

PVS is the only nationwide visitation program in the United States authorized by the Federal Bureau of Prisons and the Department of Defense to visit all federal and military prisons and prisoners. Our nationwide network of volunteer visitors provides face-to-face contact with prisoners to help them cope with prison life and prepared for successful reentry into society.

**Prisoner Visitation and Support**  
**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**  
**April 22, 2016**  
**Friends Center, Philadelphia**

In attendance: Rachel Osborn, Chair; John Vanyur, Vice-Chair; Angus Love, David Poundstone, Susan Hills Rose, Virginia Rinella (in person); Carl Bade, Rick Boardman, Murray Hiebert, Jim Marren, (telephonically/electronically). Board members unable to attend: Marc Levin, Mike Quinlan. Staff in attendance: Eric Corson, Eileen Gilkenson, Teneshia Washington. Guest: Maria Bade (telephonically).

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Rachel Osborn called the meeting to order at 9:15 am and welcomed all those in attendance.

**2. Review of November 13, 2015 Board Meeting Minutes**

The Board approved the minutes of the November 13, 2015 Board Meeting.

**3. Executive Committee Report: Rachel Osborn**

Rachel reviewed Executive Committee meetings and actions taken since the November 2015 Board meeting. The Executive Committee met on December 4, 2015, January 22, 2016, February 18, 2016 and March 14, 2016 to discuss issues related to PVS Board development, finances, personnel and fundraising. Rachel summarized the issues raised and decisions made during those meetings.

Executive Committee actions since November 2015 Board meeting:

- The new website was launched in December 2015.
- Teneshia Washington became a salaried employee as of January 1, 2016.
- Job descriptions for Administrative Manager and Visitor Recruiter were revised and approved.
- 2016 performance work plans (PWPs) for all three staff were approved and signed.
- The 2016 budget was drafted and approved, for final approval at the April 2016 Board meeting.
- A policy defining the distinctions between PVS annual sponsors and endorsers was approved.
- The training team will conduct a survey of PVS visitors, and report the results along with recommendations for 2017 training sites and options to the April 2016 Board meeting.
- Eric's retirement and the 2018 50th anniversary year will be reviewed by the Board.

#### **4. Board Membership: Rachel Osborn**

Rachel distributed current Board and committee member lists and asked for any corrections.

Two other Board-approved documents were distributed for individual signatures: the expectations for Board members document and the annual conflict of interest statement. The Board position description was presented for further review at a later date.

Rachel thanked Board members for their generous support in 2015. Noting our standard of 100% Board participation and the adoption of an \$11,500 Board goal for 2016, she thanked those who had made gifts in 2016 and stated she will be contacting each Board member to secure pledges in the second quarter, to be fulfilled by the end of the 2016 fiscal year.

#### *Actions to be taken:*

- a. Rachel will circulate the expectations for Board members document and the conflict of interest statement for individual Board members signature and return.
- b. Rachel will contact each Board member regarding his/her commitment in 2016.
- c. Board members are asked to return their signed documents within one month.

#### **5. Financial Report: David Poundstone and PVS staff**

The 2016 operating budget with an income goal of \$221,210 and anticipated expenses of \$185,886 was reviewed and approved.

Dave reviewed the distributed financial report and PVS' financial statements. Calendar year 2015 ended on a strong note, with 8.2% income growth, just short of the year's 10% target. Net assets at December 31, 2015 were \$74,028. Income through the first quarter of 2016 was basically even with 2015, standing at just 14.7% of the 2016 income target. Total assets at March 31, 2016 were \$65,282.

Starting in January 2016, Dave noted, PVS staff made some improvements in coding donations in DonorPerfect and accounting in QuickBooks, enabling a consistent comparison of periodic direct mails appeals year-to-year and tying the posting of these results in QuickBooks. For example, the spring 2016 fund appeal (still in progress) has generated \$21,481 in 194 gifts, compared to \$25,912 in 208 gifts in 2015 and \$26,633 in 221 gifts in 2014.

The 2016 Training Conference was slated to contribute \$8,135 to the 2016 operating budget. Concerns about conference pricing for visitors, however, required a decision to reduce the 2016 cost from \$490 to \$445 per person for housing and meals. This will reduce the conference contribution to the 2016 PVS operating budget. Net income to date for the 2016 Training Conference is \$2,250.

The annual audit along with IRS Form 990 is prepared by Jules Kleinberg, CPA. The 2014 audit is our most recent one. It was noted that, given the low fees the auditor charges PVS, the audit is generally not complete prior to early in the third quarter each year.

*Actions to be taken:*

- a. Teneshia will place the audit dated December 31, 2014 on the website and email (or mail) a PDF of the audit to the Board.

**6. Communications Report: Murray Hiebert**

Murray reviewed the distributed communications report. With the first meeting of this new committee on February 8, 2016, the committee in two subsequent meetings has begun to review PVS products and materials in this priority order: brochures, letterhead, website, social media, newsletter and annual report.

The Board was presented with a draft of proposed new letterhead designed by the committee and Teneshia. With minor revision of the new PVS image at upper left, it was approved to go forward, noting that this image was not an approved new logo although it (or a variant) might become one.

Susannah and the committee are working on revisions for the three PVS brochures – for visitors, prisoners, and donors – and these drafts will be available for review soon. It was suggested that a prisoner be asked to respond to the prisoner brochure draft.

*Actions to be taken:*

- a. Susannah will forward the draft brochures for review to appropriate Board and staff members prior to the next committee meeting.
- b. Eric will work on locating an appropriate prisoner to review the prisoner brochure draft.

**7. Staff Report: Teneshia Washington**

Teneshia summarized her distributed report, including improvements in DonorPerfect tracking, new fundraising initiatives, and enhancement of recruiting via the internet. Third and fourth quarter goals including assisting with improved processing of visitor applications, visitor cultivation and retention, and promoting the newly-created universal system of visitor reporting that will allow PVS to maintain accurate statistics of prisoners and visitors. She is proposing scheduling GoTo webinars/meetings with prison coordinators on a rotating schedule to follow up on first visits of appointed new visitors, as well as assisting with training of new visitors.

*Actions to be taken:*

- a. Teneshia will schedule a conference call with the training team to review effective rollout of the new system for visitor reporting, including at the 2016 Training Conference, as well as the proposed GoToMeetings.

## **8. Recruiter's Report: Eileen Gilkenson**

Reviewing her distributed report, Eileen noted the continued increase in the volume of applications. Averaging 10-15 each month, applications from the internet are now the principal source of referrals: volunteermatch.org and the PVS website. Eileen has received applications from 43 appointees pending Board approval. The Board approved the list of the 43 new visitors as presented at the meeting. It was noted five of these are Spanish-speaking and none are African American.

Eileen noted we have increased diversity regarding age, but little progress with African American and Spanish-speaking visitors. She recommends a specialized strategy to recruit these visitors, but as a part-time employee is overwhelmed with processing daily applications and supervising contract recruiters and interviewers. Recruiting efforts in the next six months will focus on priority locations.

Eileen raised two other organizational issues:

1. In 2015, 169 applications were received and more than 100 visitors appointed, for a total of about 400 visitors. In the past 12 months 65 visitors have resigned or died, for a net gain of approximately 40 visitors. This rate of attrition has significant implications for training and recruiting priorities.
2. The dramatic increase in recruits requires Board evaluation of the need for enhanced staff support and infrastructure to recruit, train, and support new visitors, especially those in isolated areas.

In discussion the following points were raised: with our rapidly changing visitor demographics, PVS needs to better understand their characteristics and support what they need. Could former PVS visitors serve as mentors? Could an exit survey for the 65 resigning visitors be developed and implemented? A staff person for training may be needed. Can we review web-based volunteer training? Should there be more focus on supporting local coordinators?

*Actions to be taken:*

- a. A working group consisting of Eileen, Virginia, Susannah, Teneshia and David was established to discuss these issues. David will serve as convener.

## **9. Executive Director's Report: Eric Corson**

Eric referenced his distributed report.

On April 21, 2016, for our annual PVS visit, Eric, Board members Rachel, John, David and Virginia as well as staff Eileen and Teneshia met with BOP Acting BOP Director Tom Kane, Assistant Director of Reentry Affairs Marion Feather, and Deputy Chief of Staff Frank Marrone. It was a very positive visit, as was the later one with Colonel Paul Kantwell, who is in charge of prisons for the Department of Defense.

One issue raised was BOP volunteer and visitor regulations as they relate to PVS visitors.

*Actions to be taken:*

- a. John and Eric will follow up with the BOP to gain clarity on whether PVS visitors are regarded as visitors or volunteers per BOP regulations, for consistent application of entry rules for PVS visitors.

**10. Development Report: Rick Boardman**

Rick reviewed the committee's report. The period between the November 2015 Board meeting and now has been satisfactory for PVS fundraising. Work has been patterned after the approved Schultz and Williams development action plan. Direct mail appeal returns are keeping pace with 2015, to be augmented by a prospect appeal mailing in May to Catholic lists. Sponsors and private prison companies are significantly down compared to 2015, likely a matter of timing. Foundation giving is down due to delays in submitting grant proposals. A concerted effort to research and contact major donors, by committee members and staff, is underway. Teneshia has brought new energy to development work.

It was noted that funding to support visitor's training is a critical need.

*Actions to be taken:*

- a. Development will identify prospects for proposals to support visitor training, based on identified cost estimates for training conferences.

**11. Personnel Report: John Vanyur**

John reviewed the distributed personnel report. He noted all staff helped develop their 2016 performance work plans (PWPs) which the Executive Committee approved. Most of Teneshia's and Eileen's assignments are ongoing and being met per deadlines. Eileen and Teneshia were thanked and excused from the meeting. Eric has several items completed or ongoing, and one action item with several components critical to transition planning that has not yet been completed.

*Actions to be taken:*

- a. Eric will send the BOP directory that he recently updated to John and Rachel.
- b. Susannah and John will interview Eric to gain documentation for the transition planning action item per the PWP.

Preceding the lunch break, Board members and staff present toured the PVS office.

## **12. Executive Session: Board**

The Board reviewed succession planning. Among the points discussed were a need for a timeline with milestones, clear directives for the next staff leader, continued dialogue with current staff leadership, and the need for the Board to work together on key organizational objectives.

## **13. Training Report: Virginia Rinella**

Virginia reviewed the distributed report. She noted there are six trainers, of whom two are new and four may be retiring from the committee in the next four years. Plans are being completed for the 2016 training conference in August at UC Santa Barbara. The team created a Survey Monkey survey for PVS visitors, which was open from February 26 to March 18, and which collected 152 responses from an email sampling to 450 visitors. The results were compiled and made available to the Board.

Background data of PVS training and findings from the survey were analyzed in the distributed PVS training conference - strategic issues report, which Dave reviewed. Key points are:

- 50% of all visitors have never attended a conference, despite the PVS policy of conference attendance. Eighty percent of all visitors have been visiting 10 years or less.
- New visitors need training early to bond them to PVS mission and service.
- Lowering or subsidizing the cost of training is vital, with 2/3 of the respondents positioning themselves at \$400 or less for each cost component – conference cost and travel.
- A Board goal of pricing the conference to break even or contribute to the PVS bottom line has been met since 2010, with conference attendee pricing rising from \$319 (2010) to \$445 (2016) to meet that goal.
- Additional PVS funding is needed to invest in training conference quality and effectiveness.

Regarding a 2017 conference site, the training team recommended a site be selected that would conveniently attract the most new visitors needing training, at a cost consistent with the average conference budget of \$25,000 - \$30,000. The preponderance of new visitors are east of the Mississippi, with 21 in Florida and 20 in Pennsylvania. It was noted that one proposal for center-city Philadelphia in 2017 at \$52,000 was too high. The Board eliminated that proposal. However, since the Board and the Executive Director had mutually agreed last year that he will retire on or by December 31, 2017 and since the ED requested the 2017 conference take place in Philadelphia to say farewell to an optimum number of visitors, the Board directed PVS staff to research 2017 sites in the Philadelphia area that met the cost criteria and space requirements identified by the training team, and to seek a minimum \$10,000 subsidy from a previously identified prospect to meet the conference funding goal.

*Actions to be taken:*

- a. Details of the 2016 Training Conference will be finalized.
- b. PVS staff will research prospective 2017 conference sites meeting the stated parameters.
- c. PVS staff will complete the proposal for \$10,000 to subsidize a 2017 conference.

In the interest of time, items 14 – PVS 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2018 – and 15 – PVS strategic vision – were tabled for a future meeting.

**16. New/Other Business: All**

There was no new or other business.

**17. The meeting was adjourned at 3:45pm. The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for Thursday, November10, 2016 at Friends Center.**

Respectfully submitted,  
John Vanyur  
Acting Secretary