

**TO:** Board Members

**FROM:** Deborah Carpenter  
Special Assistant

**DATE:** September 20, 2019

**RE:** Minutes – Board Meeting  
August 14, 2019

In compliance with *Act 175*, known as the *Sunshine Law*, effective September 17, 1976, the Office of Board Secretary provided notification to the public of the scheduled meeting on August 14, 2019, of the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole.

The public meeting convened at 9:00 a.m. with Chairman Ted Johnson presiding. A quorum of Board Members was established.

In attendance were Board Members Maureen Barden, Leo Dunn, Jim Fox, Everett Gillison, Leslie Grey, Mark Koch, Linda Rosenberg, and Tony Moscato.

Also in attendance were Chad Allensworth, Chief Hearing Examiner, Hearing Examiner Office; Alan Robinson, Chief Counsel, Office of Chief Counsel; Tanner Widdowson, Victim Services Director, Office of Victim Advocate (OVA); Pennie Hockenberry, Director of Policy, OVA; John J. Talaber, Board Secretary, Office of Board Secretary; Neil Malady, Director of Policy and Legislation; Deb Carpenter, Special Assistant to the Chairman; Laura Treaster, Special Assistant to the Chairman and Scott Woolf, Executive Assistant to the Chairman; Meghan Dade, Executive Director of Sexual Offender Assessment Board (SOAB); Janaki Theivakumaran, Executive Assistant to the Executive Director of SOAB.

The Chairman recognized public guests Mark Bergstrom, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Sentencing Commission.

**I. APPROVAL OF THE JULY 17, 2019 BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Board Member Fox moved to approve the Board minutes, and Board Member Dunn seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the minutes.

**II. STAFF REPORTS**

**A. Office of Victim Advocate**

Pennie advised STOP trainings have begun, the first one was in Pittsburgh, the next is Mercer County. They will run over the next two years and close to Parole district

offices so they can have full attendance on training for domestic violence protocol and victim wraparound. “Jens Voice” training is also being rolled out; Tracy Shott created a documentary focusing solely on domestic violence and how enforcement agencies can work with victims to better serve that population. STOP is a grant through PCCD.

B. Sexual Offenders Assessment Board

Executive Director Meghan Dade introduced the new clinical director Stacey Ginesin who replaced Diane Dombach. Stacey recently served on the Sexual Offender Assessment Board. The Board and senior staff introduced themselves. Meghan advised she would provide Deb Carpenter with Stacey’s contact information so the Board could reach out if there were any questions. Upcoming SOAB trainings: Friday September 6<sup>th</sup> personality disorders with David Maze and November 2019 regarding juvenile offenders and a variety of issues with Bob McGraff.

C. Special Assistant to the Chairman (Deb Carpenter)

Special Assistant Deb Carpenter reported that Scott Woolf is assigned as lead on the dashboard project. He will work with information technology, statistics office on the information the Board wants to see on the dashboard.

ISCA update –Parole and DOC working on streamlining the completion of the ICSA document. Medical information from the DC 481, medical release summary will no longer be copied onto the ICSA. If an inmate has not signed a release form then it is a violation for staff to copy and paste into the ICSA. Moving forward if an inmate signed the release it will be uploaded separately to the decision maker library. Board Member Fox advised he discussed with DOC as well and advised the Board would be okay with receiving the document separately. Board Member Rosenberg advised the ICSA was not uploaded and they could not get into DOCinfo, Board Member Gillison advised the message was access denied. Deb Carpenter advised she would look into it and ensure all decision makers had access to DOCinfo.

D. Executive Assistant to the Chairman (Scott Woolf)

Chairman Johnson advised Scott Woolf is back working at the Board. Scott advised he will be working on high profile cases and reporting out the happenings behind the scene on what led to the individuals being released along with a timeline and various statistics. Also, tasked with branching out to the different areas, to review the processes of the various business areas.

Chairman Johnson advised Scott will be reporting out on how we do business along with John and David Butts. He wants them to get into the weeds and map out exactly how the office runs. The Board has a chance now to dive down and find out what our processes are so we can make some improvements along with new ideas on how we do business.

E. Special Assistant to the Chairman – Communications (Laura Treaster)

Laura provided draft of Parole 101 for the educational session at Erie in September. The agenda has been finalized. Tuesday, September 24<sup>th</sup> is the Board meeting, the meet and greet with local judge's/district attorneys. Also, Pardon Board, Secretary Brandon Flood and Chairman Johnson will meet with the community while in Erie to explain the difference between the Pardon Board and Parole Board. Wednesday, September 25<sup>th</sup> will be the educational session; AM Session - focused for criminal justice students and faculty from local colleges. PM Session - focused for criminal justice/law enforcement agencies, victim advocates, support group communities. Laura has met with Board Member Grey regularly to pull this agenda together. Board Member Grey was happy on how we are progressing on the responses for all the events on Tuesday and Wednesday. The CLE session, 2.5 credits, will drive better attendance. They advised the community has been very receptive. Chairman Johnson advised the Board needs a press release for the radio and local networks advising them of our schedule. They would like to discuss off line. Neil Malady advised the materials are very helpful when he goes downtown.

F. Hearing Examiners Office

Chief Hearing Examiner Chad Allensworth reported they are meeting with the field staff on the waiver cases; gathering statistics to ensure proper implementation. During the gathering process the hearing staff is sending notice to field staff what would be rejected in the future and a hearing would be scheduled so they can see where the problem and mistake areas are. Policy has not been implemented but everyone is aware of it and Chad believes it will work out better this way when policy is implemented. Chad advised there were some questions from the Board regarding the interstate policy. Board Member Rosenberg advised she talked with Margaret Thompson on providing an explanation on how we are conducting those hearings and why people do not have to come in to provide testimony. It would be a good refresher for the Board on the process and helpful for the newer Board Members. Board Member Grey advised there was an issue about the authentication of the documents being presented, there was no interstate agent present to advise on the documentation being presented. Board Member Linda Rosenberg advised the rules are very different on the interstate cases vs. in state cases. Chad advised to get involved in this it requires legal advice. Deputy Chief Counsel John Manning advised he would be available for legal questions. Board Member Fox asked if it would be helpful if DOC sent an SCI and field representative to the Board meetings to help on these issues. Chairman Johnson will ask if they will attend future meetings. Chad advised the numbers are staying consistent on the hearings processed and interviews being conducted. He also shared the revision to the 361 to show the two new buttons regarding victim information. The person prepping the case will complete the information. The Board had no changes to the form and agreed this change was very helpful when prepping cases.

G. Office of the Board Secretary

Board Secretary John Talaber directed the Board Members to his handout regarding production statistics for the past month. Votes required discussion, Office of Board Secretary is short staffed so they will table that discussion until September. John is in the process of scheduling a conference call with Robina. Mark Bergstrom commented on the report and understands the Board's concerns. It provided their perspective and thinks it is a good idea to reengage Robina. Chairman Johnson advised John to provide a copy of the Robina report to OVA.

John said the Board needs to discuss the 2020 Board schedule, the bi-laws state the Board meeting schedule for upcoming year is to be released in the month of September. Prior to the September meeting the draft calendar will be sent out. The bi-laws also allows OVA to start planning the OVA schedule. Chairman Johnson asked the Board if they want to hold a Board meeting in the east next year. He thinks it is important to get our message out across the state. John Talaber advised the Board does not have a meeting scheduled for October and face to face days are back to back. If the Board decides to have a Board meeting then October 24, 2019 would be available to do so.

H. Policy and Legislative Affairs

Policy Director Neil Malady reported he continues to work with Board Member Barden on the National Governors Association workgroup and the project is finishing out. The final meeting is scheduled for August 22, 2019, and the final draft will be routed to everyone for input in September. Board Member Barden advised Neil did a great job shepherding this through and pulling everyone together. Neil reported they met with Senator Baker's office and DOC staff on the medical parole bill. The bill is still in draft form and is currently with DOC Chief Counsel. Hopefully will have something to present at the next Board meeting. In July we received a call from the Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman on the possibility of a hearing on the Probation and Parole process. Neil does not know if there will be a public hearing due to recent national events. The reaction of legislatures is still unknown; we will know more when they are back in session in September. Chairman Johnson advised he received a letter from the Inspector General that they received a request to investigate our parole process. Neil advised Representative Kauffman, House Judiciary Chairman, made the request to the Inspector General. Chairman Johnson will meet with the Inspector General, he does not believe it is an area of concern. Department of Corrections also received the letter. Chairman Johnson advised he will keep the Board updated on the process.

Neil provided input to House Bill 44, Correction Officers ability to testify at the individual parole hearings. The Senate is still firmly committed to doing the consolidation legislation along with JRI 2 and these bill will hopefully move forward in November/December. Senate has three days during September, then are back in October for six days. Then three days in November and December. Chairman Johnson advised these limited days concern him due to terms expiring of three Board

Members. He will talk with Andrew Barnes and Marcus Brown regarding the 90-day extension.

I. Office of Chief Counsel

Deputy Chief Counsel John Manning reported on litigation with the Penjoke case, An appeal was filed, the decision is on hold pending the Otto Young decision. Legal will keep the Board posted on the status of the case.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Commutation Cases

Board Member Fox inquired about how they will handle commutation cases. Chairman Johnson asked the Board if they wanted to review the first few cases as a full Board. Board Member Rosenberg advised John that we discussed this last month. John reported the resolution from two years ago that they would be majority cases amongst the Board. It may be challenging to accomplish this for September but moving forward it can be worked in the schedule.

At 9:43 a.m. Board Member Gillison made a motion to adjourn the public session. The motion was seconded by Board Member Koch. The Board voted unanimously to adjourn public session.

The Board entered Executive Session at 10:00 a.m. to discuss specific parole cases and to obtain legal advice from Deputy Counsel John Manning. Executive Session was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

DLC