

## MEETING OF THE MONROE COUNTY

### HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MINUTES

Wednesday, October 25, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.

1. Roll Call and Call to Order

Members present were: Byron Bangert, Darcie Fawcett, Doris Parlette, Eric Sader, Kathleen Sideli and Paul White. Staff present: Margie Rice, County Attorney.

2. Sheriff Brad Swain addressed the Human Rights Commission and discussed the Monroe County Correctional Center. Sheriff Swain discussed his history with the Correctional Center, where he was originally hired as an additional staff member to his position now of overseeing the operations, as Sheriff. He said when he was hired in this jail there were originally about 28 staff members and now there are approximately 70. He discussed the overcrowding, reasons for the overcrowding and programming. He said they try to keep the population under 300, but that is not always possible. Sheriff Swain discussed many programs including educational efforts, job-skill training, spiritual support, restructured New Leaf/New Life programs, bingo, library materials, military-grade electronic tablets used by inmates for news and video visitation, and efforts to connect inmates with their children. Medical care and continuation of care for inmates while incarcerated was briefly discussed. Sheriff Swain said that maintaining a professional staff was extremely important and that he has worked with Ivy Tech to do pre-testing and screening for potential employees. The County's investment in a good video system, which can record and store more than three-days of video, was an important way to keep inmates and staff safe. The Sheriff also mentioned that he reads each and every "use of force" incident.

Commission members asked questions about what the HRC can do to provide support and bring recognition about the needs. A conversation was held about the current facility and possible options for alternative treatment and correctional facilities. Changes in state law, where certain offenders are housed locally rather than at the Department of Corrections, and the effects of that on the Correctional Center was discussed.

The nature of violations, including probation violations, which may keep people in the Correctional Center. The ability for inmates to connect with their attorneys through a video system was brought up and the pros and cons of that system, which may not always be operable or easily used, were mentioned.

The Sheriff explained how he is using the Recovery Works program, with Centerstone, but that space is limited, which resulted in a conversation about what type of additional space could be built and where might be the best location.

3. The Commission discussed possible future speakers including Chief Public Defender Michael Hunt, local defense attorney, Phyllis Emerick, the Executive Director for the Indiana Sheriff's Association and Bill Wilson, former Monroe County Jail Commander.
4. Thank you notes to Judge Kellams and Sam Crowe were signed.
5. Minutes for September were reviewed and accepted unanimously.
6. With no new complaints, no Commission nor public comment, the meeting was adjourned. Next meeting will be held on November 29, 2017.