PAROLE COMMISSION

Staff Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 6th, 2022

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, Chris Donahoe, Ashley Payne OVSP, Amanda Readman, Joan Streetar OVSP, Michelle Whitney, Kali Zettle

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 10:00 AM.

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

The Chair brought up the subject of Military Parole, as described in Wisconsin Statute 304.071, following questions from institution staff. The Chair described how, after consulting with the Office of Legal Counsel, the statute does not currently have a mechanism to apply it in consistent fashion to parole cases. Because of the implementation of Truth-in-Sentencing in 2000, all parole-eligible individuals would be beyond the age cutoff for military enlistment.

Commissioner Drankiewicz described how BOCM has made it official policy, and not just practice, that Special Bulletin Notification (SBN) individuals cannot obtain minimum community custody level. Minimum custody would be the lowest level they can earn.

Commissioner Kramer inquired as to how signatures will be witnessed in cases where parole-eligible individuals have legal guardians. The Chair cited that this a rare circumstance, but does occur as some aging individuals require legal guardianship. It was agreed that Commissioner Kramer would contact the institution records offices for more clarification.

The Chair then answered questions submitted to the public regarding Commission policy, practice, or procedure.

**How heavily is work experience/work outside the fence weighted in parole decisions?**

The Chair described how work-release is good for transitioning incarcerated individuals to the community, although it is not essential for a parole grant. Commissioner Drankiewicz further detailed how important work-release is for individuals who have been incarcerated since a very young age, or who have no work experience. Commissioner Drankiewicz also described how in the past, this practice was not always followed, leading to individuals being released without much transition beforehand. Commissioner Kramer added that progression through work-release is not intended to hinder an individual’s progress towards a parole grant.

**If a person has not been approved for work release by their institution, does the Commission consider whether a person has applied for jobs, engaged in job training programs, or otherwise attempted to get work?**

The Commission recognizes that parts of the process are not under the control of persons-in-custody. Work-release is not a barrier to release. However, if it is available, it is a preferred strategy. This is especially true in cases where someone may have a lack of outside resources.

**What is the rationale behind Commissioners recommending work-release for individuals who have less than a year until their Mandatory Release (MR) date?**

Commissioner Drankiewicz described how, even during this timeframe, there is still a need for risk reduction strategies such as work-release to be implemented. This is intended, in part, to avoid setting individuals up for failure upon release.

The Chair noted how he and the Commissioners will be attending the Association of Paroling Authorities International (APAI) Annual Training Conference in San Diego from May 1st to the 4th.

The next staff meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, June 1st, 2022, at 10am. Questions from the public about parole policy, practice, or procedure should be submitted by the Monday prior (5/30).

The open-session meeting concluded at approximately 10:20am.