

**IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE**

**Wednesday, June 28, 2017**

**STRYKER** –Low-risk offenders in orange and white striped uniforms will soon be on trash detail following Wednesday’s meeting of the Corrections Commission of Northwest Ohio.

Board members entered into a contract with the Ohio Department of Transportation to use low-risk offenders to pick up trash along state and federal highways in the four counties of Defiance, Fulton, Henry and Williams. CCNO will provide a corrections officer to supervise the inmate crew that will work in the four-county area. In turn, ODOT will provide a van with a light bar, trash bags and up to \$45,000 per year to finance the cost. A similar project is being offered in Lucas County, but the inmate crew will be from the Toledo prison. Area sheriffs asked to be notified of the location of the work crew when on site.

In other action, Board members agreed to limits for the allocated bed numbers for the grant funded Regional Diversion Program. The program calls for 88 beds; although the count has climbed to 115 in the past. The limits will avoid overcrowding and maintain grant costs. Under the program, bed allocations stand at 12 for Defiance County; 10 for Fulton County; 4 for Henry County; 56 for Lucas County; and 6 for Williams County.

Those participating in the pilot project are non-violent fourth and fifth degree felons that will eventually return to their communities with hopes that the special intense substance abuse treatment received will help in their recovery and reduce recidivism. CCNO Executive Director Jim Dennis said there is a huge drug problem in northwest Ohio and CCNO has had to deal with detoxing inmates daily.

The Regional Diversion Program is financed by a state grant that expires June 30. CCNO officials were authorized to apply for funds for another year. New legislation will create grant funding for fifth-degree felons that are to be diverted from state facilities. Funding for the fourth-degree felons will be from a separate grant. CCNO board members authorized the use of excess funds to finance the continuation of the diversion program until state funds become available.

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In an effort to avoid overcrowding, Board members agreed to revise the Administrative Release policy so member beds would include both reserved member and Regional Diversion beds. Total count will stand at 72 for Defiance County; 65 for Fulton County; 41 for Henry County; 379 for Lucas County; and 61 for Williams County. A different grant supports 40 post release control offenders that are also incarcerated at CCNO.

In his operational report, Mr. Dennis said Wednesdays' population stood at 644 or 96.4 percent. The population averaged 594 or 89 percent in April and 610 or 91 percent in May. He said there were currently 18 federal offenders being housed at CCNO under the contract with the U.S. Marshals service.

Members agreed that the finance committee will meet July 5 to discuss bed allocations and the pending grants to continue the current Regional Diversion Program. Board members will meet in special session July 13 to discuss the pending grants and bed allocations.