CIC Quarterly Board Meeting: Thursday, March 12, 2026, 6:00 PM

Meeting Minutes

Board Attendees: Charles Thornton (Chair), Natasha Dasher, Nkechi Taifa, Katharine Huffman

CIC Staff Members: Executive Director Donald Isaac, Nicole Ukaegbu (Deputy Executive Director), Patricia Marks (Senior Program Analyst), Nailah Seabron (Chief of Staff), Eric Spencer (Program Analyst), Kareem McCraney (Program Manager), Eric Weaver (Program Analyst).

Executive Director Report

Executive Director Issac greeted attendees and welcomed new Board Member Ms. Natasha Dasher. He emphasized ongoing interagency engagement and highlighted leadership-level communication improvements with the Bureau of Prisons (BOP).

Chairman Charles Thornton highlighted the FY 2025 Annual Report of the CIC and encouraged the board members to get a copy and read it. Mr. Thornton also requested a reading of the minutes silently.

Deputy Director Report

Ms. Nicole Ukaegbu (Deputy Director) provided an overview of agency activities at the previous quarterly meeting, including:

- Publication of five new reports (two DOC inspections, three BOP inspections).
- Publication of two thematic reports and four demographic information sheets (youth, women, lifers, extended sentences).
- CIC had its Performance hearing on February 4, 2026, before the DC Council.
- CIC will be embarking on a professional development day with the New Jersey Department of Corrections Ombudsman
- Monthly CIC newsletter summarizing activities in the District and population data for DOC and BOP residents.
- Two DOC inspection visits have been conducted since the last meeting, with additional inspections scheduled.
- Participation in interagency efforts such as the "Students in the Care of DC Coordinating Committee" and the quarterly District Court detention call.
- Agency attendance at oversight-related convenings, including peer learning meetings with oversight professionals nationwide.
- Updated count of three recent DOC deaths, two occurring in early 2026 and one in late 2025.

DOC Updates

Mr. Kareem McCraney (Program Manager) provided detailed DOC inspection updates, including:

Inspection Activities and Conditions

• Multiple inspections conducted at CTF, CDF, and Central Cell Block in December 2025 and March 2026.

• Administrative Segregation: Residents were given 2 hours 45 minutes recreation + 15 minutes showers; staff may allow weekend recreation access if staffing permits.
• Disciplinary Segregation: Residents were given 1 hour 45 minutes recreation + 15 minutes showers; residents permitted continued tablet access for phone/text communication, resulting in calmer unit conditions.
• Northwest One Unit fully renovated and designated as a faith-based housing program (100-resident capacity, mixed religious groups).
• Maya Angelou Academy continues educational access even for young adults temporarily placed in Administrative Segregation.

Identified Issues
• GED unit lacks a dedicated Spanish-language instructor; a resident currently provides instruction.
• Technology costs remain high: $0.25 per text; $2.25 per 15-minute phone call; $3/hour movie rentals, with complaints about frozen screens and continued billing.
• Medical concerns in the 50-and-older unit were addressed during the inspection by escorting residents to the infirmary.
• Central Cell Block was closed for three weeks due to infrastructure issues including a flood; precincts temporarily held arrestees. Facility is operational but requires repair to a significant ceiling opening.
• DOC reports over 500 residents enrolled in the Medically Assisted Treatment (MAT) program, more than 80 gangs or "crews," and 600 residents observing Ramadan.
• Staff levels include 707 correctional officers with 109 vacancies.
• CIC recommendation regarding expanded law library access on tablets was implemented; residents no longer face 24-hour mandatory wait periods.

Executive Director Issac pointed out the continuing positive relationship with the DOC. He noted the DOC's heavy emphasis on programming for its residents. Mr. Issac also stressed the persistent issue of mold despite the age of the facility.

Chairman Thornton inquired about residents having access to the tablets as well as phone calls when they are indigent.

Mr. McCraney pointed out the DOC's in house renovation programs, (i.e., painting and plumbing) to assist with the wear and tear at the facility.

Board Discussion

• Ms. Nkechi Taifa and Ms. Katharine Huffman expressed concerns regarding mold persistence and gang-related dynamics.
• Mr. McCraney confirmed CIC is still seeking DOC's formal mold remediation plan.
• Ms. Ukaegbu encouraged Board participation in future inspections.

BOP Updates

Ms. Nailah Seabron (Chief of Staff) and Ms. Nicole Ukaegbu (Deputy Director) jointly presented BOP updates:

Communication & Administrative Challenges
• Communication difficulties persist following turnover within BOP following the federal shutdown; new points of contact provide limited information.

• Quarterly BOP meeting offered minimal updates; CIC was directed to submit FOIA requests for information historically provided directly.

USP Lee Inspection (February 2026)

Ms. Seabron reported that:
• CIC interviewed 47 DC Code residents.
• Facility is a Chronic Care Level-1 medical site, insufficient for residents with higher medical needs. CIC will recommend reassignment of such residents.
• Recurring issues included lockdown frequency, limited medical/mental health staffing, and lack of program access.
• A non-DC resident died in the SHU during CIC's inspection visit; death details were unshared due to jurisdiction limits.
• SHU residents reported concerns about staff responsiveness, water cutoff in a cell, and insufficient emergency response.
• Residents also reported limited job assignments for DC residents.

Ms. Seabron also mentioned that she and the Deputy Director have been attending inter-agency detention calls with other various government agencies including the US Parole Commission, PDS, and reentry individuals from the VOA

Death Notification Discussion

• Board expressed significant concern about lack of BOP death notifications under the existing MOU.
• CIC identified three deaths through returned holiday cards rather than BOP reporting.
• Members agreed to elevate the issue in future discussions with BOP leadership especially the lack of access to the SHU.

Voting & Legislative Education

Ms. Patricia Marks (Senior Program Analyst) explained that CIC will prepare updated voter education materials regarding:
• Ranked-choice voting implementation for the 2026 DC primary;
• The concurrent special election for Ward 5;
• Access to election information despite 130+ candidates across races.

Policy & Standards Development

Ms. Ukaegbu noted continued refinement of CIC's internal inspection standards and upcoming professional development with the New Jersey Corrections Ombudsman. She also mentioned the Legislative Booklet and upcoming updates to it.

Outgoing & Incoming Board Member Notes

• Ms. Taifa highlighted CIC's historical growth and invited CIC representatives to appear on the "Crossroads" radio program.
• Ms. Dasher expressed appreciation for joining the Board and shared her background as a returning citizen.
• CIC requested Ms. Dasher's biography for agency records.

Meeting adjourned.