

**Tennessee Community Resource Board  
Riverbend Maximum Security Institute  
January 19, 2018**

**TCRB Representatives:**

Rev. Michael Rickenbaker, Chairman / West TN Representative	(P)
Mario Allen, Member / West TN Representative	(P)
Vanessa J. Brown, Member / West TN Representative	(A)
Paul Hensley, Member / West TN Representative	(A)
Thurston S. Smith, Member / West TN Representative	(P)
J.R. Davis, Member / Middle TN Representative	(P)
Joan Evrist, Secretary / Middle TN Representative	(P)
Tom Hallquist, Treasurer / Middle TN Representative	(A)
Sean Driscoll, Member / East TN Representative	(P)
Raeanne Hance, Member / East TN Representative	(P)
Lee Ragsdale, Member / East TN Representative	(A)
Rep. William Lamberth, House Representative	(A)
Ronda Waters, Assistant to the Secretary	(P)

**TDOC Representatives:**

Eric Qualls, Director of Reentry	(P)
Deborah Thompson, Director of Religious, Volunteer & Victim Services	(P)
Cindy Sword, Assistant to Deborah Thompson	(P)
Helen Ford, Parole Board Administrator	(A)
Edward Welch, Rehab Services	(P)
Carissa Miniard, Probation Parole Program Director	(P)
Andreka Driver, DRC Director	(A)
Shaundra Davis, Correctional Administrator	(P)
Richard Boyd, DRC/CRC Director	(A)
Tamika Dobbins, Victim Services Coordinator	(A)
Reverend Brian Darnell, RMSI Chaplain	(P)
Duncan Gardner, Chaplain	(P)

**Guests**

Ward Mays – RMSI  
Robert Bates – Counselor

**Call To Order**

Michael Rickenbaker called the meeting to order at 9:10am.

**Prayer** – Chaplain Darnell

**Welcome** – Michael Rickenbaker

**Introductions – TCRB Membership / TDOC**

- All in attendance introduced themselves.

## **Review and Approve Minutes of Previous Meetings**

Sean Driscoll motioned to approve.

Thurston Smith seconded the motion.

All in favor.

## **TDOC Presentations**

- Eric Qualls – Making a lot of good progress on the initiatives that we're working on.

## **Take One Update – TDOC**

- Deborah Thompson – Take One – We reached the goal that we had to match the total of 500 attenders by the end of 2017 – we surpassed that goal of 500. We are close to 300 organizations that have been matched. Very grateful for religious and non-profit organizations who have stepped up. Tremendous success stories. Working on a video that will be shown with success stories. Chaplains are to be commended on the job they have done. At some point we'll look at getting community supervision more involved, since most of our offenders are on parole. It would be good to get the video to the parole board members to see.
- Eric Qualls – Many of you might know that Deborah Thompson is retiring this month. We are looking for someone to take her place, and build upon what she has done. We want to continue everything that has been started under her leadership. We will have her retirement party on January 31.
- Sean Driscoll – How many do we have waiting to be a part of Take One?
- Deborah Thompson – Last time we checked it was around 500.
- Sean – So now the challenge is to get a match for those 500 on the waiting list. So, getting more organizations?
- Deborah Thompson – Yes, we will look to get religious based and non-profit organizations – it's ongoing.
- Eric Qualls – The WebX Program will be an online video conference for individuals in different parts of the state to communicate.
- Sean Driscoll – How do you evaluate the success of Take One?
- Eric Qualls – recidivism will play into it, but we will also look at education, cognitive based programs, and look at everything overall. If we're able to address the individuals drug abuse, skills needs, etc., and then with Take One giving them that support in the community, our hope is to prepare them so we don't see as much recidivism.

- Edward Welch – It bridges the gap between what we try to teach them in facilities and once their a returning citizen.
- Sean Driscoll – Just asking the question if there should be more resources other than Take One.
- JR Davis – Congratulates Deborah Thompson. As Take One is handed off, what will the challenges be that we continue to have with Take One and how can we offset those? Also, do we have initiatives that are going to be more educational with the organizations?
- Deborah Thompson – Take One will continue on. We've been meeting with Rep. Johnny Shaw. We're working with our communications department to move it forward with awareness. We're working with our reporting centers to help with getting more resources for the churches. The chaplains will be ore instrumental as well with where we're heading with Take One.
- Eric Qualls – If we can get in front of organizations to give them an overview of Take One on a regular basis, that would be ideal.
- Michael Rickenbaker – I add our congratulations to Deborah Thompson and thank her for her work. In postscript to what JR said, what we have found to be successful is that people are often afraid of what they don't understand, so a great asset of people like Men of Valor with their extensive experience in mentoring and other organizations to help to mentor and tap into the resources in the community. Then with bringing these people out of the system it helps to clearly define what we do. If this is not done for organizations that we want to see involved, it won't have as much of an impact on them to help them meet the need. So to see the mentoring curriculum fully developed to make available. I think this Board would be more than happy to become a part of the team.
- Eric Qualls – Can TDOC and TCRB joint committees work on doing that? (Resounding yes)
- JR Davis – Employers are finding that men that are actually working in a local program, that they're more apt to show up to work and are more serious about it – versus taking someone who is just out of prison.
- Eric Qualls – That's what the CRCs and DRCs are working on.
- Raeanne Hance – I think it's good for those who are interested in trying to find a way to promote it in the areas of which we live. We need to have a voice to help those churches and organizations that will help encourage them to help.
- Eric Qualls – We have talked about the need to go out and talk to churches and organizations in a setting to present these programs and answer questions, etc. We have a program with TDOT where we bring individuals in and teach them how to work with companies, teaching them skills. We had 12 individuals start out in the program – 2 month training, 1 month internship – and all of them started working with businesses in the community making a good income. One issue we have run into is transportation because they work in different places. So we're looking at transportation companies now to help us.

### **Update on Education – Tom Hallquist (Tom not able to attend due to health issues)**

- Michael Rickenbaker – I'd like to have a special time of prayer for Tom. He's working very hard, has had recent medical issues. He said he feels great but cannot drive for the time being. I have a report from Tom that he sent.
  - I had the pleasure to speak at the Community College National Humanities Conference in Baltimore, MD on the 9th and 10th of November. The response was favorable and I have been invited to speak at several colleges to promote community college participation in the educational programs at the Department of Corrections facilities. Two in Illinois (Chicago and central Illinois), one in Ohio (Cleveland), Washington (Seattle), Florida (Miami), and Texas (Houston). All the presentations are with community colleges, except Houston where there is a very active community council who heard about what we are trying to do in Tennessee. I have talked with all the contacts and sent them some information on initiating an academic school academy within the prison system. I talked to an organization here in Tennessee called TN Reconnect and have another follow up meeting next week. TN Reconnect is an organization helping adult students get into community colleges by offering financial assistance and support. I will keep you informed. We are planting seeds.
- Eric Qualls – We've talked with THEI. TN Reconnect are not for incarcerated individuals, but for those in rehabilitation. We have post-secondary education happening in TDOC with THEI. Recently we had 22 graduate with an AA and a handful with GED. We've been working on it for quite a while.
- Edward Welch – We are interested in secondary education because once our graduates get a degree they have a zero recidivism rate. Thinking about themselves as students instead of offenders is changing people's lives. It's changing people's minds about what's happening in the prisons.
- Eric Qualls – It's a big difference seeing how education gives them confidence.
- Michael Rickenbaker – I've been involved in corrections since 1975. What I'm seeing happening in TDCO now with the layers of success and effort is beyond anything that I've seen in all of my years with the department. I think the community, politicians, etc., need to be aware of that. There's something about being able to tap into a community board who can somehow make that presentation to the media. What's appreciated and acknowledged that's what gets repeated.
- Edward Welch – As a TN tax payer, we work for you. That's why we come to these meetings because you have much more influence than the TDOC.
- Michael Rickenbaker – That's what I'm sensing is that this Board could help be more vocal in the community.
- Thurston Smith – I'd recommend we look at establishing a public affairs committee.

## Community Corrections - Field Services - Re-Entry - Day Reporting Centers

- Shaundra Davis – We have a home for Nashville and Murfreesboro. We will open the MB location on February 1. We will open the Nashville location on February 5. Please look for our email invitations to our grand opening. We'll have specialists to help us with all aspects. Looking for participants who are substance abusers – some time of drug issue and have had barriers to re-entering society. We want to make sure we equip this population with everything they need to be productive citizens. We want to give them tools to help them be successful citizens of our community.
  - Day Reporting – they'll come Mon through Thu starting in phase 1 – it's like a job (8:30 – 3:30 every day). They will receive MRT training, cognitive/behavioral therapy, etc., - intensive program. Once they matriculate to phase 2 they will only need to come 3 days a week, then 2 days a week, then graduation.
  - CRC – We have an array of community resource partners. Anything that has been a barrier we will have resources a couple of hours a week available for them to get what they need. These resource partners will be on-site so that people don't have to go out and all over the city – it will be like a one-stop shop. The CRC is not open to the community – but it's for anyone who has been on probation or parole. We thought about eventually opening up the CRC to the public, but it's not for now.
- Sean Driscoll – I think it will be important if there's benchmarks of success.
- Edward Welch – Those benchmarks are important, but it's because we are working with people who we want to be successful when they are returning citizens.
- Andrew Gardner – What about people who have dual diagnoses, not just drug abuse?
- Shaundra Davis – We have partnerships with organizations who will be available for those dual diagnosis issues. We want to see everyone through this program be successful.
- Michael Rickenbaker – In those settings with the social worker for the assessment, that person has access to the individual's paperwork so they are aware of what they've dealt with.
- Mario Allen – One of my concerns is with return citizens and their motivation personally.
- Shaundra Davis – We're doing what we can to motivate those coming through the program. We also will have family reunification (once a quarter) to bring the whole family into the center that will allow the family to see what the participant is going through so that they can be supportive of them.
- Edward Welch – These programs are new, so we will learn as we go along. As they evolve there will be lessons learned on what certain people need.
- Eric Qualls – We also have inmate tutors in some of our classes to help them.
- Shaundra Davis – We will also have gender specific classes, but it is a co-ed program.

## Grand Division Reports

- West TN:
  - Mario Allen – Met with DRC to set up and see the class. Ms. Smith and Ms. Brown are talking about visiting all the prison areas and transition housing areas.
  - Paul Hensley – Paul sent an email update since he wasn't able to attend.
    - Sunday, 10-29-17  
I met with two Volunteers to discuss questions and issues they had concerning inmate sign-in procedures. The Volunteers were being manipulated by some inmates. Chaplain Gross and I were able to clear up the matter.
    - Thursday, 11-2-17  
I had a working lunch with some Volunteers. We discussed some of the techniques inmates use for manipulation. We also discussed the importance of good mentoring and the importance of adhering to policy.  
  
I met with Chaplain Gross for about two hours. We reviewed the volunteer roster with regards to who were active and who were not. We also did some planning for the upcoming Volunteer Appreciation Banquet. He brought me up to speed on some policy questions I had for our anticipated Spanish Feast. It was a very productive meeting.
    - Thursday, 11-8-17  
I attended a Volunteer Certification Training at the Jackson DRC and enjoyed meeting the Educational and Religious Volunteers. Facility Director Seay was cordial and very professional. She gave me about twenty minutes of her time. I was impressed.
    - Tuesday, 11-21-17  
While filling in for Chaplain Glenn, I handled a death notice for an inmate concerning the loss of his mother. Chaplain Gross's previous instructions allowed the matter to be handled smoothly. I appreciated his guidance. I also dispensed some hygiene items and spoke to the Parenting Class instructors from Carl Perkins Center.  
  
At 1:30 I met with Chaplain Gross for two hours in his office. I helped him with some paperwork concerning Volunteers and also moved toward finalizing things for our upcoming Volunteer Appreciation Banquet. As always, it was a productive meeting.
    - Thursday, 12-7-17  
I was the Master of Ceremonies for the Volunteer Appreciation Banquet at NWCX. Many who attended said it was our best to date. Our own Warden Parris was the keynote speaker and did a fine job. He made it a point to shake hands with each of the Volunteers, thus endearing himself even more to those present.
    - Tuesday, 12-12-17  
I presented Take One at the A.W.T. meeting. A.W.T. Steve Jones had been out for several weeks because of major surgery, but was back in fine form.
    - Saturday, 12-16-17  
I coordinated a feast for the Spanish inmates. The food was provided by one of the Spanish mothers connected with our church Spanish Ministry. We had an incredibly good time as the inmates feasted on foods from home.

Out on the compound there is a certain image they feel must be maintained. However, we shared a beautiful spirit of love as walls of cultures were lowered. It had a profound effect on the Volunteer who accompanied me. It was his first exposure inside the Latino culture.

- Michael Rickenbaker – If we could get a list of the chaplains and their contact information from Deborah that would be helpful.
- Middle TN:
  - JR Davis – Riverbend is doing great. We have a strong board now. Looking forward to this year. Good support from the administration. We were thrilled to have the Chaplain organized a dinner through one of our churches.
  - Joan Evrist – TPFW just came through a really busy season with Christmas. Volunteers gave 800 Chic-Fil-A meals/drinks, several Christmas programs, 800 Christmas gift bags for inmates, Kids Christmas party – 150 Chic-Fil-A dinners to the kids and caregivers, 150 stockings filled for the kids. We had an amazing turnout of volunteer participation over Christmas. We just started a teen care for our juvenile residents. We are in the process of making over our child visitation area and we have just begun putting together a couple of committees for our spring children’s party, and our staff appreciation for the officers (May 7).
- East TN:
  - Lee Ragsdale (via email): In East Tennessee, we are continuing to focus on the Take One Initiative and recruiting more organizations to participate. We are also conducting training for new mentor organizations. We have also decided to hold quarterly luncheons for mentors so that we might acknowledge their efforts and provide them with support and encouragement. We are also working with the Day Reporting/Community Resource Center to develop a LCRB for the Community Supervision District.

#### **TREC Update**

- Eric Qualls – TREC is moving to the correctional administrators and there will be a TREC meeting scheduled for the next quarter.

#### **LCRB Update**

- Michael Rickenbaker – The LCRB bylaws that have been drafted have been delayed because we were waiting to see more of the drafts of the job needs and divisions. I know we have the draft of the bylaws. Joan Evrist will locate the bylaws that Melinda had passed along and send it out to the Board members. Deborah Thompson will get Lisa’s information to get her eyes on it as well.
- Deborah Thompson – I’d recommend doing a pilot into one of the offices in each county versus all of the offices at one time.

- Michael Rickenbaker – I'd like to have the by-laws in a form in the next meeting that can be approved.

### **Old Business – Updates**

- Eric Qualls – Badges / Policy – Making traction, just a few slight changes to make, Commissioner can sign next week and then we'll have badges
- Michael Rickenbaker – Let's plan on having ID pictures taken at our next meeting in April. We will remind everyone when we send out the minutes.
- Sean Driscoll – We have reached the point in TN where we are at full employment. Many have not accepted previous inmates will now accept them. Every employer in the state is going to have to look at alternatives to take the jobs they have available. Is there something we can do that we're not already doing to get something before the business community.
  - Eric Qualls – I'd recommend we do work on getting something together to get before the community. I can get the information before Sean to answer his concern. I'd recommend starting with the Chamber of Commerce.
- Michael Rickenbaker –
  - First, I'd like to put on the table an ad hoc committee that would work primarily with education. Tom Hallquist had volunteered to work on that committee with Eric Qualls. I want to keep this at the forefront to update and keep moving forward.
  - Second, a committee to get on the table is about community awareness. I appreciate Thurston Smith's willingness to help with that and would like to ask him to chair that ad hoc committee along with those who are in different committees to partner with him on that committee.
  - Third, another committee I'd recommend is training. We can look at the manuals we have and then develop some things that would help us.
  - I'd like us to have a consensus and agreement that these three areas seem appropriate to move forward with. If you're interested in any of these areas, please let us know.
- Thurston Smith – It would be helpful to draft a mission statement for the ad hoc committee to send to Chairman Rickenbaker and then have you look at it to send out to the Board.
- Joan Evrist – Recommends JR Davis for training.
- Michael Rickenbaker – Updated membership roster for the Board. Deborah Thompson will send updated list to Joan Evrist.

### **Other Business**

- TCRB Membership Positions
  - Deborah Thompson – Raeanne Hance has been approved by the Commissioner. It would be helpful to have a brief bio of any applicants as well.

- JR Davis – I know we have some applications coming in, so as a Board if we can look at all of them that would be helpful.
- Michael Rickenbaker – We will hold off on any action on filling any positions until we have more of our Board members in attendance. If any other applications can be submitted so that we can look at them. We want to look at qualifications that help to serve the Board.
- Thurston Smith – Can we review the applicants electronically and even vote electronically?
- Michael Rickenbaker – Yes, we will send the applications out electronically and then come together to vote on them.
- Deborah Thompson
  - Middle TN – 2 positions available
  - East TN – 2 positions available

#### **Announcements**

- Michael Rickenbaker
  - Prayer for Tom Hallquist, Barbara (former Board member), Deborah Thompson

#### **Meeting Adjourned at 11:09**

Thurston Smith made a motion to adjourn.

Mario Allen seconded the motion.

All in favor.

**Next Meeting:** Friday, April 20, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. at Riverbend