



PENNSYLVANIA STATE CORRECTIONS OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

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Patrolling the Toughest Blocks in the State

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Main Office Update (October/November)

Once again it is time to let the members know of the progress and doings at the Main Office.

Legislative Update

-10/16/19 John Eckenrode, members of SCI Pine Grove and a retired employee from Torrence State Hospital met with Representative Jim Struzzi. We discussed several issues to include a mandatory sentencing law that would require an inmate that is found guilty of staff assault to receive an additional **consecutive** sentence that would be served after completion of the original sentence. We also discussed misconducts, problems with Hearing Examiners, Restricted Housing, incentive programs implemented by the D.O.C, and Torrence H-1 members being supervised by Department of Health employees. We also asked for support for several bills that we hope will reach the floor in the upcoming weeks. Representative Struzzi has pledged his support. Special thanks to Pine Grove Executive Board member Ernie Gillum for presenting a great packet on misconducts.

-10/13/19 Mark Truskowski met with Stephanie Salavantis, District Attorney for Luzerne County.

10/22/19 Mark also met with Skip Ebert, District Attorney for Cumberland County.

-10/19/19 The PSCOA sponsored upwards of fifteen members and their families to attend Representative Jim Struzzi's Family Barn Event. The PSCOA was well represented. Thank you to the members of Pine Grove and Torrence for attending.

-10/21/19 Larry Blackwell testified before the Senate Judiciary committee. Mr. Blackwell spoke of the D.O.C. cutting corners to save money. He spoke extensively on the parole process and gave input on ways to ensure that violent offenders don't get released into our communities. He also gave input on the upwards of 1717 absconders that are currently unaccounted for in the Commonwealth.

-10/29/19 Senator Dave Argall started a Senate Corrections Caucus with the PSCOA. We met with several Senators that have SCI's in their districts. This Caucus is a great way for the PSCOA to garner support for important issues that are plaguing our membership. The PSCOA was well received and looks forward to future meeting with Caucus members. In the near future we will also be hosting a House Corrections Caucus.

-10/30/19 Larry Blackwell, Mark Truszkowski and John Eckenrode attended a meeting with Senator Neil Goodman. Senator Goodman has been an ally of the PSCOA and has pledged his support.

-11/19/19 The House Judiciary Committee will be in session. House Bills **44**, **256** and **257** will be considered to come to the floor for a full house vote. If these bills make it to the floor, we will provide the membership with a list of Representatives in all districts. We will be asking for members and family to call their respective Legislator in support of these bills.

Upcoming

-11/19/19 We are meeting with Senator Jake Corman (R) Centre county.

-11/20/19 We will be attending the House Judiciary Committee dinner.

-11/21/19 Due to the debacle that is known as Act 133, there will be another public hearing on the "proposed" closure of SCI Retreat. The meeting will be held at 5:30pm at the Nanticoke Municipal Building. All are encouraged to attend.

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Tours of Institutions

John Eckenrode toured SCI Pine Grove.

Larry Blackwell and Mark Truszkowski toured SCI Camp Hill.

Contract

-11/8/19 was scheduled to be our last contract mediation session with the Commonwealth. At the meeting the Commonwealth asked for another meeting to attempt to negotiate a fair contract for the H-1 membership. Although we remain skeptical that an agreement can be reached, we will continue to negotiate in good faith. If a tentative agreement can be reached, it will be brought before the entire membership for a vote.

Arbitration / ULP

ULP's

-The PSCOA successfully settled a ULP out of SCI Smithfield. The Smithfield Vice President submitted a Request for Information concerning a grievance dealing with inmates in the Visiting Room. Initially management refused to turn over the needed material for grievance filing. The award now mandated that they turn over the information.

-November 20th there will be a ULP hearing for a member that requested reimbursement of medical benefits that he paid for out of his own pocket for he and his family while his heart and lung claim was denied. The member successfully appealed his denial, and is now seeking the reimbursement that he is due.

-We have filed a ULP against SCI Houtzdale for a schedule change. SCI Houtzdale unilaterally changed the schedule of all COI's and COII's without a proper meet and discuss with the local.

-We have filed a ULP against SCI Greene for not providing information to the local for grievance filing. Specifically members were discipline for an incident that occurred in the institution. There was a manager involved in the incident. The Local is seeking to obtain what discipline the manager received and if it was fair and equitable to the disciplined members.

Arbitrations

-We just received a successful arbitration award from SCI Benner concerning employees with less than five years receiving a stress day. The Commonwealth believed that the employee had to have one full calendar year of "look back" to determine if you would be eligible for a stress day. Unless your hire date was January 1st, you would not be eligible for a stress day until your full second year of employment.

-We are awaiting the results of 7 arbitration that have already been heard. We currently have ten more arbitration scheduled through January 2020.

Since July we have heard 10 arbitrations and have scheduled a total of 22 arbitrations

Miscellaneous

Civil leave agreement

-We have reached an agreement concerning Civil Leave. Civil leave in the contract guarantees the member paid time off of work to fulfill your civic duty as a citizen. The article is meant to cover members that are subpoenaed for court procedures such as jury duty or to testify as a witness in a civil or criminal matter and other civic duties.

In some jails management has denied the use of civil leave when a member is subpoenaed to attend a court proceeding for a **work related incident**. In the past members have attended these proceedings on their regular scheduled off days or past normal working hours and were not compensated because the Commonwealth declared that it was part of your job. Some jails did pay overtime. Some would switch a members off days. (Contract violation) Some just told the employee that it was part of their job and they were not compensated at all.

The agreement that was reached allows for members to be paid overtime if the proceeding is outside of the employee's regular scheduled shift. If you receive overtime you will also be credited with a mandate. If you get the subpoena outside of two weeks, management can request a schedule change provided there is concurrence between the **employee**, the **local** and **management**. To be clear, **YOU DO NOT HAVE TO CHANGE YOUR SCHEDULE IF YOU DO NOT WISH TOO.** This does not change Article 13 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement. In all other matters contract prevails. If you wish to read the agreement, a copy has been supplied to your Business Agent.

Finance Committee

-We promised the membership that we would create a working Finance Committee that would meet quarterly to review the spending from the general fund and whatever other spending they wished to review. Members of this committee were volunteers that signed up at the last state board meeting or their Local President/Vice President signed them up and were voted on by the Executive Board.

The committee reviewed spending from the general fund and was overall extremely pleased. The committee also reviewed the budget that was passed by the Executive Board, along with the new spending policies that were adopted and passed by the Executive Board.

Corrections Benevolent Fund

-The Corrections Benevolent Fund is up and running. Since October the fund has given a monetary relief to twelve different H-1 members. In the past, locals have made monthly donations to the old fund to help. Since this is a new fund, we are asking that the local's continue to make a donation to the new fund to help get it up and running and keep it solvent. We will also be holding fundraisers to help build the coffers for this charitable organization.

As most are aware, we disassociated ourselves from the **Bobby Wilt Fund**. We did this for several reason. The Bobby Wilt bylaws made it all but impossible to unseat a chair member that may have needed to be removed. The election of Officers was conducted by the Officers themselves with no Executive Board approval. Creating a benevolent fund allows us to better solicit donations. When we had a Bobby Wilt fundraiser such as the golf outing, the Bobby Wilt would use general fund money to pay for the total cost of the event. The Bobby Wilt would then sell hole sponsors and collect money from team entries that they would then apply to the fund. More times than not, the Bobby Wilt did not raise enough money to pay back the money that was taken from the General Fund.

Whatever money was collected through hole sponsors and team entry fees would be deposited into the Bobby Wilt fund account and no money was given back to the general fund. This is how the fund showed a profit. This is not how a 501C is supposed to work. The Main Office has asked that any remaining money left in the old fund be turned over to new fund. Our request has been denied. Since they are a 501C, we cannot make them turn over the money.

Today, the Bobby Wilt has in excess of **\$111,000.00** This left-over money was money that mostly came from H-1 members with the intent of that money being used for members in need. As of this letter, the Bobby Wilt has not paid a benefit to any H-1 member in need. Members have inquired and have been denied. If you are in need please continue to apply for Corrections Benevolent Fund Relief. You can also apply for relief from the money that was left in the Bobby Wilt Fund. Contact Robert Grajeda (President) or send any correspondents to:

The Bobby Wilt Foundation
PO Box 321
Penn Run PA 15765

-Team PSCOA