because it is a mental health facility; other facilities are higher. Most halfway houses are in larger cities, there are none in Newtown.

2015 MEETING SCHEDULE: Ms. Llodra motioned to approve the 2015 meeting schedule. Mr. Kelley seconded the motion and all were in favor.

After no further discussions, Chief Kehoe motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:24 pm which was seconded by Mr. Kelley. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Tammy Hazen, Clerk