

Vermont Parole Board

2016 Annual Report

Governor
Peter Shumlin

VERMONT PAROLE BOARD 2016 REPORT

Mission Statement

The Parole Board is an independent entity that considers eligible justice involved men and women for parole, rendering just decisions by balancing victim needs, the risk to public safety, while promoting accountability and success.

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December 13, 2016

Vermont Parole Board 2016

2016 has been another busy year for the Parole Board as it continues to conduct monthly in person hearings at 15 locations throughout Vermont. In addition to the Parole Board Office moving from its temporary location in Williston, to its new location in Waterbury, the board welcomed new Parole Board Member Lynn Roberto from Springfield, and Office Manager Colby Leno from Montpelier. In January, the board applied for and received a scholarship from the National Parole Resource Center for technical assistance and training of its board members. The training consisted of two days with a technical assistance provider at our facility in Waterbury. The April training focused on the analysis and review of current parole conditions used in the board's parole granting process, the development of a strategic approach to the board's response to Parole Violations, and finally the use of evidence based decision making tools, practices, and guidelines. The second training date in September focused on the analysis of the parole interview, and how best to interact with people being considered for parole that will enhance the opportunity for them to be successful in the community.

The result of the training and work that followed has been a revision of the Parole Board's General and Special Conditions for Parole as outlined in Chapter 11 of the Vermont Parole Board Manual. The revised conditions which were implemented on November 1, 2016 have been completely rewritten. The General Conditions for Parole are now 4 in number, with additional Special Conditions that may be included for specific types of risks. The fundamental change in Parole Conditions is that they address specific needs which have a sound basis for implementation, designed to reduce risk, and promote success.

Vermont became one of a small group of states that have revised its Parole Conditions to significantly change its process promoting justice involved men and women to be successful in the community.

The Vermont Parole Board additionally was successful in a second training scholarship for a two-day seminar at the Correctional Management Institute of Texas in Huntsville, Texas on August 30, & 31. The scholarship funded two positions for the training focusing on Justice Involved Women, and Parole Practice Innovations. The training attended by myself, and Peter Ozarowski was excellent and very helpful in guiding the Parole Board's decision making process going forward.

Of particular importance to the Vermont Parole Board has been the importance of making sure board members are properly qualified and trained for the responsibilities of Parole Board work. We are grateful for the support received from the administration and legislature to continue with that goal. It has been rewarding to meet with other paroling authorities around the country and learn that Vermont is a leader in progressive Paroling practices.

Dean C. George, Chair
Vermont Parole Board

Vermont Parole Board Summary of Hearings - Last 12 months

<u>Type of Hearings</u>	<u>Total</u>
Parole Eligibility hearings	1022
87% low risk offenders paroled	
68% medium risk offender paroled	
35% high risk offenders paroled	
Paroled out of State (ICOTS)	24
Paroled to Detainers out of state	1
SCS (Supervised Community Sentenced) hearings	15
Violation Hearings	195
Reprimand Hearings	29
Rescission Hearings	15
Parole Condition Modification Hearings	34
Early Release from Parole Hearings	99
Medical Parole Requests	0
	<u>1433 hearings conducted</u>

Parole Board Structure

During the last legislative session, the Status of the Vermont Parole Board became legally an independent and impartial body as now defined in 28 VSA 456 Section 1 (a). The language supports the existing policy of the board, and makes it clear the Parole Board is an independent decision making body.

The following individuals currently comprise the Vermont Parole Board and supporting staff:

Parole Board Members:

- Dean C. George - Parole Board Chair
- Patricia Boucher – Parole Board Vice-Chair
- Peter Ozarowski
- Richard Grassi
- Wayne Dengler
- Mary L. Stephens
- Lynn Roberto

Parole Board Staff:

- Sue Blair – Parole Board Director
- Colby Leno – Executive Office Manager
- Kristin Graham – Administrative Assistant (Temp)

Board interviews, reviews, and hearings are conducted in person at Correctional Facilities and Community Corrections offices throughout the state each month. The board conducts all interviews, and reviews of out of state offenders at Waterbury using audio/video technology.