



TEXAS  
JUVENILE JUSTICE  
DEPARTMENT

**Board Meeting**

11209 Metric Boulevard, Building H, Ste. A  
Lone Star Conference Room  
Austin, TX 78758  
Friday, January 24, 2020 – 9:00 a.m.

**Call to order**

Chairman Ritchey called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**Prayer**

Douglas Brodie led the board prayer.

**Pledge**

The Pledge of Allegiance and Pledge to the Texas Flag were recited.

**Discussion, consideration, and possible approval regarding excused absences (Action)**

Judge Lisa Jarrett moved to approve the absence of Chief Scott Matthew. Jimmy Smith seconded. The motion passed.

**Discussion, consideration, and possible approval regarding the October 24, 2019 Board meeting minutes (Action)**

Ms. Mona Lisa Chambers wanted to ensure that the record showed she abstained from the Harris County disciplinary agenda items. Chief Pama Hencerling moved to approved as corrected. Jimmy Smith seconded. The motion passed.

**Report from the chairman**

Chairman Ritchey announced new upcoming meeting dates and asked Jeannette Cantu to email the following dates to the board members.

April 30 Committee Meetings  
May 1 Board Meeting  
June 12 Board visit to Evins facility  
August 6 Committee Meetings  
August 7 Board Meeting

**Public comments**

There were no public comments.

**Report from the executive director**

Camille Cain, Executive Director, began her report with staffing changes: Nate Jackson has agreed to take on the critical role of Chief Information Officer, Emily Anderson is now the Chief Financial and Operating Officer, Zachary Valdez is now the acting director for the Construction and Maintenance Division, and Rodney Sigler is the new director of Human Resources.

We have been busy planning for 2020 but first, I'd like to reflect for a minute on the last two years. When I joined TJJD, it was with many thoughts for how the Department could implement strategic plans for the future. We spent the first several months identifying significant opportunities for change and forming our team. We are blessed with people who care about the youth we serve, are driven and dedicated to improvement, and seem to have boundless energy. As the first several months led into Legislative Appropriation Request deadlines, we worked to develop a funding request that would increase our placement options, increase critical funding to probation so that they could access resources needed to keep the right youth shallow in the system, add important resources for a population—both at the county and state levels—with dramatically increasing and deeper mental health needs and other important focuses. We still believe these focuses are important.

As I joined the Department, I was asked by state leaders to find ways to decrease the population of our facilities. Lou Serrano focused on working with probation to increase diversion and decrease commitments and state services worked to streamline our processes for release to ensure that youth past their expected lengths of stay were reviewed actively, rather than every few months. Our population on my first day was 1026. Today, it is 793.

2019 was marked with development of the Texas Model of Corrections with Shandra Carter and her amazing team leading the way. We kicked off the beginning of implementation on September 1, 2019. As Shandra would put it we are still on shaky legs, learning and working through issues as we go. We know that real reform, at every level of the Department, is not a light switch, it is a long-term challenge. We know from other places, such as Williamson County, that getting this right takes time, training, and an ongoing commitment to reform. We are doing this on a scale that is unprecedented. Our goal is deep and lasting reform and that takes time.

Our efforts at the Model, in its first days, using August data as a benchmark—and controlling for population, from September through December, just four months in, the results are promising. I am cautiously optimistic. Since we started in September, overall rule violations are down 29% with minor violations down 35% and major violations down 12%. Security referrals are down 29%, use of OC spray is down 10%, physical restraints are down 31%, and mechanical restraints are down 26%.

As we move into 2020, I'd like to first talk for a moment about the youth in our care.

- Our youth have growing mental health needs. In 2014, at the point of intake, we identified 21% of our youth as having moderate to severe mental health needs. In 2019, we were at 53%.
- Our youth have cognitive difficulties. Our youth are, on average, 4 grades behind in reading. In the general public, people who have an IQ that is below average, impaired, or have an intellectual disability are 24% of the population, for our youth it is 58%.
- In the general public, it is estimated that between 6 and 12% of the population have 4 or more adverse childhood experiences—or ACES. At TJJD, 57% of our boys and 86% of our girls have 4 or more.
- 41% of our girls screen at the highest level of concern in the sex trafficking tool CSE-IT.
- 68% of our youth have an incarcerated family member.
- 71% of our youth have a clear history of abuse, neglect, or family violence.

We have many plans moving forward. In regards to Texas Model implementation:

- We will be implementing a Model certification process, allowing staff to prove and be recognized for their talent and capability at managing youth using Model principles.

- We are hiring a group of Texas Model implementers for each facility, who will learn at the knee of Troy McPeak and Tom Adamski and will provide full-time training and modeling on our dorms.
- We will begin training on the concepts of behavior shaping so that we can focus on shaping good behaviors and avoid shaping negative ones.
- We will be moving beyond the Texas Model Handbook to a more robust, written integrated Texas Model
- We will be adding support for our dorm team leaders, because success of implementation rests at the dorm level. Their ability to form good cultures and reinforce Model tenets are our key to the future.
- We are working to change our stage progression methods and to implement more model-aligned stage privileges, incentives for good behavior or progress, and sanctions to hold you appropriately accountable for negative behavior.
- And we are revisiting our youth services team processes to ensure that we catch lack of progress early and appropriately use incentives, stage progression, and sanctions to move youth toward real progress.

As we consider future LAR requests, we are considering how sustainable our current facilities are in regards to staffing and, therefore, population levels. That task is ongoing as we see where our efforts lead and how sustainable staffing levels can be over the course of the next few months. Emily Anderson in concert with Cynthia Brown and now Rodney Sigler have done yeoman's work to increase the staffing at our facilities and continue to do so. We are continuing to expand our efforts, but we've hired an additional 60 coaches at Mart in the last couple of months and Ron Jackson has gone from 79% hired level in November to 97% as of yesterday.

We also recognize that less populous facilities are a key to behavior management and progress among youth. Smaller milieus are more easy to manage and cut down on the opportunities for both gangs and controlling cliques to exercise control over other youth. We are actively looking for opportunities to find options for our youth and are working on additional placements for girls, including therapeutic environments for girls who have been sex trafficked. We are working on numbers but will be asking for new placement locations for our youth in our Legislative Appropriations Request later this year.

More counties are expressing interest in the Texas Model. We are committed to helping them and are working on structured ways to get them get the information, training, and planning resources they need to move forward.

We also recognize that for the Model to flourish, reduction of violence in our facilities must be a continued goal. While our goal is that the Model, over time, will decrease violence overall. To properly implement the Model now, our staff need to feel safe and know that they have options when youth are causing problems in the milieu by not helping to maintain a safe environment. Currently, we have approximately 45 youth who, through fighting or assault, have caused two or more injuries to someone else within the past six months. We have many plans and ongoing work in this area.

Within secure facilities we are expanding the Phoenix Program, revising the Redirect Program, implementing a Violence Intervention Continuum, improving Due Process, working on Gang Activity, adding new levels of review for Parole Decisions, augmenting Conditions of Parole, clarifying the Revocation process, clarifying the policy on County Jail Holds and the OIG is helping with Record Keeping.

**Bandera County Juvenile Probation Department – Terrific Opportunities: Bandera Nature Experience and Wilderness Extravaganza**

Matthew Haynie, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer provided a presentation on their Bandera Nature Experience and Wilderness Extravaganza program.

### **Report from The Advisory Council on Juvenile Services**

Chief Ed Cockerell, Chairman of the Advisory Council on Juvenile Services, stated the Advisory Council last met on November 8, 2019. He discussed the items that were presented during that meeting.

### **Report from the chief inspector general**

Forrest Mitchell, Chief Inspector General, provided an update regarding OIG operations. Yesterday, he briefed the Safety and Security Committee about the number of calls, complaints, investigations, discipline dispositions, and criminal cases filed in both the first quarter and in 2019. OIG remains concerned with the violence, gangs, and disruptive behaviors at the state secure facilities. We are actively working with facility leadership, state programs, the Office of General Counsel, the Release Review Panel, and the Special Prosecution Unit in an attempt to apply our investigative resources on the most violent or disruptive juvenile offenders. We continue to work towards providing the TJJJ staff the safest environment possible for treatment and rehabilitation through the implementation of the Texas Model and Trauma informed care by focusing on PREA and sexual misconduct incidents, violence, and organized criminal activity.

Last fiscal year, 45 TJJJ offenders were sentenced to TDCJ on new felony offenses stemming from OIG criminal investigations. We are communicating with all of those parties to make sure we can provide them with the necessary facts and evidence on any criminal or delinquent conduct investigated by OIG so they can make informed release decisions. I have also asked my command staff to work more closely with our investigators and the Release Review Panel to make sure we handle our caseloads appropriately.

I am pleased to report we continue to work with the Criminal Justice Department at Sam Houston State University on the implementation of a new complaint tracking and investigative software solution for the Incident Reporting Center and the OIG. They have studied our business processes, adapted their program, and provided us a demonstration of new system. We are now moving to a data testing phase.

We continue to work with IT on the New Visitor Management Tracking System that will be installed at all five secure facilities. The OIG gate house security staff, as well as the telecommunicators at the IRC will be trained on the system. First to process all persons, but also to conduct the necessary background checks in accordance with state law. I also advised the Committee yesterday that OIG has finally completed its application and all of the necessary requirements for TCOLE, and I am pleased to announce that I will be signing the training provider contract with TCOLE next week. I cannot thank Xavier and his team enough for their hard work and perseverance through a process which has taken nearly a year. This involved developing training files, systems, and even another audit in order to prepare ourselves for this tremendous responsibility.

Chief Mitchell also had to report some sad news, his Assistant Chief, Xavier Casares, has accepted a position with another state agency and will be leaving the OIG at the end of the month. Words cannot properly express our appreciation for all of the things that he has done for the OIG and TJJJ. Xavier joined the OIG in 2013 after retiring from the McAllen Police Department. He started as a Lieutenant with the OIG, and worked all the way up to Assistant Chief. For those newer board members appointed during the last session, Xavier briefly served as the interim IG after the departure of my predecessor for another state agency. Xavier, this agency and department is a much better place because of your hard work and efforts. Thank you for everything you have done for us, and we wish you the very best in your new position. We recognized his service by presenting him with a plaque.

### **Report from the Trust Committee**

Jimmy Smith, reported all members were present for their committee meeting yesterday. He reported on items that were discussed during committee and stated that Christina Garza will be presenting a couple of items to the board for their consideration.

**Discussion, consideration, and possible approval of the 2020 burn plan for prescribed fire(s) at Parrie Haynes Ranch pursuant to the approved Wildlife Management Plan and Memorandum of Agreement with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (Action)**

Christina Garcia, Staff Attorney and Contracts Supervisor, reported on the 2020 burn plan for prescribed fire(s) at the Parrie Haynes Ranch. The Trust has an agreement with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation to develop and implement a wildlife management plan. The approved plan calls for prescribed fires on sections of the Ranch. Prescribed fires require a burn plan. This years prescribed fires are anticipated at the end of this month and next month pending said approval by the board. Working with TPWD provides the most cost effective provision of prescribed fire services and the MO is in place to ensure the safety of all parties involved. Approval of the 2020 burn plan will allow the biologist and the TPWD to move forward with the recommended prescribed fires in the approved plan.

Mr. Smith moved to approve the resolution. Judge Jarrett seconded. The motion passed.

**Discussion, consideration, and possible approval for the Boys and Girls Club of Central Texas to host bird hunts as youth hunting events conducted by the Texas Youth Hunting Program at the Parrie Haynes Ranch (Action)**

Christina Garcia, Staff Attorney and Contracts Supervisor, reported the Parrie Haynes Trust currently leases the Parrie Haynes Ranch to the Boys and Girls Club of Central Texas. The lease prohibits activities involving the use or discharge of firearms without prior Board approval. The Boys and Girls club seeks approval to host bird hunts at the Ranch and there are two (2) bird hunts anticipated in 2020: The 2020 Spring Turkey Hunts and the 2020 Late Summer Dove Hunts. The Board has provided general approval of the hunting program however, the current resolution ensures bird hunts are also approved hunting events and also ensures the Board is aware of all planned events.

Ms. Lattimore moved to approve the resolution. Mr. Morales seconded. The motion carried.

**Report from the Finance and Audit Committee**

Commissioner Morales reported that all members were present except for Stephanie Moreno. Nate Jackson announced that he's been appointed as Chief Information Officer. He provided updates on JCMS migration, Body-worn cameras, BMC refresh, visitor track system, fiber optic cable refreshment, fixed overhead cameras replacement, RFID, blue phones and other ongoing projects. Emily Anderson gave an update on the financial status and also presented gifts that will come before the board for acknowledgment. Mr. Eleazar Garcia gave an update on the agency implementation of audit findings and recommendations.

**Discussion, consideration, and possible approval regarding an acknowledgement of gifts (Action)**

- a. **Dallam County Welfare Board**
- b. **The Dallas Meditation Center**
- c. **The Hope Irving Church**

Emily Anderson, Chief Financial Officer, reported that Dallam County Child Welfare Board donated \$500 for the purchase of items at the halfway houses. The Dallas Meditation Center donated various winter clothing to the Dallas District Parole Office, estimated at \$812.00. The Hope Irving Church provided a meal for the youth and their families as well as various clothing items, totaling \$1,100.00

Commissioner Morales moved to approve the acknowledgment. Judge Jarrett seconded. The motion carried.

**Discussion, consideration, and possible approval for a request to exceed capital transfer authority (Action)**

This agenda item was withdrawn from the agenda.

**Report from the Programs Committee**

Edeska Barnes reported all members were present for the committee meeting. He reported that updates were provided by Louis Serrano regarding probation services and Shandra Carter regarding state services. A presentation on the Texas Model was provided by Troy McPeak. Todd Novak provided discussion on options to limit the risk of homelessness coming out of Halfway Houses and Parole. Appointments to the Advisory Council will be heard by the full board for consideration.

**Discussion, consideration, and possible approval of appointments to the Advisory Council for Juvenile Services (Action)**

Louis Serrano, Deputy Director of Probation Services, reported that the agency solicited nominations from the seven regional associations and would like to bring forward the following nominations for your consideration and approval: The Honorable Natalia Oakes the Honorable Mark Allen (re-nomination), Chief Ed Cockrell (re-nomination), and Chief Teri Ann Trull. Chief Edeska Barnes stated that the Programs Committee recommended these nominations be approved by the full board as presented.

Chief Pama Hencerling moved to approve the resolution. Jimmy Smith seconded. The motion carried.

**Report from the Safety and Security Committee**

Judge Lisa Jarrett reported the committee heard from Chief Forrest Mitchell and Ombudsman, J.D. Robertson.

**Review, discussion, and possible action regarding the Bexar County Juvenile Board Application for Permanent Variance for Title 37 Texas Administrative Code Section 343.600(a)(3) related to Secure Post-Adjudication Facility Pre-Admission Records Requirements (Action)**

Scott Friedman, Staff Attorney, reported this item was discussed yesterday during the Safety and Security Committee meeting. Information was discussed regarding a permanent variance request from the Bexar County Juvenile Board for the departments weekend program, specific to post adjudication pre-admission placement requirements. Staff have reviewed the application and have worked closely with the department and we have an acceptable resolution for the board to consider to the grand the permanent variance. There is a supplemental handout with a draft resolution for the boards consideration.

Allison Palmer moved to grant the variance. James Castro seconded. The motion carried.

**Discussion, consideration, and possible approval regarding the discipline of certified officers- Agreed Orders (Action)**

- a. **Shatner Gooden, Certification No. 10071, 20-10071-190092**
- b. **Jordan Brazell, Certification No. 31708, 20-31708-190225**
- c. **Kaitlyn Hoffman, Certification No. 34137, 20-34137-190306**

Kaci Singer, Staff Attorney, presented the agreed orders.

Item A and C – James Castro moved to approve. Pama Hencerling seconded. Mona Lisa Chambers opposed. The motion passed.

Item B – Judge Lisa Jarrett moved to approve. Jimmy Smith seconded. Edeska Barnes abstained. Mona Lisa Chambers opposed. The motion passed.

**Discussion, consideration, and possible approval regarding the discipline of certified officers- Default Orders (Action)**

- a. **Bryston Bass, Certification No. 31028, 20-31028-190246**

- b. Zachary Rogers, Certification No. 32707, 20-32707-190266
- c. Austin Howell, Certification No. 33325, 20-33325
- d. Marcus Barber, Certification No. 33933, 20-33933-190269
- e. Ihezue, Jr., Bright, Certification No. 34006, 20-34006-190238
- f. Rene Flores, Certification No. 28721, 20-28721-190233

Kaci Singer, Staff Attorney, presented the default orders.

Item A, B, C and F – Allison Palmer moved to approve. James Castro seconded. The motion passed.

Item D – Jimmy Smith moved to approve. Commissioner Morales seconded. Edeska Barnes and Mona Lisa Chambers abstained. The motion passed.

Item E – This item was withdrawn from the agenda because the officer has since responded.

**Closed Session – Executive Session**

- a. Government Code §551.071 Consultation with attorney regarding litigation (see footnote)
- b. Government Code §551.072 Deliberation regarding real property (John C. Wende and Parrie Haynes trusts)
- c. Government Code §551.074 Discussion regarding personnel matters

**Reconvene in Open Session**

The meeting adjourned at 10:52 a.m.