



TO: Pennsylvania Parole Board Members

FROM: Farrah Conjar
Executive Secretary II

DATE: February 26, 2024

RE: Board Meeting Minutes
February 14, 2024

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 9, 2023.

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

- | | | |
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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chairperson Jim Fox | | <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 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
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, Records and Administration Director | |
| <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"/> Tara Gross, Executive Assistant | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jason Lambrino, Assistant Counsel | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Morgan Davis, Assistant Counsel | |

Chairperson Fox recognized public guests:

Matt Kleiman, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing
Michael Pipe, Deputy Chief of Staff, Governor's Office
Tracy Smith, Director of Treatment Services, Department of Corrections
Daniel McIntyre, Director of Bureau of Reentry Service, Department of Corrections
John Manning, Deputy Chief Counsel, Department of Corrections
Jason Stauffer, Administrative Officer 5, Treatment Services, Department of Corrections
Kelly Sekula, Deputy General Counsel, Office of General Counsel
Brett Bucklen, Director, Planning, Research and Statistics, Department of Corrections
Cheryl Horner, Chief of Treatment Services, Department of Corrections

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER AND JANUARY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Board Member Anthony Moscato motioned to approve the December 2023 and January 2024 Parole Board minutes. Board Member Theodore Johnson seconded the motion. The Parole Board unanimously approved the minutes.

Department of Corrections Presentations

Presentation by Treatment Services on the new Batterer's Intervention program. DOC has selected the University of Cincinnati's Cognitive Behavioral Intervention – Interpersonal Violence program which will replace the Duluth model. This change is effective in March 2024.

Presentation by Planning, Research and Statistics on virtual visitation vs. in person visitation. The study showed no difference in recidivism rates for those that had virtual visits vs. in person visits. The study also showed a reduction in recidivism for those individuals who had a visit of any kind vs. no visits.

OFFICE AND STAFF REPORTS

Office of Victim Advocate (OVA)

Executive Assistant, Tara Gross

- Preparing for National Crime Victims' Right Week April 21-April 27, 2024.
 - Summit and Rally will be April 22, 2024, Victim Advocate appreciates the Board's partnership for this event. The theme this year is: "Options, Services, and Hope for Crime Survivors. How would you help?"

Sexual Offenders Assessment Board (SOAB)

Executive Director, Meghan Dade

- On March 15, 2024, SOAB will be hosting a training with Steven Sawyer, a national expert on sex offender treatment, focusing on group training and risk factors with respect to the sex offender population.
- Clerical Assistant II position posting went live today.

Board Secretary Report

Board Secretary, Deb Carpenter

- Preparing for the upcoming Budget hearings. Attended the Budget prep meeting with Department of Corrections and the Office of Budget. There were no specific questions for the Parole Board.
- Board Secretary and Janaki Theivakumaran, along with EDS Evans and two members of her staff visited the Veterans Service Unit (VSU) at SCI Houtzdale, also visited the Neuro Residential Treatment Unit (nRTU) at SCI Albion, in anticipation of Justice Dougherty coming to speak to Board on Autism and his team. Unit is phenomenal, staff is vested

with this population which is leading to success in this unit. We proposed that the staff up there come to the retreat in April and speak with Justice Dougherty.

- There will be a new DocType for VSU inmates that provide more detail
- During the SCI visits, we discussed with DOC the practice of having the correctional officer or any DOC staff in the room during a parole interview. We will work on a consistent process of not having another person in the room if there is no safety concern with the individual.

Communications/Media Report

Special Assistant, Janaki Theivakumaran

- Spring Retreat is scheduled for the week of April 15th in King of Prussia.
 - Tuesday, April 16th will be the Parole 101 presentation, Wednesday, April 17th Justice Dougherty and his staff will present on Autism.
 - Please advise when you want to check in and check out for room reservations.
 - If you have any topics you are interested in hearing about at the Spring Retreat please reach out.
 - Working on the schedule for Parole for Success. We are looking into scheduling from March 2024 – December 2024.
 - The parole video that will run on the inmate channel at the SCI's is tentative for production during board week in March 2024. We are finalizing the script today and will be sending out to the Board shortly.

Policy and Legislative Affairs Report

Policy and Legislative Affairs Director, Neil Malady

- The Legislature is in recess until March 18, 2024.
- Our Budget Hearings are scheduled for February 20th at 1 p.m. with the Senate and February 23rd at 10 a.m. with the House.
- No dates have been announced for our three vacant board seats.

Office of Chief Counsel Report

Chief Counsel, Alan Robinson

- Introduced Marla Venable, our new Legal Office Administrator.
- Financial Disclosures are due May 1, 2024. Any questions regarding submissions can be directed to Morgan Davis.

Office of Hearing Examiners Report

Chief Hearing Examiner, Michael Potteiger

- Paige Wiggins, Administrative Assistant, is leaving on March 1, 2024. Interviewing for her position starting tomorrow. We have a total of five people interviewing.
- Posted the vacant Hearing Examiner's position, posting is open until February 21, 2024.
- Implemented the new recommitment ranges on parole violators, that were approved by the Sentencing Commission, on January 1, 2024. The new process is running smoothly no major issues to report.

- Implemented recordings through Zoom which are uploaded to OnBase. All held hearings will be in the individual file.
- Completed violation hearing report in the new workflow process, waiting for IT to give us the okay start testing in the new UAT with the upgrade.

Records and Administration Office (RAO)

Records and Administration Director, Scott Woolf

- Memo to Decision Makers, phase 2, tentative release date first quarter 2024.
- The Decision Maker Library organization, which was provided by the workgroup, was submitted to the developers with a tentative release date for the first half of 2024.
- Upgrade to a newer OnBase version is scheduled for February 2024.
- Recommitment enhancements are underway. Enhancements are made due to the feedback from the various users.
- Job postings for Staff Tech I, II and Clerical Assistant I will be or are available.

Board Discussion

Open discussion regarding the parole decisional instrument (PDI) four subjective interview questions.

- Board Member Diggs would like to know the substance of the information that is being used in answering the questions.
- The discussion determined decision makers are using various information and applying to the multiple questions.
- Board Member Johnson stated he would like to have further internal conversations then take those questions/concerns to the Sentencing Commission.
- The Sentencing Commission advised they used the most common decisional factors to develop the subjective questions. They will review the data with the Board to determine if the questions need to be rephrased to allow for more consistency when reviewing the information needed to answer these questions during interview process.

Open discussion regarding delaying a parole interview until victim commenting occurs. OVA works closely with the docket on scheduling victim comment in an effort to reduce holds on cases. Victim comments need to be available at the time of the interview; this will allow the decision makers to have all required information at the time of interview and decision on whether to grant or deny parole.

Board Member Diggs requested a presentation in the future from DOC on the Medically Assisted Treatment (MAT). Specially on why people can or cannot obtain subscriptions due to seeing an increase in suboxone misconducts.

- Board Secretary advised there is a lot of funding issues with this treatment right now. As soon as DOC has the needed information they will come and present to the Board.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10:39 a.m. Board Member Moscato made a motion to adjourn the public session. The motion was seconded by Board Member Johnson. The Board Members voted unanimously to adjourn the public session.