



Wisconsin Department of Corrections

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Waupun Correctional Institution

Mr. Brian Foster, Warden

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Purpose Statement

To provide a safe institution for the public, staff and inmates and a constructive environment for inmates that encourages positive growth and enables them to successfully reenter society.

Special Historical Notes and Other Institutional Information

Wisconsin's first governor, Nelson Dewey, appointed a three-member prison commission on March 14, 1851, to select a site for what would then be named the Wisconsin State Prison. On July 4 of that year, Waupun was chosen, due to its close proximity to the proposed Rock River Valley Railroad and an abundance of good quality limestone for building.

Construction of a temporary prison structure was started later that year; the first permanent building was completed in 1854 and remains in use today as the South Cell Hall. The original cell hall had 288 cells and was built using inmate labor at a cost of \$325 a cell. The main administration building was built in 1855 and additional cell halls were added in 1854, 1906 and 1913, all of which are in use today. The largest structure, the main cell hall, was constructed in 1858. The prison was home to both male and female prisoners until the women were moved to the Wisconsin's first women's prison,

constructed at Taycheedah in 1933. On Jan. 22, 1992, the Wisconsin State Prison Historic District was entered on both the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

Continual improvements to the buildings and infrastructure have allowed WCI to meet the operational needs of a modern prison. In 1998, a new Health and Restrictive Housing Complex opened, replacing buildings that dated back to the 1940's.

The prison was originally overseen by a as prison commissioner who was elected for a two-year term by general election, until the Legislature abolished the office in 1873 and appointed a warden to supervise the facility

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