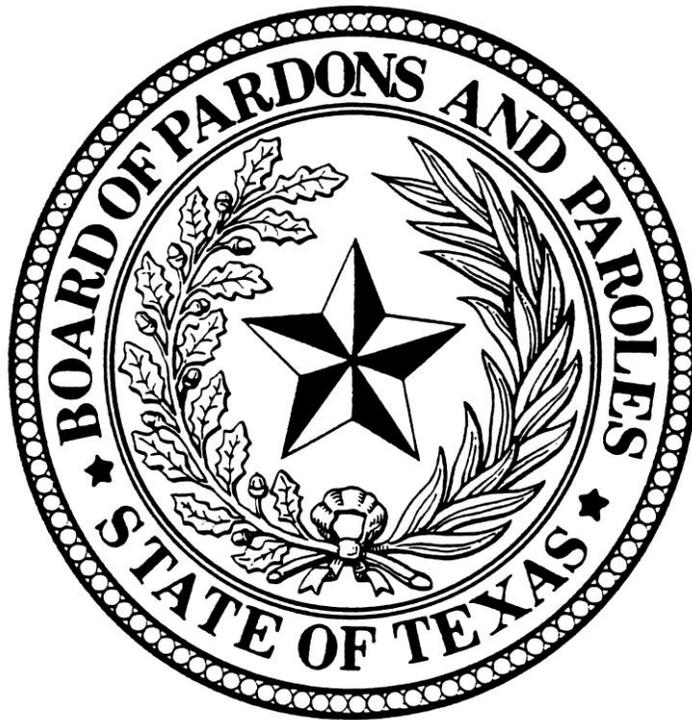


TEXAS BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLES

MINUTES

Board Workshop No. 23-0426



April 26, 2023

Austin, Texas

TEXAS BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLES

WORKSHOP

Wednesday, April 26, 2023

Holiday Inn-Austin Midtown
(Hill Country AB)
6000 Middle Fiskville Road
Austin, Texas

1:00 PM

Order of Business

1. Call Workshop to Order
2. Parole Supervision-Conditions – Rene Hinojosa, Director, TDCJ-Parole Division
3. Criminal Justice Trends and Analysis – Andrew Barbee, Director, TDCJ-Research and Development Department
4. Rehabilitation Programs Division (RPD) Volunteer Programs – Timothy Jones, Deputy Director of Volunteer Services and Lisa Langley, Program Supervisor, TDCJ-RPD
5. Policies/Directives – Bettie Wells, General Counsel, Board of Pardons and Paroles (BPP)
6. Institutional Parole Office (IPO) Liaison – Clint Gunnels, Director, BPP-IPO
7. Corrections Information Technology System (CITS) Update – Jessica Dillard, Board Administrator, BPP
8. Adjourn



**MINUTES OF THE
TEXAS BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLES
BOARD WORKSHOP
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 2023**

REGULAR SESSION

The Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles (Board) met in open session on Wednesday, April 26, 2023, at 1:00 p.m., Holiday Inn Austin Midtown, 6000 Middle Fiskville Road, Austin, Texas.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

David Gutiérrez
Elodia Brito
Carmella Jones
Brian Long
Marsha Moberley
Linda Molina
Ed Robertson

PAROLE COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Michael Adams
Richard Aiello
Jacqueline Bishop
Edward Davila
Lee Ann Eck-Massingill
Ira Evans
Mary Farley
Sandra Fletcher
Troy Fox
Raymond Gonzalez
James Paul Kiel
Jeffrey Marton
Anthony Ramirez
Alfredo Salcido

Roel Tejada

BOARD STAFF PRESENT

Bettie Wells, General Counsel
Timothy McDonnell, Chief of Staff
Jessica Dillard, Board Administrator
Rachel Alderete, Director, Support Operations
Kyle Britt, Budget Director
Eugene Stroud, Deputy Director, Financial Operations
Heather Penick, Manager Financial Operations
Wadella Murphy, Director, Hearing Operations
Kelsey Stratton, Director, Staff Development
Erica Montalvan, Deputy Director, Institutional Parole Operations
Libby Hamilton, Manager, Victim Liaison
Kimberley Harris, Manager, Staff Development
Jessica Guerrero, Manager, Administration
Pamela Pacher, Program Specialist
Terence Hall, Systems Analyst
Estela DeHoyos, Program Supervisor
Matthew Schlosser, Multimedia Technician

TDCJ STAFF PRESENT

Matt Jug, OIG

OTHERS PRESENT

David O’neil, Attorney at Law
Michelle Belanger

CONVENED – TEXAS BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLES

Presiding Officer (Chairman) David Gutiérrez convened the workshop of April 26, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. in accordance with Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, Open Meetings Act. After roll call, the Chairman stated a quorum was present and declared the workshop open.

RECOGNITIONS

Chairman Gutiérrez recognized the Board Members, Parole Commissioners and guests present.

PAROLE SUPERVISION CONDITIONS (ATTACHMENT A)

Chairman Gutiérrez introduced Rene Hinojosa, Director of TDCJ Parole Division to present agenda item #2 Parole Supervision Conditions.

Mr. Hinojosa discussed the parole supervision conditions regarding the Residential Rehabilitation Center (RRC) Client Employment Initiative. He stated one of the biggest barriers of someone being successful on parole is the inability to get a job. Currently, the unemployment rate with parolees eligible for

employment is approximately 16% - 18%. However, the number increases significantly to 70% for parolees living in RRC's, or "halfway houses." There are eight RRC's throughout the state. In order for a client to leave the RRC, they must have a place to live.

Mr. Hinojosa discussed the RRC Client Employment Initiative's proposed plan. With the Board's assistance, if a client is:

- 30 days unemployed – Impose Special Condition O.22 to maintain gainful employment.
- 45 days unemployed – Impose a sanction for violating Special Condition O.22.
- 60 days unemployed – Impose Special Condition O.07 to complete 100 hours of community service.
- Failing to complete community service – Request a pre-revocation warrant for ISF placement.

The imposition of special conditions O.22 and O.07 will assist in holding clients accountable. Communication has been made with local community supervision and safety departments to get local entities that allow parolees and probationers to complete community services. The goal is to help and motivate clients to find employment so they can become successful in supporting themselves and take control of their own life.

Mr. Hinojosa also discussed the Reentry and Integration Division (RID) Community Case Managers' responsibilities, which include assisting clients to obtain a birth certificate and social security card; conducting job referrals to community business partners; attending job fairs and hiring events; employment classes; and referrals to the Texas Workforce Commission.

Chairman Gutiérrez thanked Mr. Hinojosa for his presentation.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE TRENDS AND ANALYSIS (*ATTACHMENT B*)

Chairman Gutiérrez introduced Andrew Barbee, Director of TDCJ Research and Development Department to present agenda item #3 Criminal Justice Trends and Analysis.

Mr. Barbee stated the Research and Development Team with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice is a brand-new department. He gave the Board a brief background about himself and discussed some of the projects they work on with the Parole Division, specifically looking towards the future, which include Workforce, Inmate Suicide, Inmate Classification, Parole Client Risk Assessment, Parole Practices and Outcomes, and Population Forecasting. One of the things the team is doing in the Research and Development Department is helping the agency modernize the way data is examined.

Additionally, Mr. Barbee discussed potential future collaboration with BPP in improving the Texas Risk Assessment System (TRAS) and developing better understanding of optimal candidates for prison-based programs and earlier placement into those programs.

Chairman Gutiérrez thanked Mr. Barbee for his presentation.

REHABILITATION PROGRAMS DIVISION (RPD) VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS (*ATTACHMENT C*)

Chairman Gutiérrez Introduced Timothy Jones, Deputy Director of Volunteer Services to present agenda item #4 Rehabilitation Programs Division (RPD) Volunteer Programs.

Mr. Jones presented on Volunteer Programs, noting that volunteers are the greatest asset within TDCJ. Currently, there are approximately 25,341 volunteers that operate the programs on the units; 90% of them are faith based related, and the other 10% are broken down between substance use, sex offender education, and other areas. There are approximately 460 different recognized religions within TDCJ. As a result of the Scott vs. Pierce lawsuit, the religions are broken down into 10 major divisions. Volunteers wanting to present a program to the inmate population are asked to complete a program proposal form. The program proposal forms are reviewed by staff to determine whether they are volunteer programs for religious services or other areas so that they are applied to the appropriate areas. Currently, there is a Volunteer Programs document. The plan is to have the document in electronic format by the end of May.

Chairman Gutiérrez thanked Mr. Jones for his presentation.

POLICIES/DIRECTIVES (*ATTACHMENT D*)

Chairman Gutiérrez yielded the floor to Bettie Wells, General Counsel, to present agenda item #5 Policies and Directives.

Ms. Wells discussed the Board's policies and directives, stating the Board has a total of 40 policies and 44 directives to provide guidelines for the Board Members, Parole Commissioners, and staff to follow in all areas of the Board's duties and responsibilities. In June of 2011, a new numbering system for the policies and directives was established. Prior to that time, all Board created governing documents were identified by the date the document was approved or adopted. Under the new numbering system, all policies and directives are identified by the chapter in the Board's rules. Ms. Wells discussed Governing Documents History, Current Governing Statutory Documents, Statutory Authority for Policies and Directives, and Governing Documents Summary.

Chairman Gutiérrez thanked Ms. Wells for her presentation.

INSTITUTIONAL PAROLE OFFICE (IPO) LIAISON (*ATTACHMENT E*)

Chairman Gutiérrez introduced Erica Montalvan, Institutional Parole Office Deputy Director to present agenda item #6 Institutional Parole Officer (IPO) Liaison.

Ms. Montalvan, discussed the IPO Liaison Program, stating the purpose of the Program Liaison is to facilitate offender interviews for Board and Institutional Parole staff, reduce travel time and expenses, and concentrate statewide case production efforts on specific units. For scheduling purposes, emails were set up directly related to this role. A mailbox was created, and staff are encouraged to email the Program Liaison designated for the unit. The point of contact will now be the Program Liaison. Staff will email the appropriate mailbox, and the Liaison will submit the lay in request, notify the warden, and schedule the interview. The Liaison will ensure the offender is on time, and they can escort if there is no security staff for general population. The platforms that will be used for the offender interviews include Teams, and the telephone. Other responsibilities the Liaison will have include status letters, re-contacts, answering I-60 correspondence and hearing section re-contacts. The Assistant Regional Supervisor in each region will supervise the Program Liaison. Once the full-time Program Liaisons come on board, statewide training will be held.

Ms. Montalvan stated this is a tool voting members may use, but it does not take away from voting members going to the unit and interviewing individuals.

Chairman Gutiérrez thanked Ms. Montalvan and Mr. Gunnels for their work.

CORRECTIONS INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEM (*ATTACHMENT F*)

Chairman Gutiérrez introduced Jessica Dillard to present agenda item #7 Corrections Information Technology System (CITS).

Ms. Dillard provided an update on the CITS Project, including a brief history of the project. She reported the CITS go live date is set for May 2024. The modernization includes processes from the intake process up to pre-release. Phase I of the project will include Mainframe transitioning to TDCJ Micro Focus by the way of “lift and shift” effective June 5, 2023. Data currently stored will transition to a cloud-based solution, moving the 40-year-old Mainframe to more modernized technology to include coding and data storage systems. The data will feed all other systems utilized day to day in normal function, including OIMS, Classification Profile, Mainframe, and Reporting Tools.

Ms. Dillard explained the Mainframe transition benefits, which include, with the exception of OIMS, unification of all passwords used to access the systems, minimal to no physical change to the screens viewed for most systems. Additionally, the old Electronic Mail System (EMS) will no longer be supported. Emails and notifications will come through alternative methods, and off-line subpoena requests will have a different appearance. Also, a new icon will replace the Mainframe icon. Ms. Dillard also discussed what staff should do to prepare for the Mainframe transition and provided CITS – Project Milestones, Key Dates and contact information for any questions, comments, or concerns.

Chairman Gutiérrez thanked Ms. Dillard for her presentation.

ADJOURNMENT

Having completed all posted items on the agenda, Chairman Gutiérrez adjourned the Board Workshop at 3:37 p.m.

ADOPTED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT OF THE BOARD ON THE 27th DAY OF JULY 2023.



DAVID GUTIÉRREZ, PRESIDING OFFICER (CHAIR)