



FLORIDA PAROLE COMMISSION

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FLORIDA PAROLE COMMISSION Monthly Accomplishments Report December 2013

~CHAIR'S MESSAGE~ Tena M. Pate

December marked the end of a productive year at the Parole Commission, and we are looking forward to setting new goals for 2014 as we continue to break new ground in our pursuit of excellence in all we do.

In addition to holding its parole hearings in December, the Commission focused on building relationships with internal and external partners and promoting our mission and successes through the distribution of the 2012-13 Annual Report.

One major accomplishment this month was the project completion of the Objective Parole Guidelines Committee. To further the Commission's mission of protecting the citizens of Florida, I formed the Objective Parole Guidelines Committee and appointed Commissioner Melinda Coonrod to lead the charge. The committee, in partnership with the Florida State University's College of Criminology and Criminal Justice program, worked together to determine whether changes needed to be made to the existing guidelines while taking into account recently acquired risk assessment research. Beginning in June 2013, the committee met and reviewed the Commission's current system for scoring parole eligible inmates and ultimately provided valuable suggestions for improving the process. I'd like to recognize Commissioner Coonrod and the committee members, as well as FSU's Dean of the College of Criminology and Criminal Justice Dr. Thomas Blomberg, Dr. William Bales, Dr. George Pesta, and Ellie Sweeney for the outstanding research assistance provided to the Florida Parole Commission.

Also this month, the Commission concluded the final Executive Clemency Board meeting of 2013. Seventy-five cases, organized and prepared meticulously by the Office of Executive Clemency, the Office of Clemency Investigations and our regional offices, were reviewed by the Board. I also attended a two-day meeting in Tallahassee to review a double homicide and suicide case with the Attorney General's Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team on which I serve. Additionally, Commissioner Coonrod, Operations Director Shana Lasseter, Communications Director Molly Koon Kellogg and I attended the Gadsden Re-Entry Center Open House. This facility, as well as re-entry centers across Florida, are a vital part of the criminal justice process and have proven to reduce recidivism and victimizations rate, which helps make Florida's communities safer. Commission team members and I, also attended the Big Bend Law Enforcement Association Annual Breakfast and were able to meet with law enforcement officials that support the Commission in ensuring public safety for the state of Florida. Guest speaker, Kevin Hynes, University of Georgia's football team chaplain provided encouraging words of wisdom to attendees.

Like many criminal justice agencies, the Commission is dedicated to identifying and implementing strong crime prevention measures in an effort to reduce recidivism and to prevent further victimization of our citizens. As such, I have launched an extremely important effort focused on reaching our youth - educating juvenile offenders on the potential consequences of poor life decisions. This month, and into the New Year, I am contacting chief judges in specific locations of our state to solicit their assistance in encouraging judges assigned to the juvenile bench to impose a special condition of supervision for juvenile offenders to attend a parole hearing. My expectation is that our youth will be positively impacted by these experiences - by observing firsthand, at these public hearings, the impact of crime: the good, the bad, and the ugly, on the families of the offenders, their victims and communities many years after the crimes have been committed.

And, my hope is that these youths will change the negative course that their lives have taken. This interventional measure can be a powerful tool in crime prevention for today's youth and may serve as a turning point for juvenile criminal offenders.

In addition to this crime prevention outreach for at risk youth, the Commission began its coordination with the Office of the Attorney General for the 2014 Preventing Crime in the Black Community Conference to be held in Jacksonville in May. The Commission will sponsor a panel discussion for at-risk youth which will feature a panel discussion about the impact of crime. Panel participants will include successful parolees who were juveniles when they committed their offenses and are now middle-aged men. The panel will also have victim representation.

These two crime prevention measures targeting at-risk youths represents an aggressive campaign for the Commission, but it has never been more clear than now of the role the Commission should be assuming on this issue in light of its knowledge and experiences regarding development of crime patterns among the clients it serves.

As part of the Commission's holiday tradition, senior leadership hosted the Annual Holiday Brunch, which is a time for staff to celebrate and fellowship with each other. Staff exchanged gifts, enjoyed great food, and participated in a holiday sing-a-long. I would like to thank Commissioners Cohen, Coonrod and former commissioners for hosting such a joyous celebration. Staff in our regional offices also participated in holiday community outreach activities; Cathy Aylstock, Melinda Strickland and Patti Razor placed wreaths at military headstones throughout the state to show their appreciation to fallen soldiers.

In closing, I would like to thank each of our state's leaders for supporting the Commission's 2013 initiatives, goals and accomplishments. We could not have achieved such great success this year without your support. We look forward to setting the bar even higher in 2014!

I invite you to continue reading and review all of the Commission's December accomplishments below.

Respectfully,



Tena M. Pate
Chair

COMMISSION SECTION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Operations

Shana Lasseter, Director

Meeting with USMS Regarding FPC Warrant Sweep – This month we had the pleasure of meeting with Supervisory Inspector Marty West of the United States Marshal Service (USMS), Florida Regional Fugitive Task Force, regarding a state-wide arrest sweep for open FPC warrants. The USMS task forces combine the efforts of federal, state and local law enforcement agencies to locate and arrest the most dangerous fugitives. Seven Congressionally-funded regional fugitive task forces are located in New York/New Jersey, Pacific Southwest, Great Lakes, Capital Area, Southeast, Gulf Coast, and Florida/Caribbean. Task force officers are state and local police officers who receive special deputations with the U.S. Marshals. While on the task force, these officers can exercise U.S. Marshals authorities, such as being able to cross jurisdictional lines.

The Commission's request for assistance from the task force was approved by the USMS and preparations for the warrant sweep are underway. This will be a labor-intensive project that will require a great deal of preparatory work, including an initial, thorough analysis and investigative update on each offender in the Commission's entire warrant repository. To be successful, this project will require a great deal of research, planning, and coordination. The end result will be the retaking of many violent offenders who at one point walked away from supervision and have evaded justice ever since.

Conditional Medical Release Interview Process and Template – After a recent visit to the medical facilities at RMC, the Commission has requested that the Department now include a photograph of conditional medical release candidates in the packet submitted to the Commission for review. The Department has agreed to do so.

In addition, the current sitting Commissioners have agreed to begin dispatching an examiner to the institution where the CMR candidate is housed for an interview prior to the Commission docketing the case. The Commission recently adopted a CMR Assessment form for use by examiners during these interviews then forwarded to the Commissioners in order to provide the most up to date information regarding the inmate’s post release plan.

The CMR Assessment form has been reviewed by the Office of the General Counsel and it has been determined that use of the form will require an administrative rule change because it requests information outside of the current rule. Implementing this rule change will not start immediately since the agency is currently in the rule change process for other rules. All pertinent parties will be notified when the CMR Assessment form is ready for use.

Office of the Commission Clerk

Cases Docketed:

Parole	100
Conditional Medical	1
Conditional Release	634
Addiction Recovery	152
TOTAL	887

Month	Paroles		Conditional Medical Release	
	Granted	Denied	Granted	Denied
December	4	1	1	0

Featured Case:

Thrita Griffith DC #152479 met her victim at a bar frequented by her and her girlfriend. The crime occurred in an empty house where the three of them had gone to do cocaine. Griffith was heavily into drugs and did not remember killing the victim. Inmate Griffith’s mother reported that the inmate returned home to Arkansas and had gotten off drugs. She returned to Polk County two months later and was arrested for First Degree Murder, where she received a Life sentence with a 25 year minimum mandatory.

On the last Commission Action of July 24, 2013; the Commission reduced her Presumptive Parole Release Date by 12 months based on the above satisfactory institutional conduct, completion of the Intensive Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment program, and selection as a Peer Facilitator in the Intensive Outpatient Program. Thrita Griffith was re-interviewed during the month of October 2013 and placed on the December 4, 2013 docket. At that time, the Commission decided to Parole Thrita Griffith to a term of Life Parole. Ms. Griffith is currently located at Sanctuary Mission in Homosassa and is following all special conditions of parole imposed by the Commission. She plans to attend Recovery Centers of Arkansas and Little Rock once her Interstate Transfer is approved.

Imaging

- December 2013 totals for Imaging Inmate Records (IRIS):

Completed Documents	2,639
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Revocations

STATISTICS:

Warrants Issued	203
Cases Reviewed and Prepared for Docket	182

Include Parole, Conditional Medical Release, Conditional Release, Addiction Recovery Release and/or Control Release.

Personnel Action

Sandra Rozier was promoted to Parole Examiner in Region I.

Victims' Services

	December 2013
Victims' requests for information on parole, conditional release, and conditional medical cases	120
Victims Located	27
Status updates to victims on parole, conditional medical and clemency cases	616
Assisted victims who attended parole or clemency hearings	24

Field Services

Field Services' Statewide Activity Totals

	December 2013
Monthly Interviews and Hearings Conducted:	
Parole Interviews	100
Revocation Interviews	209
Revocation Hearings	43
Total Interviews and Hearings for the Month	352

REGION I:

- **COURTESY INTERSTATE COMPACT TASKS:**
 - Region I performed one notice and no hearings.
- **PENDING CLEMENCY CASES:**
 - With a hearing: 665
 - Without a hearing: 101
 - Total Cases: 766
- **PERSONNEL ACTION:**
 - Examiner Russ Gallogly is the new examiner in the Milton Office.
 - Sandra Rozier is the new examiner in the Quincy Office.
 - Examiner Nell Simmons is now an OPS examiner in the Milton Office.
- **TRAINING:**
 - All Region I staff have completed the HazCom training.

REGION II:

- **COURTESY INTERSTATE COMPACT TASKS:**
 - Region 2 had three (3) requests for Courtesy Preliminary Hearings through Interstate Compact.
- **PENDING CLEMENCY CASES:**
 - With a hearing: 897
 - Without a hearing: 145
 - Total Cases: 1,042
- **PERSONNEL ACTION:**
 - Parole Examiner Joanna Anderson successfully completed her probationary period on 12/26/2013 and is on permanent status.
- **COMMUNITY SERVICE:**
 - Examiner Cliff Rowan is a volunteer through the Florida Gaurdian Ad Litem program in Columbia County.
 - Examiner Gary Fox is a volunteer and coach with the Special Population Activities Recreation Council (SPARC) in Volusia County.
 - Regional Administrator Mills Rowland is a Supervision Group Leader for the Stephen Ministry through the Beach United Methodist Church and the Church of Eleven22.
- **MISCELLANEOUS:**
 - On 11/22/2013 the Jacksonville Office went through a NCIC/FCIC audit by FDLE. The office was found compliant in a letter dated 12/12/2013 with no discrepencies found.

REGION III:

- COURTESY INTERSTATE COMPACT TASKS:
 - Region III received 2 requests for probable cause hearings.
- PENDING CLEMENCY CASES:
 - With a hearing: 1,040
 - Without a hearing: 128
 - Total Cases: 1,168
- PERSONNEL ACTION:
 - All region staff reviewed/ acknowledged performance and SMART goals for the next evaluation period (Jan-June).
- TRAINING:
 - Dale Nichols completed CJIS recertification on 12/03/2013.
- MISCELLANEOUS:
 - Jolynn Linder & her sister participated in the 36th Fort Christmas' Cracker Christmas.

REGION IV:

- COURTESY INTERSTATE COMPACT TASKS:
 - 9 - Notice of Hearing/Postponements
- PENDING CLEMENCY CASES:
 - With a hearing: 2,347
 - Without a hearing: 303
 - Total Cases: 2,650
- TRAINING:
 - Jayne Hayden renewed her Victim Services Practitioner Certificate with the Office of Attorney General for another 3 years.
 - Sandie Pimental, Cindy Zimmerman, Rich Konior and Karyn Roth attended the DAVID Re-Design training on December 4.
 - Vana Cripps and Tara Tracey completed the DAVID Re-Design training on December 3, 2013.
 - Broward, Miami and Stuart staff viewed the Hazard Training video regarding OSHA's Hazard Communication Standard designed to protect employees from hazardous chemicals used or stored in the work setting.
 - Ayesha Carson, Johnshay Footman, Cavell Mason, Leris Calderon, Karen Roth, Vana Cripps and Tara Tracy completed the New DAVID certification test.

REGION V:

- COURTESY INTERSTATE COMPACT TASKS:
 - 4 requests for hearings received.
- PENDING CLEMENCY CASES:
 - With a Hearing: 1,168 cases pending
 - Without a Hearing: 247 cases pending
 - Total Cases: 1,415 cases pending
- PERSONNEL ACTION:
 - All Region V employees attended the EAP Webinar as required.
 - All Region V employees viewed the HazCom Training Video.
- TRAINING:
 - Shellie Harden tested and received her FCIC/NCIC, CJIS Limited Access Online Certification.
- COMMUNITY SERVICE:
 - FCCD Chapter 1, Hillsborough County, assisted the American Legion for their Wreaths Across America Campaign. The wreaths were placed on the headstones at the National Cemetery in Tampa on December 14, 2013.
 - The Pinellas FCCD Chapter laid wreaths at the Bay Pines Cemetery on December 14, 2013.
 - FCCD Chapter 1 held a drawing to raise funds for academic and vocational scholarships. The winner won a Samsung Galaxy Tablet on December 18, 2013.

- Per Patti Razor, approximately 260 families will receive Christmas baskets on December 21, 2013, through the Daystar Life Center Pantry in St. Petersburg.
- Robert Read attended the Boy's and Girl's Clubs of Tampa Bay Second Annual Breakfast. \$600,000.00 was raised this year to be donated to the clubs.
- Jerry Harris' daughter, Lindsey, collected shoe donations that will be refurbished and sent to third world countries.
- Region V Tampa donated books to the Palm River Elementary School, Kindergarten class for Christmas. Pizza and other goodies were also provided for their celebration.
- **MISCELLANEOUS:**
 - Region V staff enjoyed Christmas luncheon at a local restaurant after their December staff meeting.

Administration
Gina Giacomo, Director

The Division of Administration's primary accomplishments in the month of December 2013 included: Achieved 100% prompt payment on invoices. The Florida Parole Commission (Division of Administration) achieved full utilization in all five key functions. The Commission is the only state agency to accomplish green in all five key functions of the utilization matrix in FY 2013-14. Coordinated a follow up employee survey and presented results of the survey. Safety committee meet, inspection completed and corrective actions taken for safety. Set Goal for Administration section for 2014, Coordinated a Lunch and Learn on financial Fitness, Assisted staff throughout the state on Agency wide and Smart measures for performance evaluations. Worked in partnership with DOC to revise the terms and conditions statement for purchase orders to include the Commission, Completed the Tire contact survey, and the DMS Facilities Maintenance survey. Installed phone lines in Executive clemency.

Submitted request for updates to the Commissions websites. Division employees attended trainings/meetings on the following topics, (1) FASAAD Administration, (3) Purchasing, (2) Human Resource, (6) CMS meetings, (1) P-card training, (3) Safety Committee meeting, (2) Quarterly Interagency Advisory Council meeting/training and (1) Employee Assistance training.

Office of Clemency Investigations
Steve Hebert, Director

Pending Clemency Cases January 1, 2014

Types of Clemency Cases	December 2013
RCR Cases	12,558
Without a Hearing Cases (1,416)	
With a Hearing Cases (11,142)	
Non-RCR Cases*	8,116
Total Pending Clemency Cases	20,674

* Full Pardon, Specific Authority to Own/Possess/Use Firearms, Remission of Fines, Commutation of Sentence and Request for Review.

Highlights / Accomplishments for the month of December 2013 for the Office of Clemency Investigations include:

- On December 12, 2013, the Governor and Cabinet, sitting collectively as the Clemency Board, held its fourth quarterly Clemency Board Meeting at the Capitol. The Commission completed and submitted 75 in-depth clemency investigations for Commutation of Sentence, Full Pardons, Firearm Authority and Restoration of Civil Rights for consideration by the Board. The Coordinator of the Office of Executive Clemency presented the cases to the Board, and the Chair provided detailed information related to the Confidential Case Analyses and processes to the Board Members in response to their inquiries.
- This office researched the specific reasons why applicants requested restoration of their civil rights. We reviewed the 54 Restoration of Civil Rights cases heard at the December 12, 2013 Clemency Board Meeting. Several

applicants indicated multiple reasons in their statements to our examiners, and the following information is a brief summary of what our research revealed:

- 85% of the applicants specifically indicated that they were interested in regaining their right to vote, sit on a jury or hold public office.
- 11% of the applicants specifically indicated that they were interested in obtaining their civil rights to help them with employment, ranging from specific licenses or occupations to general job opportunities.
- 11% of the applicants did not provide any specific reason for requesting their civil rights.
- 33% of the applicants voted in an election without having their civil rights restored.
- On December 19, 2013, the Director of Clemency Investigations provided training to the Regional Administrators and Supervisors during a conference call to include procedures related to clemency investigations and the Rules of Executive Clemency.
- Conducted capital punishment clemency investigations and coordinated interviews for death row inmates.
- Conducted quality assurance reviews of all clemency investigations completed by regional field offices.

Office of Communications
Molly Koon Kellogg, Director

- Distributed the Commission's 2013 annual report.
- Continuing with pre-production of the Victims' Services informational video.
- Continuing progress on the Commission's new website.
- Attended the Gadsden Re-Entry Center Open House.
- Attended the Executive Clemency hearing.
- Drafted various employee informational messages regarding upcoming events and acknowledgements.
- Coordinated and responded to various public records and media requests.

Executive Clemency
Julia McCall, Clemency Coordinator

Executive Clemency is looking forward to new challenges and meeting lofty goals in 2014.

We have made several staff changes which has given employees opportunities to move within the office and learn new tasks and responsibilities. Brandee Davis has moved from an OPS position to full time as a Staff Assistant, Stephani France has moved from an OPS Senior Clerk position to the OPS Civil Rights Specialist I position and we brought Tanya Gutierrez-Tapia on board to fill a vacant OPS Senior Clerk position. Tanya is bi-lingual and has already been a big asset with her interpretation and translation skills.

Cross training is next on the list which will enhance our customer service capabilities.

Our first and foremost priority is the processing of applications for clemency. Although the number of cases may seem daunting at times, we continue to strive toward meeting our personal best goals of eliminating any backlog.

Note: It is important to understand that clemency is a two-part process. Getting through phase one is a positive step, but only part of the entire process.

WEBPAGE STATISTICS

- The Florida Parole Commission has received 1,259,264 hits with 946,256 searches for Restoration of Civil Rights (RCR) grants.
- 101,338 names were located and 63,769 certificates have been printed.
- Currently there are 375,472 RCR certificates available for printing through the www.FLrestoremyrights.com website.

Legal Office
Sarah Rumph, General Counsel

The current Legal Team has successfully prevailed on litigation now for a combined 35 years, defending the Commission's actions in 1000's of cases. The end of 2013 is here, "auld lang syne" and all that! The Legal office is fully operating under its new paperless system and working out all the details; especially with handling the large amount of paper mail we continue to receive daily.

1. In *Fabre v. FPC*: The inmate challenged his eligibility for parole arguing that the Parole Commission was abolished. Mr. Fabre apparently overlooked the fact that if he is ineligible for parole as he argues, then he will never have a chance for early release from prison on his life sentences. The Court denied his argument, making it clear that the inmate is eligible on his 1982 convictions and that the Parole Commission still exists. The Court also rejected the brief challenges to the Commission's decision to set out the next subsequent interview for 7 years.
2. In *Poly v. FPC*, after remand, the Commission continued the suspended PPRD based on:
 - a. Proposed release plan unsatisfactory per rule 23-21.002(45);
 - b. Serious nature of the offense per Post Sentence Investigation; and
 - c. Lack of program participation per Department of Corrections' records.The Court upheld these reasons and record support; finding that the Commission did not abuse its discretion.
3. In *Hawkins v. FPC*, after remand, the Commission continued the suspended PPRD based on:
 - a. Serious nature of the offense, referencing and incorporating the 947.18 order and the post sentence investigation;
 - b. Contradictory and conflicting information in the mental health evaluation and the mental health diagnosis...per the evaluations cited and referenced in the 947.18 order, incorporated herein, as well as the actual records dated 6/9/08 and 11/5/08;
 - c. Per a review of the Department of Corrections records there is a need for further observation and treatment; and
 - d. Escalating pattern of criminal conduct as referenced in the incorporated 947.18 order and the Admission and Classification Summary.The Court upheld these reasons and record support; finding that the Commission did not abuse its discretion.

Office of Legislative Affairs
Kevin Reilly, Director

- Participated in the December 2013-2014 Committee Week.
- Drafted and distributed invitations to Duval County area legislators, law enforcement officials, and state attorneys in preparation for the parole hearing in Atlantic Beach, Florida next month.
- Continuing progress on updating the Objective Parole Guidelines with senior staff.
- Met with various legislators and staff to discuss proposed Commission legislation.
- Conducted ongoing legislative constituent relations regarding various Commission functions.