



State of Oklahoma
PARDON AND PAROLE BOARD

PARDON AND PAROLE BOARD
Business Meeting Minutes

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Edward Konieczny, Richard Smothermon, Cathy Stocker, Richard Miller, and Calvin Prince

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

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

GUESTS: None

I. Call To Order – Richard Smothermon, Chairman

The Business Meeting of the Pardon and Parole Board (PPB) was called to order at 9:01 a.m. by Chairman Richard Smothermon on Monday, March 6, 2023.

A. Roll Call

The members attending were Edward Konieczny, Richard Smothermon, Cathy Stocker, Richard Miller, and Calvin Prince. The voting order was announced as Edward Konieczny, Richard Smothermon, Cathy Stocker, Richard Miller, and Calvin Prince.

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. 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 March 1, 2023, on the Pardon and Parole Board's website, www.ok.gov/ppb. The meeting is in compliance with the Open Meeting Act.

C. Reading of Pardon and Parole Board Mission Statement

Chairman Smothermon recited the Oklahoma Pardon and Parole Mission Vision and Values Statement.

II. Approval of Minutes

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

The February business meeting minutes were provided to the Board for review. Cathy Stocker made a motion to approve the February business meeting minutes with the addition of Richard Smothermon into the voting order, Edward Konieczny seconded. The Board carried the motion 5-0.

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

The February 2023 parole minutes were provided to the Board for review. Edward Konieczny made a motion to approve the February 2023 parole meeting minutes, Cathy Stocker seconded. The Board carried the motion 5-0.

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

A. Personnel Updates – New Hires and Separations

Deputy Director Melinda Romero reported one new hire: investigator Steven Shiplet. Ms. Romero reported that the other investigator vacancy for Jess Dunn Correctional Center would be reposted and that there would be interviews for the administrative assistance vacancy on March 14.

B. Field Updates

Field Director Leroy Long reported that the April 2023 docket is being completed and that the field would be fully staffed once the previously discussed vacancy was filled.

C. Legal Updates

General Counsel Kyle Counts updated the Board on revocations, reporting there were 30 revocations since the last meeting, with 23 waiving and seven receiving hearings. Mr. Counts blamed the higher number on the fact there were no revocations in January. Mr. Counts further updated the Board that the focus of the update project would be on pardons for the month of April.

D. Director’s Update

Executive Director Tom Bates thanked the Board members for their availability between meetings. Director Bates reported that he and the team would continue working through staffing issues. Director Bates further updated the Board that in addition to the SharePoint site for sharing materials, the Board is currently implementing an online system for pardon applications. Director Bates reported that he was working on implementing an electronic voting system for the Board to use.

IV. Legislative Update – Kyle Counts

Mr. Counts briefed the Board on several pending pieces of legislation related to the Pardon and Parole Board. The information in the briefing was contained in a tracker that Mr. Counts provided to the Board members. Mr. Counts further advised he would update the Board as needed.

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

No new business was discussed.

VI. Adjournment of the Business Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 9:13 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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

Kyle Counts
General Counsel

The minutes for the March 2023 Pardon and Parole Board Business Meeting were approved by a majority vote on the 10th day of April, 2023.