

**Tennessee Community Resource Board  
Riverbend Maximum Security Institute  
April 20, 2018**

**TCRB Representatives:**

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

**TDOC Representatives:**

Eric Qualls, Director of Reentry	(P)
Reverend Brian Darnell, Director of Religious Services	(P)
Edward Welch, Rehab Services	(P)
Carissa Miniard, Community Supervision	(P)
Shaundra Davis, Correctional Administrator	(P)
Duncan Gardner, Chaplain	(P)
Virginia S. Crump, Education Superintendent	(P)
April E. Stewart, Murfreesboro CRC/DRC Clinical Director	(P)

**Guests:**

Marcus K. Allen, Sr.	(P)
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**Call To Order**

Michael Rickenbaker called the meeting to order at 9:12am.

**Prayer** – Lee Ragsdale

**Welcome** – Michael Rickenbaker

**Introductions – TCRB Membership / TDOC**

- All in attendance introduced themselves.

**Review and Approve Minutes of Previous Meetings**

Sean Driscoll motioned to approve.

Shaundra Davis seconded the motion.

All in favor.

## TDOC Presentations

- Badges
  - Eric Qualls – Announcement about TCRB getting new badges. Reverend Darnell is Director of Religious Services for TDOC.
  - Rev. Darnell – We'll get badges made today throughout the meeting.
- Education
  - Eric Qualls – Honored to have Rev. Darnell and Superintendent Virginia Crump on the team.
  - Virginia Crump – Been Superintendent of Education since January 2018. Our mission is to provide a safe, orderly, and personalized environment – 6 hours per day, 5 days a week – To give them an environment conducive to learning. They can receive a HS diploma, completion certificates, and are pre-pared to join post-secondary education. We desire that they would have skills that would allow them to go back and be a part of their community, families, etc. The work we're doing is to impact the lives of those outside in our communities. We're servicing now about 5000 students. We're helping them with a new way of doing things so that they make better choices. We started a newsletter called "In The Loop" to keep everyone informed on what we're doing.
  - Joan Evrist: Question, do you work with Lipscomb?
  - Virginia Crump: Yes, Lipscomb is one of the schools we work with. We believe that once these students attain their HS diploma, they will be able to impact our communities.
  - Raeanne Hance: How do we access the newsletter?
  - Virginia Crump: We will get it to the TCRB. Join me and thank a teacher on May 8 – Teacher Appreciation Day.
  - JR Davis: Is it High School Diploma verses GED.
  - Virginia Crump: High School Equivalency is the term we're using. (HSE) The huge number of people in our program tells us that education failed at some point.
  - Sean Driscoll: Would they qualify for TN Promise (HS graduates get 2 years of community college for free)? (No) That would be a priority.
  - Tom Hallquist: We're in connection with TN Reconnect – to get inmates who have graduated HS to be able to go on to college with grant money and scholarships, etc.
  - Lee Ragsdale: Is TN Reconnect free tuition?
  - Tom Hallquist: No, TN Promise is – but they do get opportunity for grants and scholarships, but it's not guaranteed.
  - Ed Welch: We have to be advocates as well for post-secondary education. Our prisons have become the epicenter of restorative justice.
  - Raeanne Hance: Of those who are in the program, how are they chosen to be in the program? Do they volunteer to fill out the application?
  - Virginia Crump: They are eligible if they have not already come to the prison with a HS diploma. Then they are assigned through the jobs office and take the "Tape" test to assess them.
  - Lee Ragsdale: Over a year's period you likely serve way more than 5000 because of those graduating.
  - Eric Qualls: And it's a fully accredited school, so we follow the same standards and rules of our school system.

- Virginia Crump: Yes, and we have a commitment to educate, so it is a special role to be a teacher within the prisons – we are not there to punish or to give a second sentence, we are there to educate. We desire to be good stewards of the students and education. I appreciate your interest. It tells me that we're heading in the right direction and we're not alone.
- JR Davis: We do have statewide representations if you need local speakers to come in on particular subjects.
- Lee Ragsdale: Also, there our grant writers in the government and state.
- Ad Hock Committees
  - Eric Qualls – Mr. Smith will be point person for Ad Hock. Also, Rev. Darnell was going to be the point for TDOC side, but we're asking he appoint someone else for that since his new appointment.
- Guidelines for Take One mentors
  - Eric Qualls – Rev. Darnell is going to help get something structured.
  - Lee Ragsdale: In East TN we're having members of our ETREC take on a few churches as a point of contact.
- Volunteers entering facilities
  - Michael Rickenbaker: There's been specific problems for volunteers getting into the facilities (lockdown), so just looking to get the volunteers the information they need prior to trying to get into a facility if there's something happening that would disallow them to get into the facility.
  - Eric Qualls: Yes, our facilities need to do a better job of letting volunteers know if there are situations going on that would not allow volunteers to enter a facility. We'll explore some options to inform people on short notice.

### **Update on Education – TDOC Representative and Tom Hallquist**

- Tom Hallquist: Appreciate what TDOC is doing for education. Through what we're doing with education, we change a mindset that then will impact their lives and communities. There's a new awareness in society about the connection between the lack of education and those who are incarcerated. I've established a coalition of people throughout the U.S. and are getting this movement going about changing society's mindset about education. It's beginning to work. As a group, we've come up with strategies, vision. We need to understand and explain the problems so we can express those to society effectively. One way is associations with community colleges.
- Eric Qualls: When you said you'll meet with the Chancellor at Nashville State – they've been so helpful – are you concentrating on prisons or jails?
- Tom Hallquist: Both. Not just emphasizing Nashville State.
- Eric Qualls: We met with the regents, we just don't have the funds at the rate their offering.
- Tom Hallquist: One thing about building this coalition of professors, etc., is that they will help us with funding. Basically, when we give them the product, they'll give us the money. The next plan is to develop this educational concept, but we don't want to release anything until we have a product that really works. Changing the mindset of society first. We can't just have penance, we have to have rehabilitation. Continuous learning is what's needed. We have opportunities. Have faith. Be patient. Because of our TDOC reps, TN is one of the leading states in this initiative.

## Take One Report and Discussion

- Rev. Darnell: Grateful to everyone for my appointment. Up to this point we've had about 500 matches in Take One, about 299 volunteers. We had some good growth, but we have had about 300 others right under the service who are waiting to be matched. Rehabilitation is so successful in part because of those who are willing to come alongside. It's always community. Those pending applications right under the service are an easy fix. I think what we've done has been okay, but because of my connections and network, I'm going to go to the high counsel of denominations (at the Board level). Our recidivism rates are connected to what we're doing with addictions recovery. We need to amp up what we're doing with mentoring. Being present, being physically and emotionally present. It's about saving lives – cognitive restructuring. And, we are mining new people resources – people who are interested and want to get involved. Not exhausting ourselves to the point of burnout. I'm going to unburden the Chaplains from having to go out and find mentors. I'm going to lead by example, and find the mentors needed – taking away any excuse (“Don't ruin an apology with an excuse.”).
- Raeanne Hance: Going back to Take One for clarification – are there set rules of do's and don'ts that we can access? The trainings I've attended, I don't recall that Take One has gone in depth enough.
- Lee Ragsdale: We have a training we do that is both volunteer training and TREC mentor training.
- Rev. Darnell: We have policy driven training, and then real world experiential training. I'd be happy to illuminate folks on that.
- Michael Rickenbaker: We are working with Rev. Darnell on developing written curriculum for training volunteers.
- Rev. Darnell: I'd like to do a training for our Chaplains of our best practices. I'm happy to pull some of this together to help us.

## Grand Division Reports

- East TN:
  - Lee Ragsdale: The ETREC is working hard to figure out a way to put on a more robust recruitment in how to market and brand what we're trying to do. We need to go to the key leaders in each of the churches/denominations.
  - Eric Qualls: When there are any issues or stumbling blocks, be sure to copy Rev. Darnell and myself on those (if they relate to the facilities).
- Middle TN:
  - Joan Evrist: At TPFW we had several volunteers and artists come in and redo our child visitation area. We're getting ready for our Spring Children's Party April 28 – Easter Egg Hunts, toys, etc. Our staff appreciation is May 7 – the Correctional Professional Day – we do gift bags and a card. I've become a volunteer Chaplain for TPFW.
  - JR Davis: Riverbend administration is working with us – we're seeing evidence of their compassion and/or common sense in the programs taking place (pizzas for special events, etc.). We are still in need of a Chaplain here. Other than that, things are going well.
- West TN:

- Mario Allen: We got together in Shelby Co. – talking about checking out some of the half way houses, and other services available. Next think is DRC is coming along well as we've been working with them.
- Michael Rickenbaker: I've gotten good news from Southwest in that we have our first LCRB that has been developed at Whiteville Correctional Facility. There has been a challenge at that facility (in Hardeman Co.) for some of the usual things we've had a need for volunteers (such as acquiring badges).
- Eric Qualls: Everyone has until June 30 to make the change from old badges to new badges.
- Rev. Darnell: I'll help with getting the volunteers in Hardeman Co. badged.

### **Community Corrections/Field Services - DRC**

- Dr. April Stewart: We had our grand opening in Rutherford Co. on March 16. We have 8 participants and one starting next week. We have a maximum of 50. Also positive reinforcers are important. We don't want those coming in looking at it as a punishment, but as treatment. We are going to have DRC bucks – they'll receive "play dollars" for completing homework, passing drug screenings, etc. We want to help and encourage them. As we continue to grow we will have different processes in place. Ready for more referrals.

### **TREC Update**

- Shaundra Davis: TREC Meeting on March 23 at Central Office. Basically, we have TREC members and committees strategically placed throughout the state – East, West and Middle TN. We talked about Strong R presentation at this meeting. We had Ms. Crump going over education with their goals, etc. Rev. Darnell went over Take One. Christina Goal is our new inmates job coordinator. Mr. Hollis is over the workforce and development. Mr. Qualls covered grand divisions, local and non-profit organizations, chairpersons and members, rules and procedures, and oversights of local boards.
- Eric Qualls: Strong R is a Risk Needs Assessment tool. Assesses their needs and risk to reoffend. Specifically for TDOC. This will allow us to provide the treatment needed and assess their risk to reoffend.
- Shaundra Davis: The local boards are going very well. We are in the process now of putting together meeting to recruit people in Middle TN to become TREC chairperson, co-chairperson and secretary. We are looking for people to serve in those roles, so if you know of anyone who would be a good fit and interested, let us know. Now that we have our Mid TN DRC/CRC in place, please consider how you might help serve and volunteer to partner with us in them. The DRC is a structured environment and we already have our facilitators, but the CRC side is where we would like to encourage more volunteers. Nashville has 8 participants, 2 starting on Monday. The relationship has been great with the judges regarding the DRC/CRC. If you have a chance to stop by our DRC/CRC facilities, take the opportunity to do so.

### **Other Business**

- Volunteer Entry Issues
  - Michael Rickenbaker: Could we discuss the travel reimbursement policy for those who are traveling from West and East TN?
  - Eric Qualls: Definitely submit reimbursement forms. Be sure that when you fill out your form you put your mileage down. With lodging, you have to stay at a hotel that gives

you the state rate. Meals reimbursement would partial day (if you came on a Thursday/Friday). Once filled out, send to Director Darnell to process. He'll approve and send to fiscal. I will send a copy of the new form electronically.

- TCRB Membership Positions
  - Michael Rickenbaker: Voting in new members
    - Ronda Waters – Middle TN
      - Tom Hallquist made the motion.
      - Sean Driscoll seconded the motion.
      - All in favor.

**Meeting Adjourned at 12:16**

Sean Driscoll made a motion to adjourn.

Lee Ragsdale seconded the motion.

All in favor.

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