PAROLE COMMISSION

Staff Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 3rd, 2021

3099 East Washington Avenue

Madison, WI 53704

Presiding: John Tate II, Chair

Present: Doug Drankiewicz, Jennifer Kramer, Shannon Pierce, Sara Tome, Oliver Buchino

Guests: Alaina Bunger, Jennifer Gisi, Elizabeth Lucas (OVSP), Amanda Readman, Lisa Reid, Roy Rogers, Joan Streetar (OVSP), Megan Takahashi (OVSP), Ben Turk, Hillary Vedvig

This meeting was conducted in-part through Zoom Videoconferencing due to social distancing guidelines because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The meeting began at approximately 10:25 AM.

Chairman Tate opened by introducing himself and members of the commission.

The Chair described updates to Executive Directive 31, in cooperation with the DOC, to clarify the eligibility requirements.

Commissioner Drankiewicz began a discussion regarding management of victim input for parole reviews, including how the institutions would be able to make accommodations.

Elizabeth Lucas, director of the Office of Victim Services and Programs (OVSP) described coordinating with institutions to ensure sufficient space for victim attendance at reviews. Director Lucas also described how institution security directors and Wardens are willing to assist in this process.

The Chair cited how in reviews that have high numbers of victim participants, the option is available for victim members to choose a representative in order to provide input. The Chair also reiterated that the primary purpose of a parole review is to assess satisfaction of parole criteria for the person-in-custody.

Director Lucas described further assistance she had received from the DOC Assistant Deputy Secretary, and the Wisconsin DOJ, in order to implement Marsy’s Law. Director Lucas noted that the law is still in effect despite an ongoing court challenge in Dane County. Director Lucas also noted there is no cap on victim attendance in parole reviews.

Commissioner Drankiewicz described the variety of options for victim input, including letters received from those who do not attend reviews, and how not all input needs to be on the record.

Joan Streetar of OVSP described the process of preparing victims for the possibility of release of a PIOC, and the challenges in managing these conversations, particularly by phone during the ongoing COVID pandemic.

The Chair also mentioned the DAI memo from 2020, which defines different parole deferral lengths, and described how those defers provide guidance to OVSP and institutions regarding the progress, or lack thereof, of a person-in-custody towards satisfying parole criteria and earning release.

The Chair then answered questions submitted by the public regarding parole policy, practice, or procedure.

**Question: When filing for early parole under Executive Directive 31, once your case/file is under review, what is the timetable for a decision from the chairperson after he receives the Warden's recommendation?**

There is no specific timetable, and no statutory guidelines regarding a timetable. The Commission is working to develop a tool in WICS to keep track of ED-31 eligible cases.

**Question: What makes one case different from the next if they both have same/similar extraordinary circumstances and one case was granted a parole hearing?** **What would be the reason one case gets denied and one granted if they have the same/similar extraordinary circumstances?**

There are different circumstances to each case. It is a standard concept for parole not to compare two cases to each other. Factors vary even between co-actors and with culpability within the same crime. Circumstances are extraordinary to each person. When applying ED 31, the Commission also makes the distinction between the kinds of extraordinary health circumstances that may effectively mitigate risk of re-offending upon release, versus sentence lengths for certain offenses that may be considered excessive.

The next staff meeting was scheduled for December 1st, 2021 at 10am. Questions from the public about parole policy, practice, or procedure should be submitted by the Monday prior (11/29).

The open-session meeting concluded at approximately 10:58am.

The meeting then transitioned into closed session, and the No Action case presented by Commissioner Pierce was reviewed.