

**Texas Board of Criminal Justice
243rd Meeting**



Minutes

**October 17, 2025
Austin, Texas**

TEXAS BOARD OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

**Cambria Hotel Austin Uptown
13205 Burnet Road
Austin, Texas 78727**

**Friday, October 17, 2025
9:00 AM – 1:00 PM**

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Call to Order

Convene Texas Board of Criminal Justice (TBCJ) Meeting

Regular Session – Uptown Ballroom

- A. Recognitions
- B. Consideration of Approval of Consent Items
 - 1. Hazardous Duty Pay Authorization Requests
 - 2. Personal Property Donations
 - 3. 242nd TBCJ Meeting Minutes
- C. Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) Parole Division Spotlight
- D. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Purchases and Contracts Over \$1 Million
- E. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Annual Review of Board Policy BP 14.01, “Investment Policy,” and Resolution Adopting the Investment Policy
- F. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Proposed Amendments to Board Rules Title 37 Texas Administrative Code Sections
 - 1. 152.3, “Admissions”
 - 2. 159.19, “Continuity of Care and Services Program for Offenders who are Elderly, Terminally Ill, Significantly Ill or with a Physical Disability or Having a Mental Illness”
- G. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Adoption of Amendments to Board Rules Title 37 Texas Administrative Code Sections
 - 1. 151.51, “Custodial Officer Certification and Hazardous Duty Pay Eligibility Guidelines”
 - 2. 152.25, “Maximum Rated Capacity of Individual Units”
- H. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Proposed Repeal of Board Rule Title 37 Texas Administrative Code Section 152.5, “Designation of State Jail Regions”
- I. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Proposed New Board Rule Title 37 Texas Administrative Code Section 151.58, “Legislative Leave Pool”

- J. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Proposed Revisions to Board Policies
 - 1. BP 01.01, “Texas Board of Criminal Justice Responsibilities”
 - 2. BP 01.04, “Standard of Conduct for the Texas Board of Criminal Justice and the Executive Director of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice”
 - 3. BP 13.69, “State Counsel for Offenders”
- K. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Proposed Revision to Personnel Directive PD-94, “Teleworking”
- L. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Proposed Deletion of Board Policy BP 11.75, “Telework”
- M. Report from the Chairman, TBCJ
- N. Report on Information Technology Initiatives
- O. Report from the Executive Director, TDCJ
- P. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Facilities Division Construction Projects
 - 1. Request to Replace Multiple Roofs, Hughes Unit, Gatesville, Texas
 - 2. Request to Renovate Water Tower, Ramsey Unit, Rosharon, Texas
- Q. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Proposed Land Transactions
 - 1. Request for a 14.99 acres Land Acquisition, Byrd Unit, Huntsville, Texas
 - 2. Request for Electrical Transmission Easement, Montford Unit, Lubbock, Texas
 - 3. Request for Gas Pipeline Easement, Montford Unit, Lubbock, Texas
 - 4. Request for Water Line Easement, Montford Unit, Lubbock, Texas
 - 5. Request for Wastewater Line Easement, Montford Unit, Lubbock, Texas
- R. Report from the Office of Inspector General
- S. Report from the Office of the Independent Ombudsman
- T. Report from the Independent Office of Inmate Counsel
- U. Report from the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Ombudsman
- V. Report from the Office of the Independent Auditor

Adjourn TBCJ Meeting

The TBCJ may discuss and/or take action on any of the items posted on this meeting agenda.

**MINUTES OF THE
TEXAS BOARD OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE
Meeting No. 243**

The Texas Board of Criminal Justice convened on Friday, October 17, 2025, in regular session at 9:33 a.m. at the Cambria Hotel in Austin, Texas, and adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

**TEXAS BOARD OF CRIMINAL
JUSTICE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Eric J.R. Nichols, Chairman
Hon. Faith Johnson, Vice-Chair
Rodney Burrow, M.D., Secretary
Thomas Fordyce
Hon. Molly Francis
Ambassador Sichan Siv
Pastor Nate Sprinkle
General Bill Welch
Sydney Zuiker

**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF
CRIMINAL JUSTICE STAFF
PRESENT:**

Bobby Lumpkin, Executive Director
Jason Clark, Chief Programs Officer
Ron Hudson, Chief Operations Officer
Ron Steffa, Chief Financial Officer
Mary Babcock Stephanie Greger
Richard Babcock Eric Guerrero
Kate Blifford Rene Hinojosa
Tina Clark Bill Lewis
Marvin Dunbar Rachelle White
Jennifer Gonzales April Zamora
Carey Green

**TEXAS BOARD OF CRIMINAL
JUSTICE STAFF PRESENT:**

Chris Cirrito Wyvonne Long
Lance Coleman Brian Patrick
Jill Durst

OTHERS PRESENT:

Mike Ward, Senate Criminal Justice Committee
Reagan Stewart, Legislative Budget Board
Marsha Moberley, Board of Pardons and Paroles
Tim McDonald, Board of Pardons and Paroles
Megan Molleur, Office of the Lieutenant Governor

Convene the Texas Board of Criminal Justice

Chairman Eric J.R. Nichols convened the 243rd meeting of the Texas Board of Criminal Justice (TBCJ or board) on Friday, October 17, 2025, at 9:33 a.m., noted that a quorum was present, and declared the meeting open in accordance with Texas Government Code Chapter 551, the *Open Meetings Act*. He stated the TBCJ would be conducting business from the agenda posted in the *Texas Register*. The TBCJ is committed to providing the opportunity for public presentations on posted agenda topics and public

comments on issues within its jurisdiction in accordance with Board Rule 151.4, “Public Presentations and Comments to the Texas Board of Criminal Justice.” No registration cards were received for public comment prior to the deadline, so the board will not hear public presentations on posted agenda topics.

Mr. Nichols acknowledged that the board is wearing purple ribbons and attire in honor of Domestic Violence Awareness month. Domestic Violence has affected and continues to affect communities across Texas. Such violence results from a pattern of physical, sexual, and/or psychological abuse. Some of the many costs to victims and to children of victims include increased incidents of depression, acute and chronic health and mental health conditions, developmental issues, and aggressive or delinquent behavior. He stated each number provided in the statistics presented represents a human being who has been impacted by domestic violence. In 2024, 161 Texans were killed by intimate partners in 42 counties in Texas, eight others were injured, 17 friends or bystanders were killed, and 104 adults and minor children lost a parent. Sometimes, there is a stereotyped narrative around domestic violence, but this issue, much like any other, cannot and should not be stereotyped. Each incident of domestic violence impacts one or more individual human beings. Of those murdered in a domestic violence incident, 137 were women and 24 were men. The mission of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) includes, as a core element, protection and support of crime victims. The Texas criminal justice system plays a significant role in addressing domestic violence by holding domestic violence offenders accountable for their actions, enhancing victim safety, disrupting the cycle of violence resulting in intervention opportunities for victims and offenders, breaking the generational cycle and learned effect of domestic violence on children, including cycles of generational incarceration, and sending an important message that there will be real consequences for committing acts of domestic violence. Thus, during this month, the board not only recognizes victims of domestic violence, but sees and hears them. Mr. Nichols stated the men and women of the TDCJ will continue to work with and support the victims. He expressed the board’s steadfast commitment to a future where every Texan will be able to live free from violence, empowered by safety, dignity, and hope.

Sydney Zuiker shared a victim’s story and stated domestic violence impacts not only the victim but also their family. A colleague of Ms. Zuiker lost her adult daughter to domestic violence, and Ms. Zuiker discussed how that loss has shaped the victim’s life. She commended the victim for her strength and her involvement with bringing awareness to domestic violence. Chairman Nichols thanked Ms. Zuiker for her work with the board and Crimestoppers.

Recognitions

Chairman Nichols recognized the TDCJ employees who have dedicated 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, and 50 years of service to the state of Texas. He stated these individuals represent the strong commitment of this agency’s staff systemwide. On behalf of the TBCJ and Executive Director Bobby Lumpkin, he expressed deepest gratitude for the continued service of these employees. During the months of September and October 2025, 59 employees attained 25 years of service, 45 employees attained 30 years of service, 14 employees attained 35 years of service, 14 employees attained 40 years of service, and two employees attained 45 years of service. Chairman Nichols stated that the names of these individuals would be submitted as an attachment to the official board meeting minutes. He thanked them for their unwavering loyalty and dedication to the citizens of Texas. As a symbol of appreciation, these employees will receive a board certificate along with a personal letter of gratitude.

(Attachment A – Employee Names)

Chairman Nichols recognized recently appointed Executive Director Bobby Lumpkin, who has 35 years of dedicated service and most recently held the role of chief operations officer. He began his career as a correctional officer in 1990, was promoted to assistant warden in 1999, and served in several key leadership roles including agency accreditation manager, deputy division director for private facilities, division director of the Manufacturing, Agribusiness and Logistics Division, and director of the Correctional Institutions Division. Chairman Nichols stated Mr. Lumpkin's credentials are impressive, and he holds a Master of Science in Criminal Justice Management and Leadership and a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice from Sam Houston State University. Mr. Lumpkin has contributed to corrections at the national level, serving in leadership roles with the American Correctional Association and the National Correctional Industries Association. He maintains longstanding affiliations with the Correctional Peace Officers Foundation and the American Probation and Parole Association. On the state level, he is the immediate past president of the Texas Corrections Association and a member of the Texas Public Employees Association. Chairman Nichols expressed appreciation and respect for Mr. Lumpkin's accomplishments and commitment to the continuous improvement of the agency. Mr. Lumpkin expressed appreciation for the board trusting him to lead the agency in humanizing the work the agency does.

Mr. Lumpkin recognized Ron Hudson for his recent promotion to Chief Operations Officer. He highlighted Mr. Hudson's career, which began in 1992 as a correctional officer at the Huntsville Unit. Mr. Hudson brings extensive operational experience and proven leadership to his new role. Mr. Lumpkin recognized Mr. Hudson's strategic vision and commitment to excellence. Chairman Nichols thanked Mr. Hudson for his contributions to the agency and the state. Mr. Hudson expressed support for Mr. Lumpkin's plans to move the agency forward to support the employees and population.

Training and Leader Development Division Director Rene Hinojosa, formerly the Parole Division Director, recognized Parole Division Region I Director Krystle McCoy for her recent promotion overseeing the Parole Division's East Texas region. The region consists of 14 parole offices, 10,000 parole clients, and one residential reentry center. He highlighted her career, which began in 2007 as an Institutional Parole Officer after earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Political Science from Texas College in Tyler. He described her as a passionate leader who cares about her staff and is always willing to go the extra mile. Ms. McCoy stated she was honored and humbled for her new role and expressed her gratitude for the recognition. She thanked her family, friends, and colleagues for their support.

Mr. Hinojosa recognized Parole Division Specialized Programs Section Director Angelica Rodriguez for her recent promotion overseeing the division's specialized officers training program and treatment programs, including substance use, sex offender, and cognitive programs. He highlighted her career, which began over fifteen years ago as a parole officer after earning her Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from Eastern New Mexico University. She thanked Mr. Hinojosa for the new opportunity and expressed her excitement at the journey ahead. Chairman Nichols thanked her for her work with the programs that impact much of the population.

Rehabilitation and Reentry Division (RRD) Director April Zamora recognized newly promoted Jill Cale, Director of Female Programs, a position created in response to a review conducted by an outside consultant to reorganize female units with a focus on programming. Ms. Cale has prior experience with the operations of female units, as she was previously the region director over those facilities. She is also a certified trainer in the Texas Risk Assessment System and has worked on the RRD's human trafficking prevention project through the Office of the Governor. She has experience with the reentry process, including releasing an individual who may be returning to an abusive home and will need an alternative solution. Chairman Nichols thanked her for accepting a leadership role. Ms. Cale expressed her honor at being selected for the role and her anticipation for the growth and impact for the female population.

Consideration of Approval of Consent Items

- 1. Hazardous Duty Pay Authorization Requests**
- 2. Personal Property Donations**
- 3. 242nd TBCJ Meeting Minutes**

Chairman Nichols asked if there were any amendments, abstentions, or objections to the proposed consent items. Hearing none, the consent items were approved.

Texas Department of Criminal Justice **Parole Division Spotlight**

Training and Leader Development Division Director, formerly the Parole Division Director, Rene Hinojosa introduced Parole Officer Shontes Aldridge who began her career in 2015 after earning a Bachelor of Arts degree from Texas State University. She is assigned to supervise clients on the therapeutic community caseload. Ms. Aldridge cares about the mission of the agency and the success of its clients. She stated it was an honor and privilege to serve in her new role. Ms. Aldridge expressed her dedication and commitment as a Parole Officer due to her experience with people close to her going through the process of parole and the challenges that come with it. She was motivated to understand human behavior to help redirect and assist people onto a new path. She stated she believes meaningful change is possible in everyone, and her passion is to help transform setbacks into opportunities for growth. Ms. Aldridge introduced her client Susan Rothelle who has successfully completed phase two of outpatient treatment for substance use, describing her as disciplined with active engagement in opportunities for improvement. She is currently celebrating her four-year anniversary for sobriety, working toward rebuilding relationships impacted by her past choices, and has reconnected with her family. She focused on her goal to build herself a home and was successful, gaining valuable skills in construction, and started a small business as a caregiver. Ms. Rothelle has sponsored another individual's sobriety and is continuing her education. Chairman Nichols thanked her for bravery and welcomed her to share her story of successful reentry.

Ms. Rothelle was released from the TDCJ on November 5, 2024. She stated prison was not an easy experience for her, but she took advantage of every educational opportunity available. She expressed gratitude for being granted parole. During her incarceration, she learned from other women's stories and realized how often addiction and trauma lie at the root of criminal behavior. She emphasized that recovery is possible and stated the *parenting* class and *customer service specialist* course were especially influential. She stated the initial period of release was challenging, and she relied on family for employment in the beginning, which helped her stay fully engaged in a recovery community. Ms. Rothelle recognized the contributions of phase two programming and the counselor who improved her confidence. In recovery, she has worked on rebuilding relationships and making amends. She described caregiving as the most meaningful work that has been deeply rewarding to her. Ms. Rothelle recognized Ms. Aldridge for treating her with dignity and respect. Chairman Nichols thanked her for allowing the board to hear how the programs have impacted her.

**Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action
Regarding Purchases and Contracts Over \$1 Million**

Chief Financial Officer Ron Steffa reviewed the purchases and contracts over \$1 million and stated there will be 12 items brought for the board’s consideration and approval. Item one is an increase to the fiscal year (FY) 2024-2025 contract for residential and outpatient substance abuse treatment services with Treatment Associates of Victoria. This is an increase to the amount previously approved by the board in June 2025 due to an increase in utilization. Items two through 11 are increases to the FY 2026-2027 Texas Correctional Office on Offenders with Medical or Mental Impairments (TCOOMMI) contracts or case management and continuity of care with local mental health authorities. These increases include the exceptional items received in the last legislative session. Item 12 is an increase to the Calendar Year 2026-2030 contract for electricity services for 53 units in de-regulated areas of the state. The agency is seeking a 10% variance for any fluctuation in usage.

Chairman Nichols asked for further explanation on the variance request. Mr. Steffa stated the agency will contract for electricity services with estimated usage amounts which can vary largely due to the weather. The 10% variance will account for that increase should it occur. Mr. Nichols asked if there were any additional questions or comments. Hearing none, he called for a motion and a second.

Judge Faith Johnson moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the purchases and contracts over \$1 million as presented.

Pastor Nate Sprinkle seconded the motion, which unanimously passed when called to a vote.

**Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding
the Annual Review of Board Policy BP-14.01, “Investment Policy,”
and Resolution Adopting the Investment Policy**

General Counsel Stephanie Greger presented proposed revisions for BP-14.01 (rev. 22), “Investment Policy,” and the resolution to adopt. The board is required to conduct an annual review as required by BP-01.01, “Texas Board of Criminal Justice Responsibilities.” Due to House Bill (HB) 34, 89th Regular Legislative Session, the agency proposes revisions that include adding language stating the agency is not authorized to acquire security issued by a country of concern identified under Texas Government Code Chapter 2270, or an entity owned or controlled by, or subject to the jurisdiction of, a country of concern.

Chairman Nichols asked if there were any other revisions made. Ms. Greger stated there were not. Hearing no additional questions or comments, Chairman Nichols called for a motion and a second.

Dr. Rodney Burrow moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the Annual Review of Board Policy, BP-14.01 (rev. 22), “Investment Policy,” and Resolution Adopting the Investment Policy, as presented, and that the Chairman sign the Resolution Adopting the Investment Policy.

Judge Molly Francis seconded the motion, which unanimously passed when called to a vote.

Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Proposed Amendments to Board Rules Title 37 Texas Administrative Code Sections

§ 152.3, “Admissions”

Ms. Greger presented Board Rule § 152.3, “Admissions,” with proposed amendments that add language to section (b) to include the verification process of a county’s request for reimbursement; remove requirements mandated by § 152.5, “Designation of State Jail Regions,” which is proposed for repeal; and make grammatical and formatting updates. The rule will be posted in the *Texas Register* and available for public comment.

Hearing no additional questions or comments, Chairman Nichols called for a motion and a second.

Judge Molly Francis moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve for publication in the Texas Register the proposed amendments to Board Rule Title 37 Texas Administrative Code Section 152.3, “Admissions,” to receive public comment as presented.

Judge Faith Johnson seconded the motion, which unanimously passed when called to a vote.

§ 159.19, “Continuity of Care and Services Program for Offenders who are Elderly, Terminally Ill, Significantly Ill or with a Physical Disability or Having a Mental Illness”

Ms. Greger presented Board Rule § 159.19, “Continuity of Care and Services Program for Offenders who are Elderly, Terminally Ill, Significantly Ill or with a Physical Disability or Having a Mental Illness,” with proposed amendments that add the Texas Workforce Commission to the Memorandum of Understanding; revise terminology throughout, including the title, for readability; and make other edits and grammatical updates for clarity. The rule will be posted in the *Texas Register* and available for public comment.

Hearing no additional questions or comments, Chairman Nichols called for a motion and a second.

Ambassador Sichan Siv moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve for publication in the Texas Register the proposed amendments to Board Rule Title 37 Texas Administrative Code Section 159.19, “Continuity of Care and Services Program for Offenders who are Elderly, Terminally Ill, Significantly Ill or with a Physical Disability or Having a Mental Illness,” to receive public comment as presented.

General Bill Welch seconded the motion, which unanimously passed when called to a vote.

Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Proposed Adoption of Amendments to Board Rules Title 37 Administrative Code Sections

§ 151.51, “Custodial Officer Certification and Hazardous Duty Pay Eligibility Guidelines”

Ms. Greger presented Board Rule § 151.51, “Custodial Officer Certification and Hazardous Duty Pay Eligibility Guidelines,” for the adoption of amendments that revise “offender” to “inmate” where appropriate and “rule” to “section” throughout; revise the definition for “Routine Direct Inmate Contact”; add sociologists and interviewers to employees eligible under Hazardous Duty Code 3; replace the deputy

executive director with the chief operations officer as the authority to approve adding positions to Hazardous Duty Code 3; add the chief operations officer, chief programs officer, other division directors, and no more than 25 administrative duty officers to employees eligible under Hazardous Duty Code 4 and remove language stating any other positions approved by the deputy executive director; add laboratory technicians assigned to parole offices to employees eligible under Hazardous Duty Code 8; and make grammatical updates. These amendments were posted in the *Texas Register* for public comment. No public comments were received.

Chairman Nichols asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing none, he called for a motion and a second.

Thomas Fordyce moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice adopt amendments to Board Rule Title 37 Texas Administrative Code Section 151.51, "Custodial Officer Certification and Hazardous Duty Pay Eligibility Guidelines," as published in the Texas Register, and that the Chairman sign the order to this effect.

Sydney Zuiker seconded the motion, which unanimously passed when called to a vote.

§ 152.25, "Maximum Rated Capacity of Individual Units"

Ms. Greger presented Board Rule § 152.25, "Maximum Rated Capacity of Individual Units," for the adoption of amendments that update the maximum rated capacity of individual units, including a change to the previously proposed amendments that establishes the maximum rated capacity of the recently purchased Giles W. Dalby Unit as 1,906. These amendments, except for the change, were posted in the *Texas Register* for public comment. Two public comments were received. Both commenters expressed concerns for the safety of inmates; however, the TDCJ assured those commenters that security factors will continue to be considered when making classification and housing decisions, and those decisions will be made on an individualized basis. The rule will be reposted to the *Texas Register* to reflect the change, but it will not be subject to public comment.

Chairman Nichols asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing none, he called for a motion and a second.

General Bill Welch moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice adopt amendments to Board Rule Title 37 Texas Administrative Code Section 152.25, "Maximum Rated Capacity of Individual Units," as published in the Texas Register to include the change establishing the maximum rated capacity of the recently purchased Giles W. Dalby Unit as 1,906, and that the Chairman sign the order to this effect.

Dr. Rodney Burrow seconded the motion, which unanimously passed when called to a vote.

Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Proposed Repeal of Board Rule Title 37 Texas Administrative Code Section 152.5, "Designation of State Jail Regions"

Ms. Greger presented Board Rule § 152.5, "Designation of State Jail Regions," for repeal due to Senate Bill (SB) 2405, 89th Regular Legislative Session, which repealed the governing statutes, Texas

Government Code §§ 507.003 and 507.004. The proposed repeal will be posted in the *Texas Register* for public comment.

Hearing no additional questions or comments, Chairman Nichols called for a motion and a second.

Pastor Nate Sprinkle moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve for publication in the Texas Register the proposed repeal of Board Rule Title 37 Texas Administrative Code Section 152.5, "Designation of State Jail Regions," to receive public comment as presented.

Judge Molly Francis seconded the motion, which unanimously passed when called to a vote.

Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Proposed New Board Rule Title 37 Texas Administrative Code Section 151.58, "Legislative Leave Pool"

Ms. Greger presented new Board Rule § 151.58, "Legislative Leave Pool," which establishes a legislative leave pool for correctional employees in compliance with HB 1828, 89th Regular Legislative Session. Correctional employees may voluntarily contribute up to eight hours of compensatory time or vacation leave. A correctional employee may use time contributed to the legislative leave pool if the correctional employee uses the time for legislative leave on behalf of certain associations related to the correctional officer's employment with the TDCJ. The new rule will be posted in the *Texas Register* for public comment.

Chairman Nichols asked if the purpose of the rule is to help correctional employees contribute to the legislative process. Ms. Greger confirmed and stated this would allow those employees to attend committee hearings. Chairman Nichols asked if there were any additional questions or comments. Hearing none, he called for a motion and a second.

Sydney Zuiker moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve for publication in the Texas Register the proposed new Board Rule Title 37 Texas Administrative Code Section 151.58, "Legislative Leave Pool," to receive public comment as presented.

Dr. Rodney Burrow seconded the motion, which unanimously passed when called to a vote.

Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Proposed Revisions to Board Policies

BP-01.01, "Texas Board of Criminal Justice Responsibilities"

Ms. Greger presented Board Policy BP-01.01, "Texas Board of Criminal Justice Responsibilities," with a summary of revisions including replacing "offender" with "inmate" and "use of force" with "behavioral intervention" throughout; updating the Authority Section; updating the Policy Section to include the independent reporting entities; updating office titles for the independent reporting entities; adding language to include the Office of the Independent Ombudsman; in Section II.A.2., replacing the TDCJ with the Office of the Independent Auditor concerning the annual audit plan; removing the state jail region

requirement due to the statute requiring this being repealed; updating legislative references and directive titles; and adding language stating that, unless otherwise specified, independent reporting entity employees are expected to abide by all TDCJ personnel directives. Grammatical and formatting updates were also made.

Chairman Nichols asked if there were any additional questions or comments. Hearing none, he called for a motion and a second.

Judge Faith Johnson moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the proposed revisions to Board Policy BP-01.01, "Texas Board of Criminal Justice Responsibilities," as presented.

Judge Molly Francis seconded the motion, which unanimously passed when called to a vote.

BP-01.04, "Standards of Conduct for the Texas Board of Criminal Justice and the Executive Director of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice"

Ms. Greger presented Board Policy BP-01.04, "Standards of Conduct for the Texas Board of Criminal Justice and the Executive Director of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice," with a summary of revisions including updating the Authority Section; clarifying language to address annual training requirements of the board members as established in SB 2405, 89th Regular Legislative Session; updating language throughout to reflect current terminology; and updating the signature authority. Grammatical and formatting updates were also made.

Chairman Nichols asked if there were any additional questions or comments. Hearing none, he called for a motion and a second.

Dr. Rodney Burrow moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the proposed revisions to Board Policy BP-01.04, "Standards of Conduct for the Texas Board of Criminal Justice and the Executive Director of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice," as presented.

General Bill Welch seconded the motion, which unanimously passed when called to a vote.

BP-13.69, "State Counsel for Offenders"

Ms. Greger presented Board Policy BP-13.69, "State Counsel for Offenders," with a summary of revisions including renaming the State Counsel for Offenders to the Independent Office of Inmate Counsel throughout and updating address information and the signature authority. Grammatical and formatting updates were also made.

Chairman Nichols asked if there were any additional questions or comments. Hearing none, he called for a motion and a second.

Judge Molly Francis moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the proposed revisions to Board Policy BP-13.69, "State Counsel for Offenders," as presented.

Judge Faith Johnson seconded the motion, which unanimously passed when called to a vote.

**Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding
Proposed Revisions to Personnel Directive PD-94, “Teleworking”**

Ms. Greger presented proposed revisions to PD-94, “Teleworking,” which include revising language throughout to incorporate teleworking guidelines for TBCJ reporting entities and implement guidelines established in HB 5196, 89th Regular Legislative Session, concerning teleworking; update the Authority Section; add definitions for Approval Authority, Authorization of Telework, and Reporting Entity; clarify the definition for Telework for consistency with HB 5196; provide flexibility and to clarify the right to recall employees to the office at any time; adding performance expectations; streamline the request and approval process to include the addition of PERS-640, “Telework Request”; add section to provide guidance on how to renew an existing telework agreement; and require a mutually agreed-upon telework schedule. Grammatical and formatting updates were also made.

Chairman Nichols asked if the proposed revisions bring the agency in line with directives from state leadership on the appropriate use of telework. Ms. Greger confirmed. Mr. Nichols asked if there were any additional questions or comments. Hearing none, he called for a motion and a second.

Ambassador Sichan Siv moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the revisions to Personnel Directive PD-94, “Teleworking,” as presented.

Judge Faith Johnson seconded the motion, which unanimously passed when called to a vote.

**Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding
Proposed Deletion of Board Policy BP-11.75, “Telework”**

Ms. Greger presented the proposed deletion of BP-11.75, “Telework,” as the reporting entities were included in revisions to Personnel Directive PD-94, “Teleworking,” making the board policy unnecessary. BP-01.01 clarifies that reporting entities are required to abide by the same personnel directives maintained by the agency.

Chairman Nichols asked for clarification that the reporting entities would abide by the same teleworking rules as agency employees. Ms. Greger confirmed. Sydney Zuiker clarified that the direct reporting entities would be housed within the personnel directives for consistency, and so that duplicate policies are not necessary. Hearing no additional questions or comments, Chairman Nichols called for a motion and a second.

Sydney Zuiker moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the proposed deletion of Board Policy BP-11.75, “Telework,” as presented.

Dr. Rodney Burrow seconded the motion, which unanimously passed when called to a vote.

Report from the Chairman, TBCJ

Chairman Eric J.R. Nichols recognized the innovative new staffing initiative, championed by the Estelle Unit in Huntsville, Texas. He introduced Estelle Unit Senior Warden Anthony Newton, who was recently recognized as Warden of the Year by the TDCJ for his leadership at the Estelle Unit and his efforts at innovative approaches to staffing and workplace practices. He highlighted Mr. Newton's career, which began in January 2002 as a Correctional Officer at the Hughes Unit. Eventually, he was promoted to Major overseeing the unit's Mental Health Therapeutic Diversion Program and later served as an Assistant Warden before taking on the Senior Warden role at the Ramsey Unit, the Ellis Unit, and then his current post at the Estelle Unit in August 2024. A nationally certified psychiatric technician since 2004, Warden Newton holds an associate's degree in criminal justice.

Mr. Nichols stated the Estelle Unit is one of the TDCJ's most active and complex facilities. It houses all custody levels and offers extensive programming, full-service medical operations, and diverse housing. Because of this complex nature, the Estelle Unit was the ideal choice to test and implement a new-to-TDCJ, team-based staffing model. This team-based staffing pilot began as an idea to directly address ongoing staffing challenges across the state's correctional facilities. The board recognizes that staffing challenges are here to stay at various units across the state, despite great efforts to recruit and retain correctional staff. As a result of those staffing challenges and in the spirit of continuous improvement and efficiency of unit operations, the TDCJ can and must adapt to the reality of staffing challenges and continuously evaluate and improve its workplace practices. The workplace practice approach that Warden Newton is spotlighting today is one such form of innovation. The core principle of this approach is influenced by the "community policing" model successfully used nationwide by police agencies, probation and parole offices, and even the United States Army in response to similar workforce issues.

Warden Newton stated the team-based staffing model is essential to achieving three vital goals: safety, security, and employee retention. The traditional TDCJ staffing model is built on "static" posts, where staff are assigned to one area and are responsible for all functions within that area for the entire shift. The team-based staffing model challenges that accepted idea by simplifying and, where possible, eliminating the static post system. The Estelle Unit conducted a full evaluation of all unit functions and static duty posts and determined the "housing rovers" in the general population could be eliminated and highly focused teams to patrol the main building could be created, conducting independent operations. Under the new staffing metric, five different teams were created to implement a "community policing" atmosphere throughout the facility including an escort team, an ingress and egress team, a security check team, an inmate management team, and a cell search team.

Each team consists of three to five officers who remain together day-to-day. This consistency allows the agency to train, hold accountable, and build strong working groups to complete daily tasks. This widely successful implementation focuses staff in the areas with the most need, moving away from less routine, "patrol-style" coverage in areas that typically have low security incidents. The idea of using teams is greatly assisted by newly designated team leaders or officers-in-charge who focus on the motivation, training, and physical operations of the teams. By streamlining the supervisory approach, the administrative and report-based workload for Sergeants and Lieutenants is significantly reduced, allowing leadership teams to dedicate more time to critical operational oversight. The vision is for identified team leaders to undergo a leadership course with the Training and Leader Development Division, which will emphasize leadership skills, effective communication, team building, decision making, and employee motivation, providing them with the confidence and presence to effectively lead small teams.

The pros of team-based staffing are significant and include increased morale and staff retention due to a strong sense of belonging, reduced employee stress from a shared workload, ownership and pride in team assignments, increased personal safety of staff, and reduction in complacency and idleness. Beyond the anecdotal benefits, the results have been remarkable. The pilot began in March 2025, when the Estelle Unit was around 63% staffed. As of today, the Estelle Unit is approximately 92% staffed, with call-in and no-show rates reduced by 30%. Warden Newton thanked the Office of Strategic Initiatives and Modernization (OSIM) for their support, stating the OSIM has been, and will continue to be, heavily involved in measuring the pilot's progress and implementation. The OSIM will continue to use staff surveys and comprehensive data reviews to determine success, specifically comparing data on grievances, disciplinaries, injuries, assaults, behavioral intervention incidents, and inmate protection investigations to see how the change in staffing affects the climate and overall environment of the facility. Warden Newton presented a video on the pilot initiative. Mr. Lumpkin stated seven additional facilities have started the same pilot, which include the Beto, Byrd, Coffield, McConnell, Wainwright, Clemens, and Memorial units. Those seven wardens spent time at the Estelle Unit to understand the new model.

Chairman Nichols thanked Warden Newton for his leadership and commitment to rethinking the ways in which the TDCJ does business and deploys correctional staff. He recognized that across the 103 units that the TDCJ operates, there may not be a one-size-fits-all approach for the optimal way to deploy staff. Those units can serve as test sites for improved ways of deploying and supporting staff. Mr. Newton and other wardens around the state will be the leaders in the effort to avoid the “we have always done it this way” approach to unit management. Innovation requires more than a top-down approach. Senior TDCJ leadership can support innovative workplace practices, but ideas for what actually works at units also need to come from those units. Mr. Nichols shared the following quote: “The role of a leader is not to come up with all of the great ideas. The role of a leader is to create an environment in which great ideas can happen.”

The board values unit-level leadership, as displayed by Warden Newton, and knows there are many other wardens and unit leadership teams around the state who are also displaying the same type of initiative and new ideas on how to operate units. TDCJ unit leadership teams across the state are committed to sharing ideas and experiences with improved workplace practices through continued collaboration. No one has a monopoly on good ideas, and the more TDCJ can experiment responsibly with new, more efficient, and staff-supportive ways, the better off the TDCJ system and the state will be.

Chairman Nichols asked if there were any questions or comments. Pastor Nate Sprinkle asked if there is a process in place to handle any conflict within the team and if the assignment of teams is rotated. Warden Newton stated the teams have not had any issues so far, and the teams assist with other tasks as needed. Mr. Nichols asked Mr. Lumpkin to explain how the agency fosters collaboration among unit leadership. Mr. Lumpkin stated the agency encourages internal and external feedback and communication. He also commented that the ingress and egress teams ensure inmates attend programs on time. Judge Faith Johnson asked if the teams are working on all shifts or only certain shifts. Warden Newton stated the teams work 12-hour shifts. Chairman Nichols thanked Warden Newton for his presentation.

Report on Information Technology Initiatives

Chief Information Officer Tina Clark presented a report on information technology projects with board oversight. The majority of the projects are capital funded and include contracts for goods and services. Most of the projects are in the procurement phase, which can be divided into three stages: pre-solicitation, where the statement of work is created and solicitations are built; solicitation, where the request for offer is made public with a deadline for submitting bids; and evaluation, where the bids are reviewed and a

vendor is selected for contract award. The first project is the Corrections Information Technology System (CITS 2.0) to replace the agency's legacy system for a modern offender management system. The current legacy system is over 40 years old with aging applications. The funding provided is \$58.3 million and will be used for multiple contracts with a four-year projected completion. The solicitation was published on October 1st with bids due November 13th. Other contracts will be solicited for program and project management services, organizational change services, and independent verification and validation services.

The second project is the Centralized Accounting Payroll and Personnel System (CAPPS), which is the Enterprise Resource Planning solution for the state. The comptroller holds this contract with the vendor and is responsible for hosting and maintaining the system. This project is for the configuration and migration of the state's human resources (HR) and payroll components to the CAPPS. The TDCJ is one of the last state agencies to migrate to CAPPS. Once migration is complete, employees will be empowered to take over their HR information with quick access and visibility. Employees will be able to make changes to their basic HR profile, such as direct deposit information and W-4 information. The funding received is \$19.5 million and will include email accounts, personal computers for unit staff, tools, and potential gap applications. CAPPS is still in the project-planning phase with an estimated completion date of July 13, 2026.

The third project is for inmate banking and is a turn-key solution for replacing the agency's trust fund banking system, the parole fee and restitution process, the point-of-sale system used in the commissary, and the management of commissary warehouse inventory. It is designed to improve the efficiency and handling of inmate funds, remove the necessity for issuing paper checks to inmates upon release, and incorporate an online payment process for parole fees and restitution. This project is in the execution phase and is funded for \$8.1 million with an expected completion date of August 2026.

The fourth project is for broadband connectivity, which will lay a fiber backbone to every building within correctional facilities to create a network infrastructure needed for technology initiatives. This project is currently in the pre-solicitation phase and funded for \$29.3 million with a projected completion date of FY 2027.

The fifth project is the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) Crime Management System, which involves the purchase and implementation of a modern crime management system for the OIG. The modern platform is expected to have data-sharing capabilities, digital evidence, mobile access, and reporting and advanced analytics. The project is in the pre-solicitation phase and funded for \$1 million with a projected completion date of FY 2027.

The sixth project is the purchase and implementation of a modern learning management system (LMS) for employees and is sponsored by the Training and Leader Development Division. The LMS is expected to include capabilities for a course catalog, self- and auto-enrollment options, management for training resources, tracking for attendance, scores, and performance, and comes with integration for interactive content. The project is currently in the pre-solicitation phase and funded for \$4.1 million dollars with a projected completion date of FY 2027.

The seventh project is the video surveillance analog conversion, which will replace unit-based analog video surveillance systems with modern digital video systems totaling over 4,700 cameras. Modernizing the video systems will improve video quality and replace aging systems that are no longer supported. This project is in the pre-solicitation phase and funded for \$29.1 million with a projected completion date of FY 2027.

The eighth project is for the Technology Enhanced Inmate Count Proof of Concept, which started as a proof of concept for an enhanced inmate count process using technology to achieve operational efficiencies. Identification card scanners were tested to capture data of inmates entering and leaving non-housing areas, such as medical and education, and proved useful in producing automated rosters for “out-count” areas. The data is accessed via tablets used by correctional officers responsible for completing the inmate count. Time savings and accuracy were proven using the technology in the “out-count” areas. A business case is being developed, including product and infrastructure alternatives and costs to implement throughout the unit with no projected completion date as of yet.

Chairman Nichols asked if additional information would be provided in December regarding the business case for the eighth project. Ms. Clark confirmed. Mr. Nichols encouraged the board to visit the Estelle Unit to see how that project is serving the unit. Mr. Nichols asked for further details on how the fiber backbone will be implemented for broadband connectivity and what that means for developing wireless access points and other ways to support TDCJ programs. Ms. Clark stated there are approximately 23 units with the fiber backbone in place, and the focus has been to expand the network by improving broadband speeds to the front gate and now expanding access throughout the facility. Having the fiber there allows for more technology initiatives, such as the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) utilizing technology carts to evaluate inmates at the cell and to allow correctional officers to utilize tablets in some of their tasks. Mr. Nichols asked if the board will have the ability to see how the fiber backbone allows the inmate count process improvement to occur. Ms. Clark confirmed. General Bill Welch stated the difference between success and failure for massive technology initiatives is often direct oversight and advocacy for each initiative. He expressed concern that Ms. Clark is not properly staffed to move these initiatives forward and asked if the agency has considered providing staff for direct oversight of these initiatives. Ms. Clark stated agency leadership did provide a Chief Projects Officer position, filled by Michael Bates who will oversee the CAPPS initiative. Mr. Lumpkin stated additional positions were created for Ms. Clark, but more could be considered. He stated Mr. Bates would also oversee other initiatives as well.

Report from the Executive Director, TDCJ

Executive Director Bobby Lumpkin stated he is honored and humbled to give his first report as the Executive Director of the TDCJ. He stated it is a sacred privilege to work alongside the 32,000 dedicated men and women who serve the agency, assist those incarcerated and under supervision in transforming their lives, support victims of crime, and safeguard the people of Texas. He thanked the board for supporting and trusting him to guide the agency. Mr. Lumpkin began working for the agency 35 years ago, and much has been achieved, but there is still work to be done. He pledged to lead with integrity, to honor the values of the agency, and to ensure the agency continues moving forward, strengthening public safety, expanding rehabilitation and reentry, and positioning the TDCJ as an international model of criminal justice excellence. He stated his priority is establishing a unified vision built on a commitment to treating every person in the agency’s prisons and under supervision with dignity, fairness, and respect. This means more visible and engaged leadership on the units, in the parole offices, and across all administrative functions who will be there to see, to learn, and most importantly, to listen. He promised a new culture of visible, hands-on leadership.

The agency is making significant investments to evolve its processes to propel the agency into the future. Initiatives such as upgrading equipment, modernizing the count process, and launching key technological upgrades like the CITS, CAPPS, and a new LMS. Technological investments are paired with a focus on staff wellness and training, ensuring robust employee support, new uniforms, and intentional leadership readiness programs to develop the next generation of TDCJ leaders. The agency’s operational focus

extends directly to inmate and client management, including implementing recommendations from The Moss Group (TMG) to improve female services, prioritizing air-conditioned bed expansion, and enhancing efficiency by expanding onsite medical services and strengthening efforts to prevent contraband. Substance use programs are being expanded and tailored to address the realities of today's addiction, supporting family reunification, and building strong pathways to employment to connect men and women with meaningful job opportunities before and after release. He recognized that the TDCJ operates within a larger justice ecosystem and is driven by duty to the state of Texas and the Texans served. He stated that full compliance and long-term improvement will occur by putting Sunset recommendations to work. The success of the agency and the safety of the state cannot be achieved in isolation. It requires building strong, enduring partnerships with county officials, community leaders, faith-based organizations, mental health professionals, and the families of those under supervision. He stated he is honored to serve as the Executive Director and promised to deliver real, lasting change for the great state of Texas.

He recognized the first ever agency-wide Staff Chaplain Billy Holmes, whose role provides comprehensive pastoral care and support to the agency's dedicated employees as part of the agency's 2030 Plan. Chaplain Holmes has been faithfully serving in this position since June 1st. He brings a wealth of experience and a deep commitment to service with a remarkable 40-year career in public service and over three decades in pastoral leadership. His extensive background within the agency makes him uniquely suited for the groundbreaking role. Chaplain Holmes began his career with the TDCJ in 1985 as a Correctional Officer at the Ferguson Unit. Demonstrating dedication and leadership, he later transferred to the Huntsville Unit, where he was promoted to Sergeant. In August 2014, he transitioned into chaplaincy, serving at the Estelle Unit before moving to the Goree Unit in April 2015.

For the past decade, Chaplain Holmes has served as the Unit Chaplain at Goree. In his new capacity as the Chaplaincy and Volunteer Services Division (CVSD) Staff Chaplain Holmes has expanded his ministry to serve the broader agency staff and their families. His duties encompass a wide range of services, including providing pastoral support and guidance to staff members; officiating weddings for employees; conducting funeral and memorial services for staff and their families; offering vital resources and support during times of crisis, such as hurricane season, severe weather events, displacement, and fire; developing and leading religious workshops and educational programs for employees and their families; and delivering spiritual support to employees and their families navigating medical challenges. Mr. Lumpkin shared a personal story of meeting Chaplain Holmes at a local church who took the time to pray over him, offering spiritual encouragement for his new role. Mr. Lumpkin stated this deeply meaningful moment established a strong foundation for the agency's focus on prioritizing staff well-being. He thanked Chaplain Holmes and stated his role is pivotal in supporting agency staff's wellness and is a significant step forward for the agency to implement the 2030 Plan.

Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action **Regarding Facilities Division Construction Projects**

Status of Board Approved Projects

Chief Operations Officer Ron Hudson, formerly the Facilities Division Director, reviewed the Status of Board Approved Projects.

- Item 1 is the roof replacement project at the Michael Unit which is 88% complete. The contractor continues to work on building 7.

- Item 2 is the roof replacement project at the Stringfellow Unit which is 99% complete. The vendor is currently working on punch list items before completion.
- Item 3 is the Huntsville Unit project to repair and replace the mechanical department building roof which is 5% complete. The contractor has mobilized, and construction has begun.
- Item 4 is the Holliday Unit project to construct a new training facility which is 44% complete. Work on building A is ongoing, and the concrete pouring for the parking lot has begun. Framework for the staff barracks is currently being erected.
- Item 5 is the Ferguson Unit project to construct a water treatment plant which is 28% complete. Duct bank has been installed, and the freshwater line has been connected between the ground storage tanks and the high-pressure pump station.
- Item 6 is the Terrell Unit project to refurbish the water tower and water treatment plant which is complete. The board-approved program cost for this project was \$1,458,700, and the estimated closeout cost of this project is \$1,334,580, which is 9% under program cost.
- Item 7 is the Connally Unit project to replace plumbing and controls in 3, 4, 7, 10, and 11 buildings for inmate housing which is 22% complete. In building 7, G-pod is completed, and the contractor has moved to I-pod.
- Item 8 is the Connally Unit project to replace plumbing and controls in 8, 12, 18, and 19 buildings for inmate housing which is 4% complete. The contractor will begin work on these buildings once building 7 is completed.
- Item 9 is the Ellis Unit project to install a fire alarm system which is 35% complete. Material and equipment have been moved inside the main building, and installation is ongoing.
- Item 10 is the Ferguson Unit project to install a fire alarm system which is 54% complete. Installation in the main building is ongoing.
- Item 11 is the Beto Unit project to renovate the icehouse which is 20% complete. New ice machine equipment has started to arrive, and the asbestos abatement has begun.
- Item 12 is the Wainwright Unit project to replace agricultural building #5 which is complete. The board-approved program cost for this project was \$3,806,000, and the estimated closeout cost of this project is \$3,122,321, which is 18% under program cost.
- Item 13 is the Hobby Unit project to construct a multi-use facility. The Notice to Proceed has been issued.
- Item 14 is the design-only project to install HVAC in A, B, C, and D dorms at the Beto Unit which is complete.
- Item 15 is the McConnell Unit project to install HVAC – Inmate Housing (design only) which is 50% complete.
- Item 16 is the Goodman Unit project to install HVAC – ISF which is 40% complete. HVAC equipment has arrived. Electrical work and concrete pad work is ongoing.
- Item 17 is the Michael Unit project for HVAC system efficiency upgrades to inmate housing 12 building which is 92% complete. All equipment is installed, and the contractor is working on punch list items. The contractor is conducting testing and balancing of the HVAC system.
- Item 18 is the Stiles Unit project for HVAC system efficiency upgrades to inmate housing 12 building which is 1% complete. The contractor has mobilized, and HVAC equipment has been ordered.
- Item 19 is the Boyd Unit project to install HVAC – Inmate Housing, and the Notice to Proceed has been issued.
- Item 20 is the Gurney Unit project to install HVAC – Inmate Housing, and the Notice to Proceed has been issued.
- Item 21 is the Hightower Unit project to install HVAC – Inmate Housing, and the Notice to Proceed is pending.

- Item 22 is the Jester III Unit project to install HVAC – Inmate Housing, and the Notice to Proceed has been issued.
- Item 23 is the Luther Unit project to install HVAC – Inmate Housing, and the Notice to Proceed has been issued.
- Item 24 is the Polunsky Unit project to install HVAC – 3 building, and the Notice to Proceed has been issued.
- Item 25 is the Powledge Unit project to install HVAC – Inmate Housing, and the Notice to Proceed has been issued.
- Item 26 is the Stevenson Unit project to install HVAC – Inmate Housing, and the Notice to Proceed has been issued.
- Item 27 is the Stiles Unit project to install HVAC – 8 building, and the Notice to Proceed has been issued.
- Item 28 is the Terrell Unit project to install HVAC – Inmate Housing, and the Notice to Proceed has been issued.
- Item 29 is the Bell Unit project to construct an expansion dorm, and the Notice of Award is pending.
- Item 30 is the C. Moore Unit project to construct an expansion dorm, and the Notice of Award is pending.
- Item 31 is the Estes Unit project to construct an expansion dorm, and the Notice of Award is pending.
- Item 32 is the Hamilton Unit project to construct an expansion dorm, and the Notice of Award is pending.
- Item 33 is the Hightower Unit project to construct an expansion dorm, and the Notice of Award is pending.
- Item 34 is the Jester III Unit project to construct an expansion dorm, and the Notice of Award is pending.
- Item 35 is the Lopez Unit project to construct expansion dorms, and the Notice of Award is pending.
- Item 36 is the Luther Unit project to construct an expansion dorm, and the Notice of Award is pending.
- Item 37 is the Memorial Unit project to construct an expansion dorm, and the Notice of Award is pending.
- Item 38 is the Montford Unit project to construct an expansion dorm, and the Notice of Award is pending.
- Item 39 is the Pack Unit project to construct an expansion dorm, and the Notice of Award is pending.
- Item 40 is the Sanchez Unit project to construct an expansion dorm, and the Notice of Award is pending.
- Item 41 is the Travis County State Jail project to construct an expansion dorm, and the Notice of Award is pending.

Chairman Nichols asked if the HVAC projects would be completed before the temperatures rise next year. Mr. Hudson stated the majority of the projects will be completed; however, equipment delivery can cause delays but those units that can handle lower tonnage HVAC equipment will have those installed sooner. Judge Molly Francis asked if the plumbing projects for the Connally are being conducted at the same time or one by one. Mr. Hudson stated building 7 at the Connally Unit had been idle for over five years and had many issues that needed to be fixed. Once building 7 is completed, inmates will be moved into that building and the other projects can be worked on simultaneously.

Request to Replace Multiple Roofs, Hughes Unit, Gatesville, Texas

Mr. Hudson presented a new project for consideration, which includes replacement and refurbishment of the roofing system of multiple buildings at the Hughes Unit. The work will consist of the removal of the existing roofing systems; installation of new insulation, polyvinyl chloride membrane roofing systems, scuppers, overflow pipes, and flashings; and replacement of existing heating, ventilation and air conditioning equipment. The new roofing systems will provide a safer environment and meet building codes as well as energy efficiency requirements. Nine proposals were received in April 2025. If approved, the work will be performed by Patuxent Roofing & Contracting LLC, DBA Cram Roofing. Construction duration is 600 days, and the design was created by Amtec Solutions Inc. This is the 18th project for Cram Roofing, and the square footage of this project is 237,817 square feet. There is a two-year applicator warranty and a 20-year manufacturer warranty on materials. The actual bid for the project was \$14,489,223. The total estimated program cost is \$20,638,800.

Chairman Nichols asked if there were any questions or comments. Pastor Nate Sprinkle asked which building numbers would be included in this project. Mr. Hudson stated it would be buildings 3, 4, 7, and 8, which are inmate housing areas; building 1, which is an administrative area; building 6, which is the food service and laundry areas; and building 17, which is the garment factory. Hearing no additional questions or comments, Chairman Nichols called for a motion and a second.

General Bill Welch moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the request to replace multiple roofs at the Hughes Unit, Gatesville, Texas, as presented.

Dr. Rodney Burrow seconded the motion, which unanimously passed when called to a vote.

Request to Renovate Water Tower, Ramsey Unit, Rosharon, Texas

Mr. Hudson presented a new project for consideration which includes renovation of the water tower at the Ramsey Unit. The work comprises of a complete rehabilitation to include sandblasting and recoating of the interior and exterior of the existing tank, necessary repairs on corroded components as well as electrical improvements. The elevated storage tank will be isolated from the system during construction with no impact to ongoing operations. Completion of this project will ensure the necessary water supply for the unit is sustained. Four proposals were received for this project in August 2025. If approved, the work will be performed by BRZ Coatings Inc., and the construction duration of the project is 270 days. The design was created by RPC Infrastructure Inc. This is the second project for BRZ Coatings Inc., and there is a one-year standard contractor warranty. The actual bid for this project was \$737,000. The total estimated program cost is \$1,220,700.

Hearing no additional questions or comments, Chairman Nichols called for a motion and a second.

Thomas Fordyce moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the request to renovate the water tower at the Ramsey Unit, Rosharon, Texas, as presented.

General Bill Welch seconded the motion, which unanimously passed when called to a vote.

Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action
Regarding Proposed Land Transactions

Request for a 14.99 acres Land Acquisition, Byrd Unit, Huntsville, Texas

Bill Lewis, Manufacturing, Agribusiness and Logistics Division Director stated, in accordance with SB 1879, 89th Regular Legislative Session, the board shall transfer a certain 14.999 acres of land located at the Byrd Unit to Walker County. Walker County shall only use the property for the purpose of a criminal justice center. If the county uses this property for any other purpose or fails to use the property as described before the 10th anniversary of the date of transfer, the property will automatically revert to the board. The Resolution indicates that all water, oil, gas, and other minerals are reserved from conveyance. Mr. Lewis presented a map of the area.

Hearing no additional questions or comments, Chairman Nichols called for a motion and a second.

Pastor Nate Sprinkle moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the request for a 14.99 acres land acquisition at the Byrd Unit, Huntsville, Texas, as presented.

Sydney Zuiker seconded the motion, which unanimously passed when called to a vote.

Request for Electrical Transmission Easement, Montford Unit, Lubbock, Texas

Mr. Lewis presented the request of Lubbock Power & Light for an easement for an electrical transformer at the Montford Unit. The easement includes an area of approximately 0.1615 acres of land or 7,034 square feet long by 10 feet wide for the construction, installation, and operation of an above and below ground transformer electrical utility site. This electrical easement is pursuant to page three, paragraph 13 of the Interagency Cooperation Contract between the TDCJ and the Health and Human Services Commission that will allow the construction of a new maximum security psychiatric hospital. There is no offer of compensation. The term is 99 years. Mr. Lewis presented a map of the area.

Hearing no additional questions or comments, Chairman Nichols called for a motion and a second.

Judge Faith Johnson moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the request for an electrical transmission easement at the Montford Unit, Lubbock, Texas, as presented.

Judge Molly Francis seconded the motion, which unanimously passed when called to a vote.

Request for Gas Pipeline Easement, Montford Unit, Lubbock, Texas

Mr. Lewis presented the request of Atmos Energy Corporation for an easement for one four-inch pipeline at the Montford Unit. The easement includes an area of approximately 0.6 acres of land or 26,242 square feet long by 20 feet wide to transport natural gas. This utility easement is pursuant to page three, paragraph 13 of the Interagency Cooperation Contract between the TDCJ and the Health and Human Services Commission that will allow the construction of a new psychiatric hospital. There is no offer of compensation. The term is 99 years. Mr. Lewis presented a map of the area.

Hearing no additional questions or comments, Chairman Nichols called for a motion and a second.

Dr. Rodney Burrow moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the request for a gas pipeline easement at the Montford Unit, Lubbock, Texas, as presented.

Pastor Nate Sprinkle seconded the motion, which unanimously passed when called to a vote.

Request for Water Line Easement, Montford Unit, Lubbock, Texas

Mr. Lewis presented the request of City of Lubbock for an easement for one ten-inch water line at the Montford Unit. The easement includes an area of approximately 0.5365 acres of land or 23,369 square feet long by 15 feet wide for the distribution of potable water. This water line easement is pursuant to page three, paragraph 13 of the Interagency Cooperation Contract between the TDCJ and the Health and Human Services Commission that will allow the construction of a new psychiatric hospital. There is no offer of compensation. The term is 99 years. Mr. Lewis presented a map of the area.

Hearing no additional questions or comments, Chairman Nichols called for a motion and a second.

Judge Molly Francis moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the request for a water line easement at the Montford Unit, Lubbock, Texas, as presented.

Judge Faith Johnson seconded the motion, which unanimously passed when called to a vote.

Request for Wastewater Line Easement, Montford Unit, Lubbock, Texas

Mr. Lewis presented the request of the Health and Human Services Commission for an easement for a wastewater drainage site at the Montford Unit. The easement includes an area of approximately 0.9606 acres of land or 41,843 square feet long by 15 feet wide. This water line easement is pursuant to page three, paragraph 13 of the Interagency Cooperation Contract between the TDCJ and the Health and Human Services Commission that will allow the construction of a new psychiatric hospital. There is no offer of compensation. The term is 99 years. Mr. Lewis presented a map of the area.

Hearing no additional questions or comments, Chairman Nichols called for a motion and a second.

Ambassador Sichan Siv moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the request for a wastewater line easement at the Montford Unit, Lubbock, Texas, as presented.

Judge Molly Francis seconded the motion, which unanimously passed when called to a vote.

Chairman Nichols announced that Judge Faith Johnson is no longer in attendance due to a prior engagement with the Thurgood Marshall School of Law at the Texas Southern University where she is being honored with an award.

Report from the Office of the Inspector General

Lance Coleman reported on behalf of the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). He discussed a case where the OIG received information from TDCJ staff concerning the possible introduction of contraband into the

McConnell Unit. It was suspected that a civilian intended to pick up narcotics in Corpus Christi and transport those narcotics to the Beeville area. The OIG worked with state and local law enforcement. The suspect initially refused to allow law enforcement to search the vehicle; however, a canine alerted to the vehicle, and four balls of crystalline substance were found in a resealable Monster Energy drink can and tested positive for 35 grams of methamphetamines with a street value of approximately \$850 or \$4,500 in prison.

The next case involved Fusion Center staff contacting the OIG concerning a possible contraband drop at the Wynne Unit. The original drop was not located, but an additional drop was planned for another time. Surveillance was conducted at the Wynne Unit, and a vehicle was found parked. Contact was made with the suspect who admitted that the contraband was in the glove box of the vehicle. A total of 702 grams of loose-leaf tobacco with a prison value of approximately \$3,500 and 329.6 grams of paper soaked in K2 with a prison value of approximately \$50,000 were found.

The Correctional Law Enforcement Committee established contraband-free zones intended to notify those entering facilities of the consequences for the introduction of contraband. The signage was installed at the Ellis Unit and will be installed at the remaining units soon. Thomas Fordyce expressed appreciation for the collaboration between the OIG and correctional staff.

Report from the Office of the Independent Ombudsman

Independent Ombudsman Brian Patrick presented a report on the Office of the Independent Ombudsman (OIO) and shared the mission of the OIO. The OIO recently celebrated National Ombudsman Day on October 9th to honor the vital role Ombudsmen play in promoting fairness, accountability, and advocacy. He stated OIO staff have a rolling caseload and work on multiple cases at once. He thanked the Communications Team for producing a video to showcase the OIO's mission and the dedicated individuals behind it and presented the video to the board. Chairman Nichols asked if the video will be shown on any other platforms as the information is valuable. Mr. Patrick stated it is being considered and may be available on inmate tablets. Mr. Patrick provided information encompassing August 1, 2025, through September 30, 2025. The OIO received 927 inquiries during this period that required substantive work. The year-to-date total is 4,160 inquiries. Inquiries reach the OIO primarily through email and web forms with 694 inquiries received, along with 210 received via U.S. mail and 23 via phone. Inquiries are categorized to ensure appropriate prioritization and response. Mr. Patrick reported receipt of 391 emergency inquiries, which could include heat or respite concerns and security and safety concerns; 118 medical inquiries which were forwarded to the Health Services Division for handling; 67 inquiries required translation services; and 161 inquiries came directly from the inmate population.

Report from the Independent Office of Inmate Counsel

Independent Office of Inmate Counsel (IOIC) Director Wyvonne Long presented a report on the IOIC. She stated Appellate Section Chief Ken Nash designed a Continuing Legal Education course for the IOIC with more trainings scheduled for the future. The IOIC attended "Verbal Judo" training and thanked Independent Ombudsman Brian Patrick for conducting the training and Chief Audit Executive Chris Cirrito for allowing the IOIC to use his conference room. The IOIC recently lost two valued attorneys: Section Chief Thomas Brewer who announced his retirement and Staff Attorney Schuyler Cottrell who is moving out of the area. Two new attorneys, who will be working remotely, have been hired: Robert Avila from Lubbock and Michael Block from San Antonio. Mr. Avila will be handling criminal cases in the

West Texas area. Mr. Block will be handling civil cases in the South Texas area. Active cases include 23 appellate cases, 66 civil cases, 385 criminal cases, and 575 legal services-BIR cases; and Time currently has 220 open files.

Chairman Nichols thanked her for her report and congratulated her on the IOIC's name change.

Report from the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Ombudsman

PREA Ombudsman Manager James Booker presented a report from the Office of the PREA Ombudsman. He shared the organizational chart and introduced PREA staff. From June 2025 through August 2025, there were 602 PREA inquiries, with 316 from the public and 286 from inmates. He stated the PREA Ombudsman Compliance Specialists have assisted with nine PREA audits at TDCJ facilities, including six Correctional Institutions Division (CID) facilities, two community supervision corrections departments, and one transitional treatment center. The six CID facilities included the Sanchez, Wainwright, Hilltop, O'Daniel, McConnell, and Johnston units, and all six facilities passed without any corrective actions. He stated 581 PREA investigations were reviewed, and PREA management attended the Texas Correctional Association event in June 2025 and the PREA Coordinators Conference in July 2025. Chairman Nichols thanked him for the report.

Report from the Office of the Independent Auditor

Chris Cirrito, Chief Audit Executive, presented the Office of the Independent Auditor Status Report for Fiscal Years 2024, 2025, and 2026. He stated there have been no changes to the report provided to the board and concluded his report.

Hearing no questions or comments, Chairman Nichols thanked Mr. Cirrito for the status report.

(Attachment B – Office of the Independent Auditor Status Report)

Adjournment

There being no further business, Chairman Nichols thanked everyone for attending the meeting and announced that the next meeting of the Texas Board of Criminal Justice will be December 19, 2025, in Huntsville, Texas, and adjourned the 243rd meeting of the Texas Board of Criminal Justice at 12:40 p.m.

Chairman*

Secretary

* Signature on File