

Board of Pardons and Parole and Department of Corrections
1002 Hollenbeck Road
Deer Lodge, MT 59722
May 18, 2012

Board members in attendance: Margaret Bowman, John Ward, Teresa O'Connor, Darryl Dupuis, Sam Lemaich, and John Rex

Board staff in attendance: Fern Osler, Mike Webster, Julie Thomas, Tim Allred, Michael Webster, and Meaghan Shone

Department of Corrections staff in attendance: Ron Alsbury, Leroy Kirkegard, Gayle Lambert, Sam Casey, and Myrna Omholt-Mason.

The meeting was jointly chaired by Fern Osler and Ron Alsbury

Review of Old Business:

The Memorandum of Understanding pertaining to the board not being involved with criminally convicted youth has not been revised at the time of this meeting. Ms. Osler announced the December 2012 retirement of Diana Koch, Chief General Counsel for the Department of Corrections. The members expressed their appreciation of Ms. Koch's legal work she has done for the board.

REENTRY UPDATE – Sam Casey and Gayle Lambert

Mr. Casey stated there is a monthly reentry meeting in Helena. The group is split into subcommittees that deal with housing, employment, family. The Helena group is similar to the Billings Area Reentry Task Force and is building groundwork relative to community partnerships. Mr. Alsbury added that the department's target is to have specialized reentry P&P officers.

Various reentry grants have been applied for: a grant for a small number of female offenders in Butte and Great Falls to participate in the NewPath/New Life program as well a peer mentoring grant that will be used in Billings.

Ms. Lambert reported a reentry saving plan will be implemented on July 1st for offenders working for Montana Correctional Enterprises. For each year of MCE employment, the offenders' account will be credited \$100.00 with a cap of \$300.00 maximum. MCE is researching the possibility of using debit cards in lieu of checks to distribute the savings money to offenders upon their release.

Mr. Casey talked about the assessment tool being developed that is based on Ohio's validated tool. The tool will be an individualized case management plan specific to the offender. The tool will measure the offenders' risk to re-offend, his positive or negative progress as his progress through the system, as well as types of support he will need for successful reentry into the community.

Jim Pagels is the newly-hired reentry case manager based at MCE. He has extensive experience working with sex offenders and has developed good relationship

building skills relative to placing sex offenders back into the community. He is very involved with case managers and IPPO's relative to reentry planning.

Ms. Lambert said Director Ferriter gave an assignment to Adult Community Corrections, Montana Correctional Enterprises, Montana State Prison, and Montana Women's Prison to develop a coordinated reentry/recidivism reduction plan which comports with the needs and expectations of each of the four divisions. The plans are due to the director by May 18th.

Ms. Lambert stated the release assistance policy will be finalized by July 1st.

STANDARD CONDITIONS-INTOXICANTS

Ms. Osler said the board's Administrative Rules have been amended and are under final review. Rule 20.25.702 outline conditions of supervision. The existing language has the words "illegal drugs". The new language will say "all intoxicants and mind altering chemicals".

MASC/START

Information from MASC and START is being sent to Ms. Osler in a timely manner including the rational for the transfer back into MASC or START from parole. Mr. Allred asked the rational for the transfer back to MASC or START be included in the chronological notes in OMIS. Discussion followed as to who will be responsible for making the data entry notation in the chronological notes in OMIS. Mr. Alsbury will follow-up with the various IPPO's as to entering the transfer information into OMIS.

NEW STEPS/ NEW DIRECTIONS

Ms. Lambert reported Crossroads Correctional Center will implement the New Steps/New Directorns programs beginning July 1st. The Work and Reentry Center (WRC) will re-implement the New Directions program. She said there is a marked difference in the attitude of offenders that are involved in the programs. Additional training for staff relative to implementing the programs at MSP, WRC, and Shelby will be scheduled in the near future.

Ms Osler asked about training through The Pacific Institute for interested board members. Ms. Lambert stated the founder of The Pacific Institute, Lou Tice, recently passed away. Interested board members that would like to take The Pacific Institute training can do so through DOC trainers through the department's Professional Development Bureau.

New Business:

TIER III OFFENDERS

Ms. Osler told the group the Billings Mission will no longer house Tier III offenders. In the past the board paroled offenders to the mission and the offenders

were required to enroll in the team mentoring program. Ms. Osler is hopeful John Williams, P&P Regional Administrator in Billings, will meet with members of the mission's management to discuss this issue and ask for their reconsideration.

VICTIM DISCUSSION

Ms. Osler said two board staff, Julie Thomas and Cathy Leaver, will work directly with victim(s) prior to parole hearings. A checklist has been implemented relative to notifying the victim(s) regarding the possibility of media attending the hearing as well as hearing protocol. The victim(s) can ask for privacy if they choose not to be in the same room as the offender and private testimony can be given. Victim(s) will be advised the hearings are open to the public hence the proceedings do come under public scrutiny.

ELECTRONIC PAROLE REPORTS

Ms. Osler said this is still a work in progress and Deputy Warden Ross Swanson has been working on getting this project completed in the next couple of months.

COMMUNITY PLACEMENT SEQUENCE

Ms. Osler said the sequence of offender placement was Connections then Boot Camp then to a prerelease center. The sequence has now changed to Boot Camp then Connections then prerelease. Mr. Alsbury asked that Ms. Osler meet with Kelly Speer, acting superintendent at the boot camp and with Cathy Gordon, acting facilities program bureau chief, as to the correct sequence for placement. The requirement regarding approval for an offender to be at a prerelease center when the offender is already housed at the center will also be clarified.

DRUG COURTS

There are four specialized treatment courts: family court, drug court, impaired driving court, and a veteran's court. A Billings judge has requested the board become involved in sending offenders to the specialized courts, with the assurance the board will still have authority over the offender. Offenders would apply through the court screening committee before receiving the courts assistance.

Tim Allred talked about the Great Falls specialized drug court. Currently offenders on conditional release or on parole are not accepted to receive assistance. Great Falls Judge Jensen and her team work with offenders and develop a task list that is specific to the offender. Compliance with the stipulations on the task list is mandatory. The team approach through the court is different from offenders being on straight parole. The court team meets weekly with offenders and offers incentives when they comply with court specified conditions. The courts have had success with offenders on probation and those that have received deferred sentences. Sanctions are through the district court judge if probation/deferred offenders are found non-compliant with court conditions.

The board members agreed the court is a good tool but clear lines relative to court/board supervision would have to be established. There was agreement that the specialized courts would grant the P&P officers more options for successful management of offenders as opposed to sending non-compliant offenders either to START or prison. The members also agreed it would be beneficial to attend court to obtain a better understanding of the workings of the court.

CLOSING COMMENTS

- ❖ No public comment
- ❖ Warden Kirkegard announced that Deputy Warden Ross Swanson will retire on July 27, 2012.
- ❖ Next meeting date is targeted for October prior to Director Ferriter's retirement the end of December, 2012.