

Texas Board of Criminal Justice
180th Meeting



Minutes

August 7, 2015
Austin, Texas

TEXAS BOARD OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

**Omni Hotel Downtown Austin – Lone Star Room
700 San Jacinto
Austin, Texas 78701**

**August 7, 2015
1:45 – 3:00 PM**

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Call to Order

Convene Texas Board of Criminal Justice (TBCJ)

I. Regular Session

A. Recognitions

B. Consideration of Approval of Consent Items (*Pages 1-6*)

1. Hazardous Duty Pay Authorization Requests
2. Personal Property Donations
3. Sale or Disposal of Surplus Agricultural Goods and Agricultural Personal Property
4. 179th TBCJ Meeting Minutes
5. Excused Absences

C. Report from the Executive Director, Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ)

D. Report from the Chairman, TBCJ

E. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding the Proposed Fiscal Year 2016 Annual Audit Plan

F. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Purchases and Contracts Over \$1 Million (*Pages 7-8*)

G. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding the TDCJ Fiscal Year 2016 Proposed Operating Budget

H. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Adoption of Amendments to Board Rules Title 37 Texas Administrative Code Section 163.45, Distribution of Community Corrections Funding (*Pages 9-11*)

I. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Readoption of Board Rule Title 37 Texas Administrative Code Section 195.61, Method of Payment for Parole Supervision & Administrative Fees (*Pages 12-14*)

- J. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Proposed Amendments to Board Rule Title 37 Texas Administrative Code Section 151.4, Public Presentations and Comments to the Texas Board of Criminal Justice (*Pages 15-19*)

- K. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Proposed Land Transactions (*Pages 20-27*)
 - 1. Request for Gas Pipeline Easement at the Boyd Unit in Freestone County, Teague, Texas
 - 2. Request for Gas Pipeline and Electrical Easements at the Ellis and Estelle Units in Walker County, Huntsville, Texas
 - 3. Request to Amend Electrical Easement (1) at the Scott Unit in Brazoria County, Angleton, Texas
 - 4. Request to Amend Electrical Easement (2) at the Scott Unit in Brazoria County, Angleton, Texas

- L. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Proposed Facility Division Construction Projects (*Pages 28-41*)
 - 1. Request to Install Fire Alarm System at the Luther Unit in Grimes County, Navasota, Texas
 - 2. Request to Replace Roofs at the Powledge Unit in Anderson County, Palestine, Texas
 - 3. Request to Replace Roofs at the Clements Unit in Potter County, Amarillo, Texas
 - 4. Request to Replace Door Controls at the Bridgeport Unit in Wise County, Bridgeport, Texas
 - 5. Request to Replace Door Controls at the Michael Unit in Anderson County, Tennessee Colony, Texas
 - 6. Request to Replace Locking System at the Ramsey Unit in Brazoria County, Rosharon, Texas
 - 7. Request to Replace Locking System at the Stringfellow Unit in Brazoria County, Rosharon, Texas

- M. Public Comment

Adjourn

The TBCJ may discuss and/or take action on any of the items posted on this meeting agenda. The TBCJ may also convene into Executive Session on any of these matters when attorney-client privilege is warranted.

MINUTES OF THE TEXAS BOARD OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Meeting No. 180

The Texas Board of Criminal Justice (TBCJ or board) convened in regular session on Friday, August 7, 2015, at 1:49 p.m. at the Omni Hotel Downtown, Austin, Texas. The board adjourned at 3:03 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Oliver Bell, Chairman
Terrell McCombs
Leopoldo (Leo) Vasquez, III, Secretary
Eric Gambrell
Judge Larry Gist
Janice Harris Lord
Larry Miles
Thomas P. Wingate

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Carmen Villanueva-Hiles

TDCJ STAFF PRESENT: Brad Livingston, Executive Director
Bryan Collier, Deputy Executive Director
Jeff Baldwin
Mike Bell
Christopher Cirrito
Jason Clark
Matt Demny
Marie Freeland
Patty Garcia
Sharon Howell
Frank Inmon
Stuart Jenkins
Sherry Koenig
Dr. Lannette Linthicum
Bobby Lumpkin
Angie McCown
Jerry McGinty
Oscar Mendoza
Ron Steffa
William Stephens
Bruce Toney
Carey Welebob
April Zamora

OTHERS PRESENT: The Honorable Judge Dale Spurgin, Jones County; Libby Elliott, Office of the Governor; Dr. Clint Carpenter, Superintendent of the Windham School District (WSD); and members of the media.

Convene Texas Board of Criminal Justice

Chairman Oliver Bell convened the 180th meeting of the TBCJ on Friday, August 7, 2015, at 1:49 p.m. He noted a quorum was present and declared the meeting open in accordance with Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, the *Open Meetings Act*. He stated that during the regular session, the board would conduct business from the agenda posted in the *Texas Register*.

Chairman Bell recognized Libby Elliott, Office of the Governor; The Honorable Judge Dale Spurgin, Jones County; Dr. Clint Carpenter, Superintendent of the Windham School District (WSD); and members of the media.

Chairman Bell stated that the TBCJ is committed to providing the opportunity for public presentations on topics posted on the meeting agenda in accordance with Board Rule 151.4, "Public Presentations and Comments to the Texas Board of Criminal Justice." He noted three registration cards were received for the public comment period later; therefore, the review of the rules for comments to the board would take place at that time.

Recognitions

Chairman Bell introduced Gary Anderson, from the Texas Public Employees Association (TPEA). Mr. Anderson presented a plaque to Brad Livingston, Executive Director of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), honoring him as the recipient, for the fourth time, of the *Agency Administrator of the Year Award for TPEA*. He explained the role of the TPEA and expressed appreciation to Mr. Livingston for his broad range of experience, excellent leadership, and invaluable advice, especially during the legislative sessions. Chairman Bell, Terrell McCombs, and Janice Harris Lord echoed gratitude to Mr. Livingston for the unique set of skills he brought to the office of the executive director.

Mr. Livingston acknowledged the significant contribution of the TDCJ staff and accepted the award on behalf of the TDCJ.

Jerry McGinty, Chief Financial Officer, recognized and congratulated Sherry Koenig for 30 years of excellent service to the TDCJ, eight of which she has been budget director.

Chairman Bell recognized the TDCJ employees who have dedicated 25, 30, and 35 plus years of service with the state of Texas during the months of June and July 2015. On behalf of the TBCJ and Mr. Livingston, he expressed deepest gratitude for their unwavering loyalty and dedication to the citizens of Texas.

(Attachment A – Employee Names)

Consideration of Approval of Consent Items

- 1. Hazardous Duty Pay Authorization Requests**
- 2. Personal Property Donations**
- 3. Sale or Disposal of Surplus Agricultural Goods and Agricultural Personal Property**
- 4. 179th TBCJ Meeting Minutes**
- 5. Excused Absences**

Chairman Bell asked if there were any amendments or objections to the proposed consent items, which included excused absences for Pastor Larry Miles, from the April 17th meeting, and Judge Larry Gist, from the June 10th meeting, both due to personal business.

Eric Gambrell stated his firm represents several entities listed on the personal property donations for board approval; therefore he would abstain from taking action on the consent items. Pastor Miles acknowledged his affiliation with Trinity Fellowship Church, which donated items presented for consideration, and stated he would abstain from taking action on the consent items. Chairman Bell asked if there were any other objections or amendments. Seeing none, the consent items stand approved, with abstentions from Mr. Gambrell and Pastor Miles.

Report from the Executive Director, TDCJ

Mr. Livingston discussed the FY 2016 pre-service and in-service training curriculum. He stated the correctional officer training curriculum undergoes ongoing review and revision; for example, minor modifications were recently made to ensure officers' full compliance with the standards of the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA). Beginning in FY 2016, additional mental health and crisis intervention training will be administered to all correctional officers, and will cover all units. The mental health and crisis intervention component is patterned after the training required for officers who work on units with mentally ill offenders treated in inpatient programs. In order to incorporate the training, duration of the officer pre-service training will expand from 216 hours to 240 hours, while in-service training will dedicate eight additional hours to mental health and crisis intervention. Mr. Livingston stressed the importance of addressing mental health issues of those incarcerated, and said the training will raise the bar in correctional training and provide necessary tools for officers to be even more positive and productive.

Mr. Livingston noted that it has been three weeks since Officer Timothy Davison lost his life in the line of duty at the Telford Unit. He said he visited the unit the day after the tragedy, and witnessed the enormous outpouring of support as everyone who works for the TDCJ felt the impact. He affirmed this was a startling reminder of the danger and daily risk associated with the role of correctional officers. Mr. Livingston offered condolences to Officer Davison's family, friends, and peers.

Report from the Chairman, TBCJ

Fallen Officer Timothy Davison

Chairman Bell offered words of encouragement to the colleagues, family, and friends of Officer Davison, and said he was able to attend the funeral and speak to the family. He described the funeral services, which included an outflow of support from the local community, a color guard from about 14 states, representatives from different law enforcement branches, and many others who came to show their support. Chairman Bell offered a petition for divine care of the fallen, the family, and the communities.

Partnering with Kairos and Other Volunteer Organizations

Chairman Bell shared his experience attending a Kairos event as a guest speaker. He commended the faith based volunteer initiative for its valuable partnership with the TDCJ, and called Kairos volunteers excellent representatives of their faith, who inspire by putting their faith

into action. He emphasized the importance of all the volunteers' contribution to the mission of the TDCJ, and welcomed more volunteers to bring hope and positive influence.

Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding the Proposed Fiscal Year 2016 Annual Audit Plan

Christopher Cirrito, Internal Audit Division Director, referred to his committee presentation of the proposed FY 2016 annual audit plan. He asked the board if they had any questions or concerns, and if none, he recommended board approval.

Chairman Bell asked if there were questions. Seeing none, he asked for a motion and a second.

Leo Vasquez moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the Internal Audit Plan for Fiscal Year 2016 and authorize the internal audit director to perform audit work outside of the audit plan if the director deems deviations are warranted, documented as required by the Texas Internal Auditing Act, and presented to the board at its next scheduled meeting.

Terrell McCombs seconded the motion which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

Attachment B – Texas Department of Criminal Justice Internal Audit Division Fiscal Years 2014-2015 Status Report as of 07/27/15

Attachment C – Texas Department of Criminal Justice Internal Audit Division Proposed Fiscal Year 2016 Annual Audit Plan

Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Purchases and Contracts Over \$1 Million

Jerry McGinty reviewed the purchases and contracts over \$1 million. Item one was an annual contract for bleaching and preshrinking TDCJ-produced fabric. Items two and three were FY 2016-2017 contract renewals for aftercare residential and outpatient substance abuse treatment at two locations. Mr. McGinty grouped items 4-16, the contracts for Texas Correctional Office on Offenders with Medical or Mental Impairments (TCOOMMI) to provide continuity of care and case management at local mental health authorities throughout the state. These contracts include additional legislative funding to increase the number of mental health services to offenders in the community. Items 17 and 18 were based on state funding to establish contracts with community based reentry services in Houston and Dallas. Item 19, an FY 2016-2017 contract renewal for vehicles, at essentially the same cost as FY 2014-2015, focused on freight and offender transportation. Item 20 renewed the \$25 million two-year contract with the Department of Information Resources, funded by the legislature to provide data consolidation services to TDCJ. Item 21 related to the \$5 million, for FY 2015 purchases of laundry and food service equipment, and items 22-25 pertained to Correctional Managed Health Care. Item 22 listed the FY 2014-2015 contract, which provided additional authority and an increase of \$66.7 million to cover increased medical services. Items 23 and 24 consisted of the FY 2016-2017 contracts for

offender medical and mental health care, through Texas Tech University and the University of Texas. Item 25 renewed the contract with Huntsville Memorial Hospital through the Walker County hospital district.

Chairman Bell asked if there were any questions.

Judge Larry Gist referred to the evaluation process established by Bryan Collier, Deputy Executive Director, to measure the success of substance abuse programs. He said this evaluation would be applied to all the substance abuse programs, and hoped to see follow up reports in the future.

Chairman Bell added it is nice to hear a philosophical concept; however, when a program can show measureable results, it gives assurance that money has been spent wisely.

Chairman Bell asked if there were any more questions. Seeing none, he called for a motion and a second.

Terrell McCombs moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the purchases and contracts over \$1 million, as presented.

Janice Harris Lord seconded the motion which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding the TDCJ Fiscal Year 2016 Proposed Operating Budget

Mr. McGinty referred to the earlier presentation during the Business and Financial Operations Committee meeting of the FY 2016 proposed operating budget. He said the \$3.374 billion budget represents an approximate five percent increase compared to FY 2015 spending. He assured the salary increases, treatment programs, reentry initiatives, and additional funding to probation were accounted for, and pledged his staff will work to process the funds promptly and appropriately.

Chairman Bell asked if there were questions. Seeing none, he called for a motion and a second.

Eric Gambrell moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the Texas Department of Criminal Justice Fiscal Year 2016 Operating Budget as presented, and authorize the executive director of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice to make transfers as necessary and as authorized through the General Appropriations Act and other applicable laws.

Pastor Larry Miles seconded the motion, which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Adoption of Amendments to Board Rule Title 37 Texas Administrative Code Section 163.45, Distribution of Community Corrections Funding

Sharon Howell, General Counsel, presented Board Rule 163.45, Distribution of Community Corrections Funding. She referenced the board's approval last April to publish the rule in the *Texas Register*, for public comment. Since it appeared in the May 1, 2015, issue and no comments were received, she recommended adoption.

Chairman Bell asked if there were questions. Seeing none, he called for a motion and a second.

Judge Larry Gist moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice adopt Title 37 Texas Administrative Code Section 163.45, Distribution of Community Corrections Funding, as published in the Texas Register, and that the Chairman sign the order to this effect.

Judge Thomas Wingate seconded the motion, which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Readoption of Board Rule Title 37 Texas Administrative Code 195.61, Method of Payment for Parole Supervision & Administrative Fees

Ms. Howell presented Board Rule 195.61, Method of Payment for Parole Supervision & Administrative Fees. She explained the rule was due for periodic review; however, no proposed amendments were necessary. It appeared in the May 8, 2015, *Texas Register* with no public comments received. Ms. Howell recommended adoption.

Chairman Bell asked if there were questions. Seeing none, he called for a motion and a second.

Judge Thomas Wingate moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice readopt Board Rule Title 37 Texas Administrative Code Section 195.61, Method of Payment for Parole Supervision & Administrative Fees, as published in the Texas Register, and that the Chairman sign the order to this effect.

Judge Larry Gist seconded the motion, which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Proposed Amendments to Board Rule Title 37 Texas Administrative Code Section 151.4, Public Presentations and Comments to the Texas Board of Criminal Justice

Ms. Howell presented proposed revisions to Board Rule, 151.4, Public Presentations and Comments to the Texas Board of Criminal Justice. She stated the rule was reviewed and conformed to legislation of the 184th Legislative Session, which prohibits the possession of

firearms by anyone other than law enforcement at an open meeting. She recommended publication in the *Texas Register*.

Chairman Bell asked if there were questions. Seeing none, he asked for a motion and second.

Janice Harris Lord moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve for publication in the Texas Register, the proposed amendments to Board Rule Title 37 Texas Administrative Code Section 151.4, Public Presentations and Comments to the Texas Board of Criminal Justice, as presented.

Terrell McCombs seconded the motion, which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

Chairman Bell thanked Ms. Howell for her presentations.

Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding a Request for a Gas Pipeline Easement at the Boyd Unit in Freestone County, Teague, Texas

Matt Demny, Agribusiness, Land and Minerals Director, presented the easement request from Lone Star NGL Pipeline LP. As discussed earlier in the meeting of the Business and Financial Operations Committee, the company requests to install a natural gas pipeline at the Boyd Unit, consisting of an area of 0.73 acres of land, with an additional temporary workspace. They agreed to pay \$15,556.00 for this easement with a 10 year term. Mr. Demny recommended board approval.

Chairman Bell asked if there were any questions. Seeing none, he called for a motion and a second.

Pastor Larry Miles moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the request for a gas pipeline easement at the Boyd Unit in Freestone County, Teague, Texas, as presented.

Leo Vasquez seconded the motion which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding a Request for a Gas Pipeline and Electrical Easements at the Ellis and Estelle Units in Walker County, Huntsville, Texas

Mr. Demny presented the request, as discussed earlier in committee, from Lone Star NGL Pipeline LP, for two easements at the Ellis and Estelle units, consisting of two tracts of land with a combined area of 4.68 acres, and an additional temporary workspace. The company will install one natural gas pipeline, and one electrical transmission line. For these easements, they have agreed to pay \$108,641.00, both with a 10 year term.

Chairman Bell asked if there were any questions. Seeing none, he called for a motion and a second.

Eric Gambrell moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the request for a gas pipeline and electrical easements at the Ellis and Estelle units in Walker County, Huntsville, Texas, as presented.

Pastor Larry Miles seconded the motion which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

**Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding a
Request to Amend Electrical Easement (1) at the Scott Unit in Brazoria
County, Angleton, Texas**

Mr. Demny presented the request from CenterPoint Energy Houston Electric, LLC to amend an existing electrical easement at the Scott Unit by adding 10.913 acres. As discussed earlier in committee, the expansion will accommodate a new electrical substation. The company has agreed to pay \$81,763.00 for this easement amendment with all other terms and provisions remaining in full force and effect. Mr. Demny recommended board approval.

Chairman Bell asked if there were any questions. Eric Gambrell abstained due to his firm's representation of CenterPoint Energy. Seeing no further questions, and noting Mr. Gambrell's abstention, Chairman Bell called for a motion and a second.

Terrell McCombs moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the request to amend electrical easement (1) at the Scott Unit in Brazoria County, Angleton, Texas, as presented.

Judge Thomas Wingate seconded the motion which prevailed when called to a vote.

**Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding a
Request to Amend Electrical Easement (2) at the Scott Unit in
Brazoria County, Angleton, Texas**

Mr. Demny presented the request, as discussed earlier in committee, from Texas New Mexico Power, to amend an existing electrical easement at the Scott Unit by adding 6.64 acres, to extend an electrical transmission line to the site of an electrical switching station. They have agreed to pay \$49,749.00 for this easement amendment, with all terms and provisions remaining intact.

Chairman Bell asked if there were any questions. Seeing none, he called for a motion and a second.

Leo Vasquez moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the request to amend electrical easement (2) at the Scott Unit in Brazoria County, Angleton, Texas, as presented.

Terrell McCombs seconded the motion which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

Chairman Bell thanked Mr. Demny for his presentations.

**Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding a Facilities
Division Construction Project to Install Fire Alarm System at the
Luther Unit in Grimes County, Navasota, Texas**

Frank Inmon, Facilities Division Director, reviewed the job scope and proposed budget, as discussed earlier in the Business and Financial Operations Committee, for the installation of a new unit wide fire alarm system at the Luther Unit, at a cost of \$1,710,500.00. Mr. Inmon recommended approval.

Chairman Bell asked if there were any questions. Seeing none, he called for a motion and a second.

Judge Larry Gist moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve a not to exceed budget of \$1,710,500.00 to install a fire alarm system at the Luther Unit in Grimes County, Navasota, Texas, as presented.

Leo Vasquez seconded the motion which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

**Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding a Facilities
Division Construction Project to Replace Roofs at the Powledge Unit in
Anderson County, Palestine, Texas**

Mr. Inmon reviewed the job scope and proposed budget, as presented earlier in committee, for the replacement of 91,204 square feet of deteriorated roofing at the Powledge Unit Industry Building, at a cost of \$1,827,700.00. Mr. Inmon recommended board approval.

Chairman Bell asked if there were any questions. Seeing none, he called for a motion and a second.

Judge Thomas Wingate moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve a not to exceed budget of \$1,827,700.00 to replace roofs at the Powledge Unit in Anderson County, Palestine, Texas, as presented.

Judge Larry Gist seconded the motion which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

**Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding a
Facilities Division Construction Project to Replace Roofs at the
Clements Unit in Potter County, Amarillo, Texas**

Mr. Inmon reviewed the job scope and proposed budget, as discussed earlier in the Business and Financial Operations Committee, for replacement of deteriorated roofing on buildings of the Clements Unit, at a cost of \$8,924,900.00. Mr. Inmon recommended approval.

Chairman Bell asked if there were any questions. Seeing none, he called for a motion and a second.

Janice Harris Lord moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve a not to exceed budget of \$8,924,900.00 to replace roofs at the Clements Unit in Potter County, Amarillo, Texas, as presented.

Pastor Larry Miles seconded the motion which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

**Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding a Facilities
Division Construction Project to Replace Door Controls at the
Bridgeport Unit in Wise County, Bridgeport, Texas**

Mr. Inmon reviewed the job scope and proposed budget, as discussed earlier in committee, for replacement of door controls at the Bridgeport Unit, at a cost of \$2,011,000.00. Mr. Inmon recommended approval.

Chairman Bell asked if there were any questions. Seeing none, he called for a motion and a second.

Pastor Larry Miles moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve a not to exceed budget of \$2,011,000.00 to replace door controls at the Bridgeport Unit in Wise County, Bridgeport, Texas, as presented.

Judge Thomas Wingate seconded the motion which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

**Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding a Facilities Division
Construction Project to Replace Door Controls at the Michael Unit in
Anderson County, Tennessee County, Texas**

Mr. Inmon reviewed the job scope and proposed budget, as discussed earlier in committee, for replacement of door controls at the Michael Unit, at a cost of \$6,549,500.00. Mr. Inmon recommended approval.

Chairman Bell asked if there were any questions. Seeing none, he called for a motion and a second.

Judge Thomas Wingate moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve a not to exceed budget of \$6,549,500.00 to replace door controls at the Michael Unit in Anderson County, Tennessee Colony, Texas, as presented.

Terrell McCombs seconded the motion which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding a Facilities Division Construction Project to Replace Locking system at the Ramsey Unit in Brazoria County, Rosharon, Texas

Mr. Inmon reviewed the job scope and proposed budget, as discussed earlier in committee, for replacement of the locking system at the Ramsey Unit, at a cost of \$2,608,800.00. Mr. Inmon recommended approval.

Chairman Bell asked if there were any questions. Seeing none, he called for a motion and a second.

Terrell McCombs moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve a not to exceed budget of \$2,608,800.00 to replace the locking system at the Ramsey Unit in Brazoria County, Rosharon, Texas, as presented.

Leo Vasquez seconded the motion which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding a Facilities Division Construction Project to Replace Locking System at the Stringfellow Unit in Brazoria County, Rosharon, Texas

Mr. Inmon reviewed the job scope and proposed budget, as discussed earlier in committee, for replacement of the locking system at the Stringfellow Unit, at a cost of \$1,227,766.00. Mr. Inmon recommended approval.

Chairman Bell asked if there were any questions. Seeing none, he called for a motion and a second.

Leo Vasquez moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve a not to exceed budget of \$1,227,766.00 to replace the locking system at the Stringfellow Unit in Brazoria County, Rosharon, Texas, as presented.

Pastor Larry Miles seconded the motion which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

Chairman Bell commended Mr. Inmon for his presentations in the committee as well as the regular session.

Public Comments

Chairman Bell reviewed the rules concerning public comments.

Yancy Escobar asked for the rules for death row inmates to be changed to allow phone privileges, to keep them from feeling alienated from family. She stressed the importance of staying in contact with incarcerated loved ones. Ms. Escobar stated the holidays are difficult for the family. She asked for consideration of more humane housing.

Pat Hartwell, spoke about the conditions at the Polunsky Unit. She complimented the Polunsky mail room for their improvement, and commended Warden Harris for his sincere efforts to address complaints. Ms. Hartwell asked for a copy of the final inspection report of a cell which she was told had not been properly cleaned from the previous occupant, and had a closed vent due to a leak in the air system. Regarding the visitation room, she said the address posted for the American Correctional Association (ACA) was outdated, and the unit's vending machines were often inoperable, and had over-priced, outdated food. Ms. Hartwell stated she would submit a copy of a detailed letter of her presentation, as well as a letter she received from an offender, listing other issues.

Hepsibah Hoffman Rogers introduced herself as president of the Friends of Paws in Prison Charity, dedicated to supporting the Paws in Prison Program at the Lockhart Unit. Ms. Hoffman explained the program brings shelter dogs into the facility to be trained by female inmates, then the dogs are adopted into the community. She stated she has been a volunteer trainer for the program since its inception seven years ago, with the GEO Group managing the unit. When the contract was awarded recently to Management and Training Corporation (MTC), Ms. Rogers began meeting with MTC regarding program continuation. Although community support covers operational cost, the program director's salary is in question. Ms. Rogers attested a full time director is necessary to the success of the program. She urged the board to construct a process of bidding contracts that involves providers of existing programs. She listed benefits of rehabilitation programs involving animals, and urged the TDCJ to promote them. She offered a signed petition of community supporters for the program.

Chairman Bell thanked all the public speakers and urged them to submit any documentation associated with their topic in order to ensure a written response from the board.

Chairman Bell thanked everyone for attending, and announced the next meeting of the TBCJ would be Thursday, October 15, 2015, at the Courtyard Marriott Downtown, in Austin.

Adjournment

There being no further business for the regular session, Chairman Bell adjourned the 180th meeting of the TBCJ at 3:03 p.m.

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Chairman

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Secretary

**Signature on file*

Note: Referenced attachments for approved minutes are available upon request from Executive Services, the Office of Record.