



**TO:** Pennsylvania Parole Board Members

**FROM:** Farrah Conjar  
Executive Secretary II

**DATE:** November 22, 2023

**RE:** Board Meeting Minutes  
**November 15, 2023**

In compliance with *Act 175*, known as the *Sunshine Law*, effective September 17, 1976, the Pennsylvania Parole Board provided notification to the public of the scheduled meeting on November 14, 2022.

The public meeting convened at 9:00 AM at Riverfront Office Center in Harrisburg, PA with Chairperson Charles Fox presiding. A quorum of Board Members was present.

### **Attendance**

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chairperson Jim Fox                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BD Member Leo Dunn                      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BD Member Tony Moscato              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BD Member Marcus Brown                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BD Member Ted Johnson                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BD Member Linda Rosenberg           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BD Member Khadija Diggs                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BD Member Jack Daneri                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BD Member Elizabeth Bolton<br>Penna |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alan Robinson, Chief Counsel              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deb Carpenter, Board Secretary          |   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neil Malady, Policy/Legislative Affairs   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scott Woolf, Director – RAO             |   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michael Potteiger, Chief Hearing Examiner | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Janaki Theivakumaran, Special Assistant |   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meghan Dade, SOAB Executive Director      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suzanne Estrella, Victim Advocate       |   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jason Lambrino, Assistant Counsel         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Morgan Davis, Assistant Counsel         |   |

Chairperson Fox recognized public guests:

- Randee Brant, Chief of Staff, Department of Corrections (DOC)
- Mark Bergstrom, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Sentencing Commission
- Matthew Kleiman, Pennsylvania Sentencing Commission
- John Manning, Deputy Chief Counsel, Department of Corrections (DOC)

### **APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Board Member Anthony Moscato motioned to approve the September 2023 Parole Board minutes. Board Member Ted Johnson seconded the motion. The Parole Board unanimously approved the minutes.

## **OFFICE AND STAFF REPORTS**

### **Office of Victim Advocate (OVA)**

Victim Advocate, Suzanne Estrella

- Conducted a pilot training with Department of Corrections, Reentry Staff around Human Trafficking.
- Updating the section of Parole 101 training for 2024, give a little more understanding what goes into the Victim Comment piece.
- A victim comment site in Philadelphia has been identified for 2024.

### **Sexual Offenders Assessment Board (SOAB)**

Executive Director, Meghan Dade

- Scott Moore SOAB investigator has passed away with brief battle of cancer. Chairperson Fox read a tribute and observed a moment of silence for Scott.

### **Communications/Media Report**

Special Assistant, Janaki Theivakumaran

- Working on planning the Spring retreat with a tentative date of April Board Meeting in the King of Prussia area.
- Please advise if you have any speaker or presenters you are interested in for the retreat.
- We were contacted after the retreat in Pittsburgh to set up a training on violations and hearings by the York County Public Defender's office, this will take place on November 16, 2023.
- The Philadelphia Public Defender's office also requested a training on violations and hearings, this is scheduled in December 2023.

### **Policy and Legislative Affairs Report**

Policy and Legislative Affairs Director, Neil Malady

- The House and Senate are in session today.
- The Senate will be back in session the first week in December; then the House will be in the second week in December. There are no remaining sessions for the calendar year.

### **Office of Chief Counsel Report**

Chief Counsel, Alan Robinson

- Office Hours are being offered to the Hearing Examiner and Records and Administration office on topics they wanted more information on.
- Circulated the Thomas case, this is a case where he challenged the rescission of his auto reparole. Thomas was found not guilty of possessing a controlled substance, but was found guilty for a misconduct for contraband which was tainted with synthetic marijuana. The Court said the decision was good because the statute does not say possessing controlled substances, it says misconducts involving controlled substances.

### **Office of Hearing Examiners Report**

Chief Hearing Examiner, Michael Potteiger

- DEA will do a presentation on trends in the Commonwealth on firearms and drugs at the December Board meeting.
- Working with DOC leadership in reference to the recommitment ranges which will be starting in January 2024.
- Samuel Rivera is the new Specialized Hearing Examiner he has been sitting in with different Hearing Examiner's for training. He will be on his own in January 2024.

### **Records and Administration Office Report**

Records and Administration Office Director, Scott Woolf

- Revamp of the recirculation process will be taking place next week, this is an enhancement for the decision maker.
- Board Member Rosenberg suggested a box for OVA Commenting in the PDI that it displays on the screen that there is a victim comment. Testing will begin this week.
- Decisions are being generated faster because the computer is doing the routing.

### **Board Secretary Report**

Board Secretary, Deb Carpenter

- The zero tolerance parole condition definition has been deleted from DOC Field Services policy. If you have a mandatory zero tolerance condition then please explain what that means to ensure the field has a clear understanding of the condition that is imposed.
- If Board Members or Hearing Examiners are having issues, delays or lack of communication with SCI Parole on interview/hearing days then please advise so we can resolve the issues.
- Reminder, now that we are virtual, to verify via email with a SCI Parole staff member that an inmate is refusing to attend their parole interview.
- Update Parole 101
  - BM Rosenberg will be presenting at SCI Chester on November 28, 2023, to speak to inmates about what to expect for upcoming parole interviews.
  - Working with DOC Reentry staff to participate in a panel, which will consist of the Board, DOC Reentry, Treatment and Housing. The Parole for Success presentation will be held at all the SCI locations.
    - In the planning phases, hoping to start this Spring 2024.
  - Chairman Fox stated we will be doing a professional video for all inmates to see to keep them informed/updated with the parole process.

### **Board Discussion**

- Board Member Diggs inquired if we are going to solicit feedback or distribute a survey regarding our Parole 101 presentation.
- In particular, are we responding to the public defenders request that their information be included and identified.
  - Board Member Johnson would like to explore the various options regarding this.

- Board expressed some concerns and issues they are having with interpreters for parole interviews.
  - Board Secretary will look into their issues and concerns.
- Board Member Moscato asked Meghan Dade about the PCLR score and why he may be seeing an uptick of insufficient score.
  - PCL-R is a very difficult assessment to score and it is very case specific. If there are pieces missing that cannot be obtained then the assessment cannot be scored properly.
  - Another PCLR score training is scheduled for next year.
  - Please reach out on any particular case you have questions about.

### **PA Sentencing Commission**

Mark Bergstrom announced Matt Kleiman will take over as the Executive Director effective January 1, 2024. Update on status of recommitment ranges were submitted the General Assembly for the 90-day review period, that review period ends on November 27, 2023. On track to take effect January 1, 2024.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

At 11:05 a.m. Board Member Moscato made a motion to adjourn the public session. The motion was seconded by Board Member Bolton-Penna. The Board Members voted unanimously to adjourn the public session.