

Corrections Commission of Northwest Ohio

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STRYKER – The Corrections Commission of Northwest Ohio decided to prepare action against the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections (ODRC).

The commission met in executive session for 39 minutes this afternoon to discuss pending litigation and security arrangements. After resuming open session, the board unanimously approved the authorization of their legal counsel to prepare necessary documents against the ODRC for exceeding their time to accept prison-sentenced inmates.

“We absolutely understand that changes have to happen that will help protect against COVID-19. We’ve all had to make changes because of the type of environment we’re in; it’s a closed area with close living quarters for the inmates and the staff are directly supervising in the unit,” explained Dennis Sullivan, the jail’s executive director. “The state’s response has been to push this down to the local level.”

According to the Ohio Revised Code, the state is to accept prison sentenced inmates within five days of being sentenced to prison. Director Sullivan explained that the state is requiring a 14-day quarantine and negative COVID test on all prison inmates and that they are staying at the local jail for far longer than the five days. “In most cases, it takes much longer before we can get them to prison due to the need to provide proper quarantine space,” said Sullivan.

Also following the executive session, board members authorized the director to pursue the assistance of the Ohio National Guard at the jail.

“We’ll be asking for their assistance in a limited capacity. CCNO, like all correctional facilities, is dealing with COVID issues. Several correctional facilities either have been or are starting to use the Ohio National Guard. We’re in an enclosed area so we’ve got staff getting sick, and inmates getting sick. Our people just need some relief,” Sullivan explained.

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