

1 **NYS BOARD OF PAROLE**

2 **BUSINESS MEETING**

3 **APRIL 15, 2024**

4 (Commencing at 11:00 a.m.)

5 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Good morning, Commissioners,
6 and thank you all for joining me at the Department of
7 Corrections and Community Supervision Albany Training
8 Academy.

9 I would like to ask you all to stand and join
10 me for the Pledge of Allegiance.

11 (Whereupon, the Pledge of Allegiance took place.)

12 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Please be seated.

13 This meeting will come to order. This is the
14 April 2024 meeting of the New York State Board of
15 Parole. The time is now 11.02 a.m., on April 15, 2024.

16 We'll now call the roll:

17 Commissioner Crangle?

18 COMMISSIONER CRANGLE: Present.

19 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Commissioner Agostini?

20 COMMISSIONER AGOSTINI: Present.

21 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Commissioner Berliner?

22 COMMISSIONER BERLINER: Present.

23 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Commissioner Drake?

24 COMMISSIONER DRAKE: Present.

25 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Commissioner Davis?

1 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Present.

2 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Commissioner Corley?

3 COMMISSIONER CORLEY: Present.

4 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Commissioner Lee?

5 COMMISSIONER LEE: Here.

6 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Commissioner Mitchell?

7 COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: Present.

8 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Commissioner Enright?

9 COMMISSIONER ENRIGHT: Present.

10 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Commissioner McCabe?

11 COMMISSIONER McCABE: Present.

12 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Commissioner Henken?

13 COMMISSIONER HENKEN: Present.

14 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Commissioners Coppola,
15 Demosthenes, Samuels and Segarra are excused.

16 A quorum has been established for the purposes
17 of conducting business.

18 Also joining us are Board of Parole staff:

19 Kathy Kiley, counsel?

20 KATHLEEN KILEY: Present.

21 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Elliott McIntosh?

22 (Not present.)

23 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Chelsea Vizvary?

24 CHELSEA VIZVARY: Present.

25 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Dannielle Hille?

1 DANNIELLE HILLE: Present.

2 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Lorraine Morse?

3 LORRAINE MORSE: Present.

4 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Gregory DiDonato?

5 GREGORY DIDONATO: Present.

6 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Moving on to the agenda, I
7 would again like to ask you to join me this time in a
8 moment of silence.

9 (Whereupon, there was a moment of silence.)

10 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Thank you. I would also like
11 to acknowledge any members of the public joining us in
12 person, along with those on the livestream or who have
13 taken the time out to watch the recorded version of this
14 meeting.

15 We have no public joining us here at the
16 training academy.

17 Just a reminder, in-person attendees who are
18 here are only able to observe.

19 Moving on, you all have received a copy of the
20 September 25th business board meeting minutes. Please
21 take a moment to review these minutes for accuracy.

22 (Pause.)

23 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: I will entertain a motion to
24 accept the minutes.

25 COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: So moved.

1 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Thank you, Commissioner
2 Mitchell.

3 Do I have a second?

4 COMMISSIONER BERLINER: Second.

5 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Commissioner Berliner.

6 It is moved and seconded that the September
7 25th business meeting minutes be adopted as presented.

8 Is there any debate?

9 (Pause.)

10 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Having heard none, all in
11 favor, aye?

12 (All members present responded "Aye.")

13 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Those opposed, no?

14 (There was no response.)

15 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Any abstention?

16 COMMISSIONER LEE: I am abstaining.

17 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: I am abstaining.

18 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Abstaining, Davis and Lee.

19 COMMISSIONER HENKEN: I am also abstaining.

20 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: And Henken.

21 The ayes have it, and the motion is carried.

22 Moving on to old business:

23 At this time, there's no old business to
24 discuss.

25 We will move on to new business:

1 The first item is the National Institute of
2 Corrections. I think we might not have had an
3 opportunity to discuss it with the Board, but we've had
4 contact with the National Institute of Corrections. We
5 took a small delegation over to Connecticut and also
6 participated in a conference in Colorado.

7 The main purpose the National Institute of
8 Corrections was looking at, they are trying to get
9 states in order to adopt a structured decision-making
10 framework which we have been viewing. I think that there
11 are some merits, and we will get a chance to discuss the
12 actual framework at a later date, but I wanted to at
13 least share with you, myself, Commissioner Agostini,
14 Mitchell and Berliner, have been participating in these
15 sessions. I think there is some merit, basic framework
16 that would give us an opportunity, I think, to
17 standardize our decisions and make our decisions more
18 repeatable. I think that right now the way that we make
19 these decisions, there's a lot of room for objectivity,
20 or subjectivity, and I think that the decision-making
21 framework does create a more objective standard; whether
22 things are aggravating or mitigating, I think that, in
23 our review, we find with consistency we will find the
24 same results one hundred times by creating these types
25 of standards.

1 To the commissioners that have been involved
2 with this, do you want to share a little bit of your
3 thoughts in regard to the potential of the framework?

4 COMMISSIONER AGOSTINI: In visiting the Board
5 of Parole in the State of Connecticut, we were able to
6 observe them and their work with the instrument that I
7 believe the NIC helped develop and in conjunction with
8 the board in Connecticut, and I thought that it was a
9 very interesting opportunity for the State of New York
10 and is worthy of consideration, and I'm glad that we
11 will be considering other options if they can help us
12 out here in New York.

13 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: I thought it was also
14 interesting just to see how other states are handling
15 parole, you know, certainly there will be some more
16 opportunities for visitation, especially to our
17 neighboring states, looking to reach out to Pennsylvania
18 and New Jersey to have an opportunity to visit and see
19 what their practices are.

20 We're really in a search for best practices as
21 we update our protocols here. Also, we'll take the
22 opportunity to have Connecticut come and visit us to
23 take a look at our practices, as well.

24 Commissioner Mitchell, Berliner?

25 COMMISSIONER BERLINER: I would only want to

1 add that I think that a lot of the value in a structured
2 decision-making form is the science behind it, and as
3 much objectivity as we can put into the work is a good
4 thing. It still allows for those where there's a little
5 bit of subjectivity, which I think, you know,
6 occasionally is necessary, but the opportunity to put as
7 much science behind what we do as possible is a good
8 thing. And I thought it was an interesting experience
9 to see how Connecticut does their work, and the NIC
10 training, to see how other states do their work. The
11 more New York can move toward additional implementation
12 of newer practices with science behind it, the better.

13 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Kathy, anything you would
14 like to add as counsel to the Board?

15 KATHLEEN KILEY: No, nothing further. Thank
16 you.

17 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Thank you.

18 Next we'll move to the New York City
19 revocation hearing locations, notifying you that they
20 have changed. The hearings are still in Brooklyn at the
21 county courthouse, but the Manhattan hearings have been
22 moved to the Bronx.

23 I, as well as a number of staff people, have
24 gone down to visit our operation in the Bronx, where it
25 is not optimum, because there is some distance between

1 Manhattan and the Bronx, but it is a comfortable
2 setting, and I think we have room for expansion. But we
3 are in a crunch for space and continuing to work with
4 OCA in order to find appropriate space for our hearings.
5 We are looking at Queens and, again, taking a look to
6 see whether there might be appropriate space in
7 Manhattan but, in the meantime, I do think that
8 operations are going well.

9 Additional training:

10 Dannielle, do you want to expand on it?

11 DANNIELLE HILLE: Just to mention, the Board
12 and the staff got gender identity training on March 18th
13 of this year, and there are upcoming trainings in the
14 works. We're looking to collaborate with experts in
15 several fields to ensure that staff and Board of Parole
16 commissioners have a better understanding of several
17 topics. So, those are to come.

18 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Can you hear me now?

19 We'll move on to correspondence, announcements
20 and invitations:

21 There is the one announcement.

22 Yes?

23 COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: Many things happened
24 last week, not the least of which was the solar eclipse
25 and the earthquake that took place last week.

1 We also celebrated on the second Tuesday in
2 April a very important event, and that's, International
3 Be Kind To Lawyers Day. So, I just wanted to
4 acknowledge those lawyers and members of the legal
5 profession who are with us.

6 COMMISSIONER LEE: You gave us chocolates.
7 Thank you for the chocolates.

8 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Commissioner Mitchell may
9 have some case and he is working his way through the
10 attorney.

11 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Just in the form of
12 announcements. Commissioner Demosthenes has announced
13 that she will be leaving the board this month. And We
14 want to, in her absence, thank her for her service to
15 this Board, and we will have a later opportunity in
16 order to thank her in person.

17 We have some upcoming tours. And, again, I
18 extend an invitation for the commissioners to join the
19 360 Tour and the Edgecombe Correctional Facility tour.
20 If you are interested, please see Chelsea Vizvary.

21 Having concluded all scheduled business, I
22 will entertain a motion to adjourn the public portion of
23 today's meeting.

24 COMMISSIONER AGOSTINI: I move to adjourn the
25 public portion of today's business meeting.

1 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Commissioner Agostini.

2 Do I hear a second?

3 COMMISSIONER BERLINER: Second.

4 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Did I hear a second?

5 COMMISSIONER BERLINER: Yes.

6 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Excellent. It's been moved
7 and seconded that we end our public portion and move on
8 to an executive session to conduct full case reviews and
9 discuss litigation matters with our counsel.

10 Any discussion?

11 All in favor, aye?

12 (All members present responded "Aye.")

13 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Opposed, nay?

14 (No response.)

15 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Any abstention?

16 (No. Response.)

17 CHAIRMAN TOWNS: Thank you very much.

18 It has been moved and seconded to adjourn the
19 public portion of today's meeting and enter into
20 executive session.

21 The public is adjourned 11:16.)

22 (Meeting adjourned at 11:16 a.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I hereby certify that the proceedings and contained fully and accurately in the notes taken by me on the meeting, and that this is a correct transcript of the same to the best of my ability.

Dated this 15th Day of April 2024.

Gregory T. DiDonato
Gregory T. DiDonato
Verbatim Reporter I