TEXAS BOARD OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Via Zoom Video Conference

March 5, 2021
8:45 AM – 10:45 AM

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Call to Order

Convene Texas Board of Criminal Justice (TBCJ) Meeting – Recess to Executive Session

I. Executive Session

A. The TBCJ may convene into Executive Session.

B. Discussion of personnel matters relating to the Board of Criminal Justice, the Executive Director, the Inspector General, the Director of the Internal Audit Division, the Director of the State Counsel for Offenders, the Director of the Office of the Ombudsman, and the Prison Rape Elimination Act Ombudsman or to hear a complaint or charge against an employee (closed in accordance with Section 551.074, Government Code).

C. Discussion regarding deployment of security personnel, devices, or security audits (closed in accordance with Section 551.076, Government Code).

D. Discussion regarding security assessments or deployments relating to information resources technology, confidential network security information, or the deployment, or specific occasions for implementation, of security personnel, critical infrastructure, or security devices (closed in accordance with Section 551.089, Government Code).

E. Consultation with legal counsel regarding pending or contemplated litigation or settlement offers; to receive legal advice on items posted on this agenda; or consultation on a matter where the TBCJ seeks the advice of its attorney as privileged communications under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas (closed in accordance with Section 551.071, Government Code).

Reconvene Texas Board of Criminal Justice (TBCJ)
II. Regular Session

A. Recognitions

B. Consideration of Approval of Consent Items
   1. Hazardous Duty Pay Authorization Requests
   2. Personal Property Donations
   3. 214th TBCJ Meeting Minutes
   4. Excused Absences

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

D. Report from the Chairman, TBCJ

E. Report from the Presiding Officer, Judicial Advisory Council

F. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding the Selection of the Office of the Ombudsman Director

G. Internal Audit Status Report for Fiscal Years 2020-2021

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

I. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Proposed Land Transaction-Request for Pipeline Easements at the Stiles Unit in Jefferson County, Beaumont, Texas

Adjourn

The TBCJ may discuss and/or take action on any of the items posted on this meeting agenda.
The Texas Board of Criminal Justice (TBCJ) convened on Friday, March 5, 2021, in executive session at 8:45 a.m. via Zoom, recessed at 8:46 a.m., reconvened in regular session at 9:54 a.m. and adjourned at 11:03 a.m.

**TBCJ MEMBERS PRESENT:**
- Patrick O’Daniel, Chairman
- Derrelynn Perryman, Vice-Chairman
- Larry Miles, Secretary
- E.F. “Mano” DeAyala
- Judge Molly Francis
- Judge Faith Johnson
- Sichan Siv
- Eric Nichols
- Rodney Burrow, M.D.

**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE STAFF PRESENT:**
- Bryan Collier, Executive Director
- Oscar Mendoza, Deputy Executive Director
- Richard Babcock
- Jason Clark
- Cody Ginsel
- Billy Hirsch
- Bobby Lumpkin
- Miguel Martinez
- Ron Steffa

**TBCJ STAFF PRESENT:**
- Chris Cirrito
- Jill Durst
- Cris Love

**Convene the Texas Board of Criminal Justice**

Chairman Patrick O’Daniel convened the 215th meeting of the Texas Board of Criminal Justice (TBCJ) on Friday, March 5, 2021, at 8:54 a.m., noted that a quorum was present, and declared the meeting open in accordance with Texas Government Code Chapter 551, the *Open Meetings Act*. He stated the TBCJ would be conducting business from the agenda posted in the *Texas Register*.

Chairman O’Daniel stated that the TBCJ is committed to providing the opportunity for public presentations on posted agenda topics in accordance with Board Rule 151.4, “Public Presentations and Comments to the Texas Board of Criminal Justice.” One speaker registration card was received for public comment prior to the deadline. He reviewed the rules and stated the presenter is allowed three minutes.
Recognitions

Bobby Lumpkin, TDCJ Correctional Institutions Division (CID) Director, introduced Miguel Martinez as the new CID Deputy Division Director, and highlighted his background.

Mr. Lumpkin introduced Richard Babcock as the new Laundry, Food and Supply Director, and highlighted his background.

Chairman O'Daniel recognized the TDCJ employees who have dedicated 25, 30, 35, and 40 years of service to the state of Texas during the months of January and February 2021. During this time, 74 employees attained 25 years of service, 22 employees attained 30 years of service, 16 employees attained 35 years of service, and five employees attained 40 years of service. He stated these individuals represent the strong commitment of the TDCJ staff systemwide. On behalf of the TBCJ and Mr. Collier, he expressed deepest gratitude for the continued service of these employees.

(Attachment A – Employee Names)

Consideration of Approval of Consent Items

1. Hazardous Duty Pay Authorization Requests
2. Personal Property Donations
3. 214th TBCJ Meeting Minutes
4. Excused Absences

Chairman O’Daniel stated the consent items include an excused absence for Larry Miles for the 214th TBCJ meeting due to personal business and asked if there were any amendments, abstentions, or objections to the proposed consent items. Hearing none, the consent items were approved.

Report from the Executive Director,
Texas Department of Criminal Justice

Correctional Officer Staffing

Mr. Collier stated correctional officer staffing continues to be the TDCJ’s top priority and the new recruiting and retention initiatives are beginning to take shape. On January 1, 2021, correctional officer recruiting was successfully transitioned from the Human Resources Division to the Training and Leader Development Division. The new recruiting director, Benny Kinsey, has hit the ground running and has been working closely with Talent Acquisition Advisor staff. Their daily direct involvement has resulted in several procedural changes to speed up the processing and scheduling of candidates, while also creating a unified pathway from first contact to arrival at the academy. They have implemented practices to factor in projected losses based on historical data to determine the breakeven point, allowing us to see at what point our new hires will exceed our expected losses for any given month. Historically, January to March has a noted dip in production over each of the last three years. This year, we are on track to eliminate that downward trend to set us up for a very successful summer. Overall, we are continuing to
eliminate the processing bottlenecks to improve our efficiencies and will begin making marked improvements to the ability to seek out candidates in the near term. Mr. Mendoza has been interviewing captains who have been nominated for the Executive Director’s Retention Task Force and meetings of the group will begin in the next few weeks.

Legislative Update

Mr. Collier provided an update on the 87th legislative session that began on January 12, 2021. Both the Senate and the House of Representatives introduced budgets that were very favorable to the TDCJ and restored the 5% reduction items that were included in our first requested priority item. This restoration eliminated our first exceptional item and gave us a much better starting posture than anticipated. The Senate Finance Committee began meeting in January and the TDCJ testified before them this past Wednesday to present our budget request. The House of Representatives elected a new speaker, Dade Phelan, and he announced house committee assignments, which include a new Chair of the Appropriations Committee, Greg Bonnen, and Chair of the House of Corrections Committee, Andrew Murr. The Appropriations and Corrections Committees began regular meetings this week, hearing from TDCJ on Wednesday and Thursday. There has been a total of nearly 3,500 bills filed thus far, and the TDCJ is tracking more than 900 bills for potential impact to the agency if passed. Mr. Collier stated he will provide an update on the TDCJ’s progress as the session unfolds.

COVID-19 Response

Mr. Collier stated, as referenced in December, the TDCJ has initiated a new testing strategy that involves each unit in the system being tested every three weeks based on a random sample of staff and inmates at those locations. We have also continued weekly testing at five locations with the highest concentration of geriatric inmates. The COVID-19 approach of testing, disinfecting, and protocols, including the use of vital oxide fogging, iWAVE technology in air handlers, social distancing, protective equipment for staff and inmates, and unannounced visits from the Compliance Assessment Teams to ensure that guidelines and policies are being followed is working. When looking at key indicators from our system in comparison to other large states, we find that we are one of the most aggressive at testing for the virus, yet we are actually finding less positives than many state systems. We still have a long way to go to get to the other side of this pandemic; however, if you step back and look, you can see that the thousands of men and women employed with the TDCJ, and our healthcare providers, are doing an outstanding job. The focus remains on prevention, mitigation, and protection as we continue to work through this pandemic.

Sadly, since our last meeting, we have lost 14 staff members to COVID-19: Dorothy Caylor, Human Resources Specialist at the Roach Unit; Phillip Holbert, Correctional Officer at the Formby State Jail; Joe Landin, Correctional Officer at the Montford Unit; Brenda Lafaso, Parole Officer at the Beaumont District Parole Office; Rebecca Crowe, Clerk at the Victoria District Parole Office; Randall Sims, Sergeant of Correctional Officers at the Havins Unit; John Wier, Agriculture Specialist at the Powledge Unit; Treva Preston, Lieutenant of Correctional Officers at the Hamilton Unit; Alfredo Jimenez Jr., Correctional Officer at the Formby State Jail; Maria Garcia, Correctional Officer at the Connally Unit; Godfrey Zuze, Correctional Officer at the Estelle Unit; Vickie James, Correctional Officer at the Choice Moore Unit; Tawio Obele, Correctional Officer at the Beto Unit; and Troy Morin, Parole Officer at the San Antonio I Parole
Office. Each of these employees lost their battle with COVID-19; however, they will never be forgotten for their bravery, commitment to public safety, and the ultimate sacrifice they paid. We continue to pray for their families and co-workers who still mourn each of these losses and we will honor each of them in our fallen officer service. We have lost 36 inmates due to complications from COVID-19 since our last meeting. We offer our prayers to their families during this time.

Mr. Collier publicly commended the TDCJ staff, the Windham School District staff, and the staff who work for our medical partners, the University of Texas Medical Branch and Texas Tech Health Science Center. These men and women have been true heroes throughout this event. Regardless of the position, they are all heroes and their sacrifice to the state of Texas has allowed the TDCJ to meet its mission of delivering public safety. Texans are very blessed to have such dedicated servants who, despite the challenges we have seen, still push through and get the job done. He thanked Chairman O’Daniel and the TBCJ members for their time and continued support.

Chairman O’Daniel stated Ms. Laurie Pherigo, who provided a speaker registration card for public comment, may present.

Laurie Pherigo thanked the board for the opportunity and stated on March 4, 2020, Texas reported its first case of COVID-19. According to the TBCJ update from January, a total of 32,766 inmates and 10,437 staff have tested positive for the virus. Incarcerated people don’t have access to the same things that we do. She noted that we can take preventative measures to keep ourselves and loved ones safe. But there is no ability to social distance yourself in prison. People in prison cannot get masks, don’t have access to information, and are not able to get the vaccine like everyone else. She requested that TDCJ immediately offer the vaccine to the incarcerated people who are eligible to get the vaccine now and offer an educational program throughout the system that provides solid, easily understandable information on the vaccine to increase participating in the vaccination program. Once the vaccine is made available to all members of the public, it should also be made available to all incarcerated in the TDCJ. They should not be prevented from getting the vaccine just because they are in prison. Punishment should not be risking the inmate’s life and the lives of others.

Report from the Chairman, TBCJ

Employee Tributes

Chairman O’Daniel thanked all the men and women of the TDCJ for all they have done and continue to do. He stated their resilience has allowed the TDCJ to continue to weather the storm and their commitment has made all the difference. Since the inception of the prison system in Texas more than 170 years ago, we have seen and mastered many challenging moments. This has been one of the most challenging in our history. Chairman O’Daniel stated he is convinced that we will overcome this one, too. It is in times of crisis that heroes are born. Today, we honor 14 individuals who, despite knowing the dangers, continued to perform their essential work right up to the moment that they could not anymore. This is work that keeps us safe at night. Sadly, like thousands of others across the great state of Texas, they have succumbed to the COVID-19 virus.
Dorothy Caylor was known for her baking and her love of people, especially children. Dorothy’s entire career with the TDCJ was as a Human Resources Specialist at the Roach Unit in Childress, beginning in 2005. When not at work, she might be baking her wonderful fresh strawberry cake, cream cheese banana bread, or toffee crackers. Warden Michael Crow at the Roach Unit said, “Whenever I went to the Human Resources office, she would cut her eyes to the refrigerator and I knew there were some goodies in there.” She was a lifetime member of the United Pentecostal Church and enjoyed shopping, visiting the mountains, or going to Biloxi, Mississippi. Dorothy was also someone who deeply loved her family. She was married to William, and they have a daughter, Jamie. She also has two stepdaughters, Tonya and Crystal, and four grandchildren. Dorothy Caylor, age 62, died from the coronavirus on December 17, 2020.

Correctional Officer Phillip Holbert loved his family, the family that are relatives by blood and the family that he worked with at the Formby State Jail. Phillip began working for the agency 24 years ago and the last 14 years were as a Correctional Officer. Warden Gregory David at the Formby says “dependability” was Phillip’s highest trait. “Although he encountered health problems, he tried his hardest to be here and lend a helping hand when he could have easily just called in sick. He knew how important it was to be at work not only for his own peace of mind but also for everyone he worked with,” added Warden David. Phillip’s lifelong goal was to retire so that he could spend time wrestling with his three grandchildren and just be a part of their everyday lives. He loved being their Papa. He enjoyed doing home improvements around his own house, as well as his three daughters’ houses. When he wasn’t doing that, he could be found either cooking, hunting, or fishing, his favorite pastimes. He liked to brag on his wife. He would tell colleagues how he and Stephanie “eloped” and have been blissfully happy ever since that day. Phillip Holbert, age 58, died from the coronavirus on December 27, 2020.

Joe Landin, Correctional Officer at the Montford Unit in Lubbock, was one those employees who worked here for many years and retired, then decided this is where he truly belonged. Joe began his TDCJ career in April 1993 at the Tulia Unit and in 1995 transferred to Montford. When he turned 50, he retired. Three years later, he was back working at the Montford Unit. His dedication to the TDCJ was always a sense of pride, especially when he volunteered to assist the Beaumont area after the hurricanes in 2005, and again when major storms threatened the Stiles Unit in 2020. When he wasn’t doing his part to beautify the area around the facility, he was offering his assistance in the Maintenance Department during staff shortages. For his commitment to loyalty and duty before self, Joe was presented with one of the first Montford Unit challenge coins. A family man who raised his two daughters and two sons with stern but steadfast love, Joe was also an outdoorsman and craftsman who had a great sense of humor and loved being around his seven grandchildren. He was also an avid Dallas Cowboys and Texas Rangers fan whose companionship, sincerity, and empathy for others made him a pleasure to be around. Joe Landin, age 54, died from the coronavirus on December 28, 2020.

Brenda Lafaso began her TDCJ career in 2018 and, in the short time that she worked at the Beaumont District Parole Office, she made an impact on her co-workers. Brenda’s introduction to the agency was as a clerk supervisor, and she quickly promoted to a Parole Officer where she supervised clients on super-intensive supervision. It was her camaraderie with her fellow employees that is remembered fondly by them. One co-worker said her daughter began a baking business and that Brenda bought a pecan pie from her and then a cheesecake for her granddaughter’s birthday. She said Brenda was very encouraging of her entrepreneurial spirit and continued to place more orders, which she gave away to others. October was her favorite time of year because that’s when she would attend the Renaissance Festival. Brenda was married.
for 27 years to her loving husband, Randy. They raised a daughter and two sons. She had the joy of enjoying her three grandchildren. Brenda Lafaso, age 51, died from the coronavirus on December 31, 2020.

Whether it was talking about her latest “do it yourself” project, her beloved pets, or her gardening, one thing is certain about Rebecca Crowe: she made a mark on all those that met her. Although she had only been employed for one year at the District Parole Office in Victoria, Rebecca made a lasting impression. Some of her co-workers commented “She was a joy to work with and brought so much wisdom to the office. I will miss her help in making sure my plants stay healthy,” “She helped me increase my computer skills and I will miss her smile,” “From the moment I began working here, she made me feel at home,” and “She was a funny, sweet, and selfless person who made everyone’s day brighter, no matter what kind of day she was having.” Rebecca could be called a “renaissance woman” because of her many interests. Two of them were working on stained glass art pieces and welding. She also enjoyed working around her new home. She adored her family: son, Michael, and daughter-in-law, Melissa; niece, Julie; sisters, Olga and Julie; and brother, Benny. They want you to know that Rebecca has taken on a new assignment. It has a huge sign-on bonus, reuniting her with her son, Chris. Rebecca Crowe, age 73, died from the coronavirus on January 1, 2021.

“The value of a man is not measured by what he does for himself to make his life easier, but is measured by what he does for others to make their lives easier.” This quote perfectly describes Sergeant Randall Sims of the Havins Unit. Randy began his TDCJ career in October 1992 and was assigned to help the French Robertson Unit in Abilene. He later transferred to the Havins Unit. He promoted to sergeant and then to lieutenant at the San Saba Unit, from which he retired in December 2013. But like so many, the agency was in his blood, and he rehired a year later, again assigned to the Havins Unit, where he once more promoted to sergeant in October 2017. Randy was community-minded and participated annually in the livestock shows and other events that benefitted the Mullin School District. But if you wanted to really strike up a conversation with him, just ask about his family. It’s a large one and many of them are also employees of the agency at the Havins Unit. His widow, Tina, was a lieutenant; his daughter, Crystal, is a laundry manager; his other daughter, Jennifer, is a property manager; and his sister, Angelina, is a correctional officer, just to name a few. Randy leaves behind 20 grandchildren. He loved the Texas Longhorns and the Texas Rangers, but most of all, he loved the Mullin Bulldogs. He was a jokester, both on and off the job. As one co-worker said, “He was selfless and was always willing to give of himself even if he didn’t have anything to give.” He was also a mentor to many others at the units where he served. Randall Sims, age 57, died of the coronavirus on January 3, 2021.

John Wier was always ready and eager to learn about something new. He was an agriculture specialist at the Powledge Unit in Palestine, and he loved working with his hands, building things for the agency or his family. John was only with the TDCJ for a short time. He began working at the facility in September 2020. His supervisor John Beckendorf said, “There wasn’t a lazy bone in his body. He was always ready to go to work and he always had that friendly, warm smile on his face.” When not taking care of his responsibilities at the Powledge Unit, John was spending time with his family, which includes his wife, a son, a daughter, and five grandchildren. He also loved to take “road trips” on his motorcycle. Although he only worked for the agency for a short time, John left a lasting impression on those who worked with him at the Powledge Unit, and he will truly be missed. John Wier, age 52, died from the coronavirus on January 4, 2021.
Lieutenant Treva Preston was known as “Mama Bear” at the Hamilton Unit in Bryan, because she watched out for everyone and was always there when needed. She began working for the state through the Texas Youth Commission over 16 years ago, but soon transitioned to the correctional ranks at the TDCJ. She was a training sergeant and then promoted to lieutenant where she left a long-standing legacy within the agency. One of her co-workers at the Hamilton Unit said, “You always knew where you stood with ‘Mama Bear,’ because she always told you the truth, no matter how hard it was to take.” When not mentoring others at the facility, Treva was spending time with her family, which included her husband, Melvin, their two daughters, Bianca and Monique, and her granddaughter. She also loved to go on cruises, go dancing, or just gather around with friends and family to play cards, dominoes, or do a crossword puzzle. Lieutenant Treva Preston, age 57, died from the coronavirus on January 15, 2021.

Alfredo Jimenez, Jr. made sure that everyone he worked with was taken care of; it was just his nature. He went to work at the Formby State Jail in Plainview five years ago. He would work day-in and day-out, and was always a professional with a pleasant grin on his face and a kind word for staff. They said it was his willingness to help in all situations that really made him stand out. Yvonne Perez, the HR Specialist at Formby State Jail, said Alfredo was always the first one to come to her office willing to donate his sick time to anyone in need of it. When she asked him why he would donate so much, he told her “they’re my friends and they need it more than I do.” When not on the job, Alfredo enjoyed being outdoors, and he especially enjoyed hunting. His last hunting trip was for bear in southern Colorado. He also enjoyed taking pictures of his friends and co-workers at formal and informal gatherings; this was how he chose to capture the memories he shared with them. Alfredo Jimenez, age 71, died from the coronavirus on January 15, 2021.

Family was everything to Maria Garcia, whether it was her own family in Kenedy or her TDCJ family at the Connally Unit. She made sure that she was always there for them. Unfortunately, this past year had been a difficult one for Maria and her family. She had already said goodbye to her brother and another relative who passed on. So, it was especially difficult for her co-workers when they heard that she had been hospitalized in mid-January after testing positive for the coronavirus. Connally Unit Warden Phonso Rayford said, “She was a valuable member of our team. She was a hard worker who always came to work with a positive attitude and was always first in line to volunteer for any duty.” Maria was a big Dallas Cowboys and San Antonio Spurs fan. On most game days, you could find her watching the games on her TV with her dog, Chico, at her side. Her friends and co-workers said her loyalty to the Cowboys and Spurs was unwavering. They also said one of her trademarks was bringing a Dr. Pepper and M&Ms candy to co-workers to cheer them up. Maria Garcia, age 60, died from the coronavirus on January 22, 2021.

Family mattered to Godfrey Zuze, a correctional officer at the Estelle Unit. He always made time for his family, whether they were here in the United States or overseas in his native Zambia. Officer Zuze was the pastor of the Miracle Faith Ministries in Houston. He is remembered by his co-workers, friends, and family as a man of godly conviction and persuasion. His passion was serving God. He had hopes of becoming a chaplain for the TDCJ. His fellow officers at the Estelle Unit say he always had a positive attitude and greeted everyone with a smile. His willingness to help others is one of the many traits he possessed that will be sorely missed. He was deeply loved by his wife, Bella, and their two young children, Crown and Treasure. On
January 10, 2021, Officer Zuze completed his shift at the Estelle Unit and flew from Houston to Zambia to be with his family because one of his relatives had recently died. Unfortunately, he became ill while in Zambia and was placed in an intensive care unit. Correctional Officer Godfrey Zuze, age 48, died from coronavirus on February 8, 2021.

Every unit has a parental figure on each shift, and that is what Officer Vickie James was for the third shift at the Choice Moore Unit in Bonham. Although she had only worked for the agency for a little more than four years, Officer James had established herself as a true teammate. Warden Patrick Cooper said, “She had respect for all and really loved her job.” He added that her co-workers called her “quite the character to work with.” One young officer said that when he first came to work for the agency, Officer James immediately treated him with respect and as a member of the team. Away from work, Officer James enjoyed antiquing. Her home in Celeste, Texas was filled with antique furniture, lamps, fixtures, and glassware. She also had quite a knack for drawing and painting. Her father and brother said she had many paintings by famous artists that she had copied that looked like the originals. Officer James’ last day at the Choice Moore Unit was January 11, 2021. She was hospitalized in critical condition on January 18, 2021, and placed in an intensive care unit. Officer Vickie James, age 59, died from the coronavirus on February 10, 2021.

Officer Tawiwo Obele would have celebrated her two-year work anniversary with the TDCJ on February 19, 2021. Tragically, she was called home before she reached that date. During her time at the Beto Unit in Palestine, she quickly became known as a person who would lift others up. Warden Kirt Stiefer said, “Co-workers would come to her with their personal or professional problems and she would pray with them.” He went on to say that “She will be truly missed by the many that were blessed by having her in their lives.” Officer Obele was a dedicated employee. Even after she tested positive for COVID-19 at the end of January, she was eager to return to work. Unfortunately, her condition worsened, and she had to be hospitalized February 9, 2021, in Tyler, Texas. Officer Tawiwo Obele, age 68, died from the coronavirus on February 16, 2021.

If it was Friday, you knew that it was Dunkin’ Donuts day at the San Antonio Parole Office, because Troy Morin made sure everyone there had a donut, whether you were on a diet or not. Troy began working for the agency in August 2018 and was known as a hard worker who was ready to help on anything that needed to be done. He was willing to go above and beyond to help his co-workers. One of his supervisors even gave him the nickname of “Mr. Superstar” because of his ability to adapt to any situation or need. However, it was his stories and jokes that really set him apart from the other staff members and brought a smile to everyone’s face. He was a great conversationalist and had a wonderful sense of humor. He went to each cubicle in the office every morning with his coffee in hand to greet everyone and to see how they were doing. It was just his style. Troy also enjoyed the warmth and love of his family, which includes his parents, two sisters, and three adult children. Troy Morin, age 53, died from the coronavirus on February 23, 2021.

The families of these heroes are mourning, and so are those who have lost incarcerated loved ones. As written in the 25th chapter of Matthew, Christ himself admonishes us to remember those in prison. The families of inmates who have lost a loved one are grieving, too. Chairman O’Daniel asked to lift all of those hurting in prayer and remember them as they learn to navigate
this life without their family members. He stated while this virus continues to negatively affect this agency, he is encouraged that brighter times are on the horizon.

The TDCJ has been working closely with medical partners to administer COVID-19 vaccines to unit health care workers, eligible agency employees who work in and around the positive inmate population, and also some of the inmates. As the amount of vaccine availability increases, so will the agency’s progress inside correctional institutions. We know this is an important tool and hopefully in the near future it will help us get to a new normal. We all must do our part. Just as Mr. Collier pledged, when it becomes available, he will get the vaccination. As vaccines become readily available, more of us will be in the lifeboat heading to dry land. As Franklin Roosevelt once said, “To reach a port, we must set sail. Sail, not to tie an anchor, sail, not drift.” Chairman O’Daniel closed by once again thanking all the men and women of the TDCJ, and thanked Mr. Collier and his team for continuing to guide the TDCJ as we navigate this storm.
Palomo encouraged the TBCJ to reach out to any member of the JAC for questions or discussions about probation or any part of the system.

Eric Nichols expressed appreciation to Judge Palomo and the JAC for the proactive approach of looking at the needs of probation in the future.

**Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding the Selection of the Office of the Ombudsman Director**

Chairman O’Daniel stated during the October 2020 TBCJ meeting, the realignment of the Office of the Ombudsman unanimously passed. The Office of the Ombudsman will serve as an independent office that will investigate and respond to external inquiries made by the general public, elected officials, and inmates, as well as serve as a point of contact for them. The position for the Officer of the Ombudsman Director was posted on October 30, 2020, for 10 days. The search committee, composed of Derrelynn Perryman, Pastor Larry Miles, Eric Nichols, and Sichan Siv, selected qualified candidates for interviews, which were held in January. Earlier today, the committee presented their recommendation to the full board for discussion in executive session. Derrelynn Perryman emphasized that the selection of the ombudsman director would not occur until regular session. Chairman O’Daniel thanked the four board members for going above and beyond on the search for this very important position selection.

*Derrelynn Perryman moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the selection of Brian Patrick as the Director of the Office of the Ombudsman, to be effective March 15, 2021.*

*Eric Nichols seconded the motion, which unanimously passed when called to a vote.*

**Internal Audit Status Report for Fiscal Years 2020 - 2021**

Chris Cirrito, Internal Audit Division Director, presented three updates to the handout of the February 8, 2021, Internal Audit Division Status Report for Fiscal Years (FY) 2020 – 2021:

- **2107 – Texas Risk Assessment System Scoring:** Audit is in the reporting phase.
- **2114-02 – Suicide Awareness Walkthrough:** Audit is now complete.
- **2115 – Accidental Weapons Discharge:** Audit is a draft report.

*(Attachment B – Internal Audit Division Status Report, February 8, 2021)*

**Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Purchases and Contracts over $1 Million**

Chairman O’Daniel abstained from taking action on this agenda item due to his firm representing the Management and Training Corporation.

Ron Steffa, Chief Financial Officer, reviewed the purchases and contracts over $1 million, which had two items for consideration. Item one is a modification to increase the FY20-21 contract for B.M. Moore Correctional Center with the Management and Training Corporation. This increase
adds the security and maintenance positions required to provide the minimum amount of security and maintenance necessary for the Bradshaw State Jail, which was idled. This will ensure the facility is turnkey ready to reuse as future populations dictate. Item two is an increase to the FY20-21 contract with Tri-County Behavioral Healthcare due to increased mental health case management services being provided to parolees served through this contract.

Chairman O’Daniel asked for any other questions, comments, or abstentions. Hearing none, he called for a motion and a second.

Dr. Rodney Burrow moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the purchases and contracts over $1 million, as presented.

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

Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action
Regarding Proposed Land Transaction – Request for Pipeline Easements at the Stiles Unit in Jefferson County, Beaumont, Texas

Billy Hirsch, Director of the Manufacturing, Agribusiness and Logistics Division, stated the request includes indemnification language, the most-favored nation clause, and additional insurance in the amount of at least $3,000,000. He presented the request for pipeline easements at the Stiles Unit, in Jefferson County, Beaumont, Texas, and stated that Sunoco Pipeline L.P. is requesting two easements consisting of an area approximately 1.80 acres of land being 1,324.13 feet long by 30 feet wide for two crude oil pipelines being 80.25 and 78.51 rods in length totaling 158.76 rods. This request includes temporary workspace of 3.98 acres for use during pipeline construction and installation. Sunoco Pipeline L.P. has agreed to pay $158,760 for these easements with a ten-year term. Mr. Hirsch recommended the TBCJ approve the request.

Larry Miles moved that the Texas Board of Criminal Justice approve the request for pipeline easements at the Stiles Unit in Jefferson County, Beaumont, Texas, as presented.

Judge Faith Johnson seconded the motion, which unanimously passed when called to a vote.

Chairman O’Daniel thanked everyone for attending the meeting and announced that the next meeting of the Texas Board of Criminal Justice will be Friday, April 16, 2021, via video conference.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Chairman O’Daniel adjourned the 215th meeting of the Texas Board of Criminal Justice at 11:03 a.m.

Chairman
Secretary

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