



State of Oklahoma
PARDON AND PAROLE BOARD

PARDON AND PAROLE BOARD
Business Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 6, 2023
9:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Edward Konieczny, Richard Miller, Calvin Prince, Kevin Buchanan, and Robert Reavis

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF: Tom Bates, Melinda Romero, Kyle Counts and Leroy Long

GUESTS: Glen Blake, Trey Livingston, Bree Blackburn, Morgan Hale

I. Call To Order – Edward Konieczny, Acting Chairman

The Business Meeting of the Pardon and Parole Board (PPB) was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Acting Chairman Edward Konieczny on Monday, November 6, 2023.

A. Roll Call

The members attending were Edward Konieczny, Richard Miller, Calvin Prince, Robert Reavis, and Kevin Buchanan.

B. Assurance of Compliance with Open Meeting Act

General Counsel Kyle Counts provided assurance of compliance with the Open Meeting Act. The business meeting of the Pardon and Parole Board was convened in accordance with the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act. This meeting was preceded by an advance notice of the date, time, and place filed with the Oklahoma Secretary of State on November 14, 2022. An amended notice was filed on May 9, 2023, which provided updated information concerning the meeting location. Notice of this meeting was also given at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the meeting by posting notice of the date, time, virtual meeting place, and agenda of the meeting on November 2, 2023, on the Pardon and Parole Board's website, www.ok.gov/ppb. The meeting is in compliance with the Open Meeting Act.

II. Approval of Minutes

A. Discussion and Possible Action on October 2023 Business Meeting Minutes

The October business meeting minutes were provided to the Board for review. Calvin Prince made a motion to approve the October business meeting minutes, Richard Miller seconded, and Kevin Buchanan abstained. The Board carried the motion 4-0, with one abstention.

B. Discussion and Possible Action on October 2023 Parole Meeting Minutes

The October Parole minutes were provided to the Board for review. Calvin Prince made a motion to approve the October Parole meeting minutes, Richard Miller seconded, and Kevin Buchanan abstained. The Board carried the motion 4-0, with one abstention.

III. Business Meeting –Tom Bates, Executive Director, Melinda Romero, Deputy Director, Leroy Long, Field Director, and Kyle Counts, General Counsel

- A. Personnel Updates** – Melinda Romero, Deputy Director reported one separation from the agency, Parole Investigator Brittany King. Ms. Romero also reported two new Parole Investigator hires Morgan Rush and Donly Drakes. Finally, she announced that there would be interviews held on November 14th, for the open Administrative Assistant position in the administrative office.
- B. Field Updates** – Leroy Long, Field Director, reiterated one separation in the field office and reported that he would be filling it as soon as possible. Mr. Long also informed the Board that the December docket was close to completion.
- C. Legal Updates** – Kyle Counts, General Counsel, reported that in the month of October there were 14 parole revocations with all waiving their hearings. He informed the Board that they would be voting on five Notices of Rulemaking Intent to be published December 1st, with copies being available after publishing. He announced the deadline for Statutory changes is December 9th. Finally, he stated that legal staff will continue to work on policies and procedures before they are voted on in January 2024.
- D. Director's Update** – Tom Bates, Executive Director, explained that Melinda Romero is working on the budget for the next Fiscal Year, with further updates coming in December 2023.

IV. Training – Project Commutation

Members of the advocacy organization Project Commutation presented to the Board for training. Project Commutation was established in 2018 as a collaboration between the Tulsa County Public Defender's Office and University of Tulsa School of Law. Project Commutation started with just Attorney Glen Blake and 8 Legal Interns. Project Commutation also collaborate with the Department of Corrections. It began with State Question 780, which would eliminate prison time for those charged with simple possession of controlled substances. Once passed, Project Commutation retrieved a list of inmates serving harsh sentences for crimes that would now be classified as misdemeanors. Glen Blake's focus was the legal aspect until one day he was questioned about resources for reentry. From there, Project Commutation expanded to work with those coming up for parole, acting as delegates and advocates for parolees, as well as providing said parolees with resources needed to successfully re-enter society. Project Commutation relies on information sharing from DOC to come across potential clients. They often do prison visits, including Mabel Bassett and Eddie Warrior Correctional Centers monthly. In total, Project Commutation has helped around 4,000 inmates total, and 1,000 with reentry. Also speaking were Administrative Coordinator Trey Livingston, Case Manager Bree Blackburn, and Program Director and Managing Attorney Morgan Hale. They answered questions from the board regarding possible expansion, recidivism tracking, and reentry resources for those who parole to federal, or out of country detainees, such as ICE Detainers. Both the Board and Project

Commutation showed appreciation for the other in their work and advocacy.

V. Discussion and Possible Action on Notice of Rulemaking Intent for Procedures of the Pardon and Parole Board Administrative Rules

Kyle Counts briefed the Board on a proposed Notice of Rulemaking Intent for Procedures of the Pardon and Parole Board. Calvin Prince made a motion to approve the publication of the Notice of Rulemaking Intent for Procedures of the Pardon and Parole Board Administrative Rules, and Kevin Buchanan seconded. The motion was carried with a vote of 5-0.

VI. Discussion and Possible Action on Notice of Rulemaking Intent for Clemency Hearing Procedures

Kyle Counts briefed the Board on a proposed Notice of Rulemaking Intent for Clemency Hearing Procedures. Calvin Prince made a motion to approve the publication of the Notice of Rulemaking Intent for Clemency Hearing Procedures, and Richard Miller seconded. The motion was carried with a vote of 5-0.

VII. Discussion and Possible Action on Notice of Rulemaking Intent for Commutation Procedures Administrative Rules

Kyle Counts briefed the Board on a proposed Notice of Rulemaking Intent for Commutation Procedures. Calvin Prince made a motion to approve the publication of the Notice of Rulemaking Intent for Commutation Procedures, and Robert Reavis seconded. The motion was carried with a vote of 5-0.

VIII. Discussion and Possible Action on Notice of Rulemaking Intent for Pardon Procedures Administrative Rules

Kyle Counts briefed the Board on a proposed Notice of Rulemaking Intent for Pardon Procedures. Calvin Prince made a motion to approve the publication of the Notice of Rulemaking Intent for Pardon Procedures, and Robert Reavis seconded. The motion was carried with a vote of 5-0.

IX. Discussion and Possible Action on Notice of Rulemaking Intent for Parole Procedures Administrative Rules

Kyle Counts briefed the Board on a proposed Notice of Rulemaking Intent for Parole Procedures. Richard Miller made a motion to approve the publication of the Notice of Rulemaking Intent for Parole Procedures, and Calvin Prince seconded. The motion was carried with a vote of 5-0.

X. New Business Not Known or Which Could Not Have Been Reasonably Foreseen Before the Posting of the Agenda

No new business.

XI. Adjournment of the Business Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 9:48 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kyle Counts", is written over a horizontal line.

Kyle Counts
General Counsel

The minutes for the November 2023 Pardon and Parole Board Business Meeting were approved by a majority vote on the 4th day of December, 2023.