



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

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

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

**EXCUSED WITH VALID REASON:**

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

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Solomon Graves, Administrative Services Manager, APB  
Mahogany Brown, Fiscal Support Supervisor, APB  
Melissa Haney, Executive Assistant to the Chairman, APB  
Tamara Saalam, Administrative Specialist III (Parole), APB  
Kenneth Giesbrecht, Computer Support Specialist, APB  
Sheila Sharp, Director, ACC  
Dina Tyler, Deputy Director of Communication and Public Affairs, ACC  
Dan Roberts, Deputy Director of Parole/Probation Services, ACC  
Shirley Ellingburg, Area Manager, Institutional Release Services, ACC

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 – January 16, 2014**

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

## **POPULATION REPORT**

Chairman Felts stated that the current county jail back up is up to 2,507 men and 184 females. The total number in county jail at this time is 2,691. He stated that ACC did some data collection and there are currently 57 on GPS monitoring awaiting revocation hearings. He stated that the numbers in the County Jail awaiting a hearing by a Hearing Judge. He stated that he appreciates Dan and Sheila and all the hard work their teams have done to expedite the process.

In review of the ACC Parole and Probation Population report there are 28,598 individuals on probation, 2,401 in drug court, 22,161 individuals on parole, and 409 in boot camp for a total of 53,569 under supervision.

In review of the ACC jurisdiction population there is a total population of 1,516. This includes those in ACC correction centers and Omega and SE ARK TVP. Chairman Felts stated that ACC has done a lot of hard work to alleviate some housing issues and that has been a big benefit.

Chairman Felts stated that everyone should have a copy of the OVG report in their board packets. There were no questions.

In review of the APB monthly report, Chairman Felts stated that the Board had a total of 322 approved Transfer Screenings out of a total of 362. The overall approval rate for Screenings was 89%. There were 9 EPA screenings and 8 were approved for an approval rate of 88.9%. The Board conducted a total of 460 Transfer Hearings with 210 approved without programs and 91 approved with programs for a total of 301 approved. The Board had a 71.9% approval rate. There were 70 denied and 131 deferred. The Board had 52 reconsiderations, 38 rescind screenings and 22 rescind hearings for a total of 112. There were also 22 pardons voted with merit and 8 voted without merit, 22 commutation screenings voted without merit and 4 commutation hearings. Of this number, 9 were deferred and 9 hearing was scheduled for an overall total of 75 Pardons/Executive Clemencies. The Board had total actions of 1,053.

## **ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE**

There was no report from the Attorney General's Office.

## **FISCAL REPORT**

Mrs. Mahogany Franklin reported that the Board has currently expended 47% of its annual travel and operations budget. She stated that the detailed report is attached for the Board's review.

## **HEARING JUDGES REPORT**

The Hearing Judge report was available to the Board for review. Chairman Felts stated that Mrs. Bohannon had a total of 176 actions, Mr. Williams had a total of 271, Mrs. Vailes had a total of 198 and Mrs. Boyd-Conners had a total of 105 for an overall total of 758. There were 192 revoked to ADC and 65 continued. He stated that this needs to be further discussed in order to ensure that officers are getting the proper training on how to process paperwork. In addition, there were 350 waivers to ADC, 31 to RCF and 19 to TVP. There were no questions regarding the Hearing Judge Report.

## **AGENCY UPDATES**

Mr. Graves stated that there will be new computers for the staff and Board. They will be replacing these throughout the next few weeks. He stated that Ken has been working diligently to enhance our systems and

ensure that they run more efficiently.

Mr. Graves stated that on February 5<sup>th</sup> he and the Chairman will be attending the Rules and Regulations Committee regarding policy that was instated in November to allow revocation to the RCF centers. At the time, the Board used emergency status, but it is still required to go through the full promulgation process.

Mr. Graves reported that the Fiscal session will convene Monday, February 10, 2014 and the Board is not requesting any additional money in FY 2015. However, additional personnel will be granted to keep temporary people from ADC and ACC.

Mr. Graves reported that they are making great progress to assess some issues with Eomis. There are currently 2 major projects and he will be meeting with team members from ACC, ADC and Marquis this afternoon to discuss the future of our Eomis needs. He stated that Chairman Felts and Commissioner Vandiver will be available to help map out any enhancements to be made in order to move forward with electronic voting. In addition, Mr. Graves stated that the revocation department has automated all but 2 areas. These areas include appeals and scheduling. In the next 90 days, we will be scheduling in Eomis. This will be a huge benefit to the staff and the ability to keep accurate count of who needs to be scheduled.

Chairman Felts stated that the meeting will be this afternoon and they will be discussing some issues in order to make this process as simplistic and effortless as possible. He stated that this will free up a lot of work load that the Board and staff currently have. Mrs. Sharp stated that this is a top priority for her agency. Mr. Graves stated that the longest part of the project will be to determine the scope of work. It has to work right upon implementation to ensure that voting is done correctly. This is necessary to ensure the best product available. He stated that this will take approximately 2-3 months to complete. Chairman Felts stated that 90 days is well worth the time it will take to complete this project and that it will be a huge benefit to the Board.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business to discuss.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Chairman Felts introduced Mrs. Sheila Sharp, Mrs. Dina Tyler and Mr. Dan Roberts. He stated that Mrs. Sharp will be presenting the new Parole Amnesty policy, which was presented to the Board of Correction.

Mrs. Sheila Sharp stated that they have had a lot of discussion regarding how to alleviate the County Jail backup and address the 2,200 people on abscond status. In order to provide the offenders with the option to return to supervision, ACC is offering a temporary Amnesty Program. Under this program, abscond offenders without pending charges can turn themselves in without the fear of being jailed pending a revocation hearing. She stated that they do not want to lock up people who can be productive in society. Commissioner Wallace asked if an absconders time is stopped or is it forgiven under this policy. Mrs. Sharp stated that it is not forgiven. The time is added on to the end of their supervision and their discharge date will move out. Commissioner Wallace stated that if they are allowed to start at day one then they will get a better response. Mrs. Sharp stated that that would put officers in a bad position. Commissioner Wallace stated that they need to come up with a better term for the policy than Amnesty, since Amnesty implies that there is a total forgiveness. Mrs. Sharp explained that in this policy it indicates that the offender will not be locked up. Chairman Felts stated that this in response to the unbelievable surge in the County Jail backup and ACC is changing who they lockup in order to free up space in the County Jails. Mrs. Sharp stated that they presented this to the Governor and he thought it was a very creative idea and a great way to help people be more successful on supervision.

Mrs. Sharp stated that they will be putting this out publicly and that letters will be sent out to the relatives of parolees. This will be an attempt to locate them before ACC has to go out and find them. Commissioner Peacock asked how this would be communicated to offenders who have absconded. Mrs. Sharp stated that they have friends and family members listed in Eomis for offenders and they will send letters to these individuals in hopes that they will relay the information to the offenders. There will also be posters and press releases from Dina Tyler that will go out publically. Chairman Felts stated that it is a great idea to reach out to relatives. Commissioner Mays called for a motion to approve this policy and authorize APB staff to recall warrants for offenders under the Amnesty program.

Commissioner Vandiver seconded the motion. The motion was carried.

Commissioner Wallace asked that in the future these type of actions be discussed with the Parole Board and approval given before a policy is implemented. He stated that the Board is the finite paroling authority and should be involved in the process from the beginning. He stated that that ACC is doing a great job and its very much appreciated by the Board, but would like to be included in these type of policy changes before they are approved.

Chairman Felts stated that they appreciate the opportunity to work closely with ACC and that we are all a team and we are all working for the same common goal. He stated that the Board appreciates the hard work that ACC is doing.

Mrs. Sharp stated that they have handed out a copy of the ACC strategic plan and this will be approved at the next Board of Correction meeting. She stated that there is a big push for re-entry and they want to ensure that resources are available throughout the state in order to encourage successful supervision. She stated that they have hired Mr. Kevin Murphy to oversee re-entry efforts. She stated that this in response to Act 11 and they would like the Parole Boards commitment to attend these meetings. Chairman Felts stated that he commends ACC on their dedication to re-entry as it is a vital part of success. The Board wants to release people who can be successful on supervision. Chairman Felts asked what their goal is for absconders. Mrs. Sharp stated that they would like to clear the list; this also includes those that are out of state through Interstate Compact.

Chairman Felts stated that he would like Board Members to relay to inmates that the worst thing they can do is to just stop reporting while on supervision, because the worst thing that can happen is for a parolee to be doing great and get pulled over and brought back in for failing to report. He stated that they should be encouraged to just do what needs to be done and finish their supervision successfully. Commissioner Vandiver asked that we receive some Amnesty Program posters to be posted in the office. In addition, Chairman Felts stated that they have also prepared a letter that will be given to inmates when they are approved for parole that clearly spells out the expectations of the Board while under supervision.

#### **FEBRUARY 2014 SCHEDULE**

Chairman Felts stated that February is going to be a big month. They are currently looking at 686 hearings for the month and this number does not include screenings. He stated that everyone will be going out more frequently and if there are any conflicts in scheduling to let him know so those can be addressed. He stated that due to the large numbers the Board may be utilizing the Hearing Judges as well.

#### **FILES FOR DISCUSSION - REVIEW**

Chairman Felts stated that there are few files for discussion that need further review. He stated that #1 and #2 on the list need to be rescheduled for next month. There were no further questions regarding files for review.

#### **ADOPTION OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

#### **OTHER COMMENTS**

Chairman Felts asked Mrs. Ellingburg if she had any issues that needed to be addressed. She stated that there were no issues at this time. Chairman Felts stated that Mrs. Ellingburg's group has been a great asset to the Board and they appreciate all the hard work they have done.

Commissioner Wallace asked that everyone got a copy of the discretionary felonies and he suggested that it be studied by each Commissioner so that they can be familiar with the new rules for who can be denied parole. Chairman Felts stated that they do plan to laminate these and put them in each box for the Commissioners. These can also be kept in the desks for reference. Commissioner Mays reminded each commissioner to be mindful of the dates that the new statutes were enacted. Chairman Felts stated that there are also copies of the abbreviations to be used on the dockets for voting purposes. This will start in February and this will be a valuable tool to help with the process.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The next Board meeting will be held on Thursday, February 13, 2014 at 9:30a.m. in the APB Boardroom

The meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

**Signature on File**

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**John Felts**  
**Chairman**

**Signature on File**

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**Richard L. Mays, Jr.**  
**Secretary**

**ARKANSAS BOARD OF PAROLE  
FULL BOARD RATIFICATION OF VOTES**

**JANUARY 2013**

<b><u>UNITS:</u></b>	<b><u>RATIFIED (X)</u></b>
EAST AR	X
MISSISSIPPI CO.	X
NEACCC	X
OUACHITA RIVER CORR.	X
PINE BLUFF	X
R.L. WILLIAMS	X
SEARC	X
VARNER	X
WRIGHTSVILLE	X
OTHER: PARDONS, COMMUTATIONS, TRANSFER SCREENINGS, ACT 290, 700'S, RECONSIDERATION, REVOCATION APPEALS, EPA, ETC.	X

**MOTION BY: Commissioner Mays    SECONDED BY: Commissioner Carpenter**

**RATIFICATION DATE: JANUARY 30, 2014**