



PENNSYLVANIA STATE CORRECTIONS OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

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Patrolling the Toughest Blocks in the State

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March Main Office Update

Of course, COVID and the upheaval that it has created inside of our institutions has been the talk for the last few weeks. We were asked by several members why we had not put out our monthly update. We tossed around the idea of appropriateness and decided that people are asking so we should put it out there.

Legislation Update

February 8th Larry, John, Mike Michita (Business Agent) and Rick Zellers (President of SCI Camp Hill) attended a spaghetti dinner fundraiser for Senator Mastriono (R) in Gettysburg.

February 19th, we conducted a press conference on the steps of the Capitol. We had a very good turn out for this event from members throughout the Commonwealth. We invited several legislators to attend and they also spoke at the event. After the press conference was over, members were invited to the main office for lunch.

March 12th -We held our second town hall meeting in Meadville for SCI Albion, SCI Mercer, SCI Cambridge Springs and SCI Forest. In attendance was Senator Brooks, Senator Laughlin and Senator Hutchinson. Also, in attendance was State Representatives Bernstein, Representative Oberlander and Representative Roae. Topics were misconduct/hearing examiner issues, drugs, assaults, liberal policies and overall staff safety. We had really good turnout and great participation from the membership. We had a third town hall scheduled for the SCI Dallas/Retreat area. Due to COVID, we canceled the event. We look forward to resuming these town hall style meetings with legislators and the membership in the future.

We are currently working with Legislators and different organizations to include COVID in the Heart and Lung forum for H-1 members. If we are successful in doing so, members

that test positive, or are quarantined by doctor's order, would qualify, subject to approval for heart and lung benefits. Appeals would apply.

State Board meeting

February the 12th and 13th we held a state board meeting for all Presidents and Vice Presidents. Day one of the two-day state board, we conducted training for the Local Vice Presidents and Presidents. Training consisted of, how to chair a meeting, Navigating the Grievance Management System and the Document Management System, Heart and Lung, Grievance procedures and Wendy Bauer from the Corrections Peace Officers Foundation gave a presentation of the benefits provided by the C.P.O.F.

Day two of the state board meeting, we provided all Presidents and Vice Presidents with a copy of the PSCOA budget. We invited Mark Richards our lobbyist in Harrisburg to give an overview of legislation. Mr. Richards talked about the D.O.C. budget. Secretary Wetzel asked for 90 million more dollars even with the closure of SCI Retreat. The house bills associated with staff safety made it out of the House Judiciary Committee and were voted on and approved by the House with an overwhelming majority. Those bills are now in the Senate Judiciary Committee. Mr. Richards and Larry met with the Senate Judiciary Chairwoman Lisa Baker, to discuss what the priority of the PSCOA are moving forward and how to get the bills out of committee and to the senate for a full vote. Being our lobbyist, Mark was essential in helping to set up our town hall meetings and was present at the first meeting in January. At the state board he stated the following. "I talked to the Legislators that attended after the town hall was over." It was a real eye opener for each of them." They were really struck and taken by the level of discontent and how low morale is."

We covered some new PSCOA policies

No non-members will be allowed to attend PSCOA meetings

If you are an elected official and interview for a manager's position, you must resign as an elected official.

The PSCOA death benefit was increased from \$250 to \$1000.

Video and audio recording of any PSCOA meeting is prohibited.

For the past several months we have been working with the Voices of Joe. Voices of Joe is a political advocacy group whose primary purpose it to lend a voice to the families of Corrections workers as well as Officers. Marybeth and Cortney from Voices of Joe spoke at our meeting to give an overview of their purpose and function and to show support to our membership.

Tours of Institutions

Mark toured Retreat, Chester and Dallas.

February 20th Hank attended labor management at SCI Phoenix

February 26th Hank, Mark, John and Joe Fox attended the Chester February labor management meeting.

February 24th John and Ray tour SCI Cambridge Springs.
March 6th Hank and Mark met with Academy Cadets.
March 25th Mark and Hank toured SCI Retreat.
March 26th Larry toured SCI Rockview.
March 27th Larry and John toured SCI Benner.
April 1st John and Ray toured SCI Laurel Highlands.

Grievances

We recently received a favorable arbitration win out of Forest concerning mandates. Sometime in 2019 management took the position that any overtime excluding walk time, worked past your normally scheduled shift would be considered an **extension of shift**, not a mandate. For example, if you were involved in a use of force towards the end of your shift and management told you that you had to stay to complete your paperwork, they were no longer giving the member credit for a mandate, it would be labeled an extension of shift. With this arbitration win, late relief and obligation to complete required paper work will be considered a mandate.

We are still waiting on decisions for six arbitration that have already been heard.
Business Agent meeting was held 2/25/20

Pre-Arbitration settlements

Promotions are to be picked after interviews are conducted. (management must use scores and pick from the interviews)
How overtime is handled for K-9 unit
Bid post for SCI Houtzdale (Tower)
Improper mandates SCI Houtzdale
Health and Safety SCI Houtzdale proper PPE for asbestos
Due Regard SCI Houtzdale (management was made to purchase 50 new walkie talkies)
Mandates at SCI Pine Grove

Hank has been meeting with the D.O.C. and OA attempting to establish virtual hearings for upcoming arbitrations and respective joint committee hearings.

ULP's

We received a favorable ULP decision concerning Heart and Lung benefits. A member was denied Heart and Lung. He won his H and L appeal but management refused to pay his medical expenses and lost wages. The member was paid \$6500.00 for medical expenses and a significant amount of money for lost wages. We have filed numerous ULP's for management refusing to provide requested information.

February 18th, we conducted our first ever statewide Department of Human Services labor management for Norristown and Torrance. Members of DHS, met with The Western and Eastern Vice Presidents and the Local Presidents, Vice Presidents and Business Agents for Norristown and Torrance. Topics were provided by the locals for discussion.

Contract update

As last reported, we reached an impasse with negotiations. We are going to arbitration. A neutral arbitrator was struck, Jim Leonard. As it stands today, we are scheduled to present to the arbitration panel June 23rd, 24th and 25th. The Commonwealth is scheduled to present July 29th, 30th and 31st. We continue to meet with our law firm to prepare.

March 11th, we conducted a local stewards training in Meadville for local officers and stewards from Albion, Mercer, Cambridge Springs and Mercer.

We have rescheduled the Corrections Benevolent Clay shoot to **September 29th**.

These are very trying times for the H-1 membership. Members have been working in less than desirable conditions since this crisis started. Members are physically and mentally exhausted. We all hope and pray that this comes to an end as soon as possible.

Historically, we have always come together in support of one another in times of need. Some people are really struggling with the concerns not only inside, but in their personal lives that COVID has created. Stick together and stay safe.

Team PSCOA