



**MINUTES OF THE
ARKANSAS PAROLE BOARD
JANUARY 16, 2014 @ 9:30 A.M.
APB BOARDROOM**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

John Felts, Chairman
Jimmy Wallace, Vice-Chairman/Commissioner
Richard L. Mays, Jr., Secretary/Commissioner
Dawne Vandiver, Commissioner
Richard Brown Jr., Commissioner
Abraham Carpenter, Commissioner
Joe Peacock, Commissioner

EXCUSED WITH VALID REASON:

Ashley Vailes, Hearing Judge/Attorney
Cara Boyd-Conners, Hearing Judge/Attorney
Jim Williams, Hearing Judge/Attorney
Carol Bohannon, Hearing Judge/Attorney

OTHERS PRESENT

Solomon Graves, Administrative Services Manager, APB
Mahogany Franklin, Fiscal Support Supervisor, APB
Melissa Haney, Executive Assistant to the Chairman, APB
Tamara Salaam, Administrative Specialist III (Parole), APB
Pam Brown, IRS Assistant Area Manager, DCC

MINUTES PREPARED BY: Melissa Haney, Executive Assistant to the Chairman
CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Felts called the meeting to order at 9:30 am. A quorum was declared.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – December 19, 2013

Commissioner Wallace moved. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as presented.

AGENCY UPDATES

Mr. Graves stated that there needs to be Board approval to proceed with legislative review of the rules that allow for revocation to the ACC centers. He stated that this is currently going through the full promulgation process and the public comment period expired yesterday. He stated that the only comment was from the Bureau of Legislative Research and they have asked for some minor clarifications. Commissioner Wallace moved. Commissioner Mays seconded the motion. The motion was carried.

Mr. Graves stated that the Chairman has led talks of changing the revocation appeals process due to an influx of cases. There is a lack of understanding for those under supervision about the revocation appeal process. Mr. Williams has helped to draft a list of rules for the Board and it lists the appeal process and rights of the offender. Chairman Felts stated that this is to bring some clarity to the process and address some issues within the county jail. Mr. Graves asked for a vote on adoption of this form. Commissioner Wallace moved. Commissioner Vandiver seconded the motion. The motion was carried.

Mr. Graves reported that the annual report is the Board's packets for review. This is required by state law to be filed with the Governors office and the legislature by February 1, 2014. He stated that the Board is coming up on this deadline. Mr. Graves covered several highlights in the annual report including a decrease in approval rates by the Board. This is due to a hardening of offender population and seriousness of discretionary crimes being committed. He also discussed the revocation activity and noted that it has remained flat between fiscal years 2012 and 2013. He stated that at this time the Board has already surpassed the numbers for those revoked, waived and seen for all of 2013. This is due to a change in supervision policy. He stated that he will be filing this Monday, January 27th, in case there are any questions or corrections that need to be addressed by the Board. Mr. Brown commended Mr. Graves on his excellent work. Chairman Felts stated that our staff is growing and the revocation, parole and administrative staff are all really doing a great job and the Board appreciates their efforts. Mr. Graves asked for approval of the annual report. Commissioner Vandiver moved. Commissioner Mays seconded the motion. The motion was carried.

Commissioner Peacock stated that it seems like there is an overload of people being brought back for minor infractions. He asked if there could be some balance brought to this in order to slow the intake of parole violators at this time. Chairman Felts stated that this will be re-evaluated and they will discuss this at a later time.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to discuss.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Felts reminded the Board that financial interest forms are due by the end of the month and to please have them filled out and returned to Ms. Haney so she can have them filed by the deadline.

Chairman Felts stated that he has been in discussion with Mrs. Sharp regarding parolee response to supervision. It has been noted by parole officers that they get a better response from parolees when they can say that the Board has required a course of action for an offender. Chairman Felts stated that parole is a privilege and not a right. He stated that he has drafted a letter that will go out to all those who have been approved for parole supervision by the Board. The letter is a statement from the Board that makes it clear that parole is to be taken seriously and that their supervision will be revoked if they violate the conditions of release. Chairman Felts read the letter to the Board.

Commissioner Wallace stated that he has recently received 2 or 3 phone calls from parole officers regarding

the ACC requiring parolees to obtain their GEDs. He stated that he can not find anywhere in the statute that this is a required condition of parole. He stated that it is a great thing to encourage education, but you can not threaten offenders with a parole violation if they can't obtain a GED. Some people are not capable of achieving their GED and they should not be revoked on their supervision. Mr. Graves stated that it is not a requirement that they obtain their GED, but it is a ADC policy that they make progress toward a GED. This was instituted by the Board of Correction. ACC is asking that as part of parole supervision that the offenders are continuing to make progress toward their GED once they are released to supervision. He stated that if they are assessed and it is determined that they need to obtain a GED then they will be referred for participation. He stated that no one will be sent back to prison for failure to obtain their GED. Chairman Felts stated that all areas were asked to present the issues that they felt would best benefit parolees and all areas suggested that GEDs would be helpful for parolees in order to obtain employment. Commissioner Wallace stated that parolees need to be told to work on it, but that they will not be revoked if they don't obtain it. Chairman Felts stated that they need to be given firm command or they will not do it at all. This is something that will be addressed at a later time.

FILES FOR REVIEW

There were no questions regarding the files for review.

ADOPTION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Commissioner Mays moved to adopt the recommendations. Commissioner Carpenter seconded. The motion was carried.

OTHER COMMENTS

Chairman Felts stated that there will be Board training on January 27th. Commissioner Vandiver stated that there will be several training sessions to discuss ideas and possible tweaks to the existing process. She stated that they are working to arrange some upcoming dates for training.

ADJOURNMENT

The next Board meeting will be held on Thursday, January 30, 2013 at 9:30a.m. in the APB Boardroom.

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

Signature on File

John Felts
Chairman

Signature on File

Richard L. Mays, Jr.
Secretary

**ARKANSAS PAROLE BOARD
FIRST BOARD ADOPTION OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

JANUARY 2014

UNITS:

RATIFIED (X)

DELTA



NORTH CENTRAL UNIT



NORTH WEST/WASHINGTON CO.



TUCKER



TUCKER MAX.



GRIMES



MCPHERSON



MCPHERSON



BENTON



TRCC/SW



DCC-CAC



CUMMINS



OTHER: TRANSFER SCREENINGS, COMMUTATIONS, PARDONS



RECONSIDERATIONS, REVOCATION APPEALS, RESCINDS,

SPECIAL CONDITIONS, ACT 290, 700'S, EPA, ETC.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Mays

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Carpenter

ADOPTION DATE: JANUARY 16, 2014