

MINUTES

Meeting: Commission on Jail Standards

Place: William P Clements Building
300 W 15th Street Rm 103
Austin, TX 78711

To obtain a recording of the meeting February 6, 2025, contact Richard Morgan, at Richard.morgan@tcjs.state.tx.us.

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Date: February 6, 2025

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Stoudt of the Texas Commission on Jail Standards at 9:00 a.m.

II. Roll Call of Commission Members

Judge Bill Stoudt, Chairman	Mr. Ross Reyes
Dr. Porsa, Vice Chairman	Ms. Monica McBride
Mr. Duane Lock	Commissioner Ben Perry
Ms. Patricia Anthony	Sheriff Kelly Rowe

Commission members present at roll call were Chairman Stoudt, Dr. Porsa, Mr. Duane Lock, Sheriff Kelly Rowe, Ms. Patricia Anthony. Commissioner Perry and Ms. McBride were absent. Staff members attending in-person included Brandon Wood, Ricky Armstrong, Richard Morgan, Jason Jouett, Todd Allen, Michael Garrett, Michael Gravitt, Martin Arnold, and Leslie Spear.

Chairman Stoudt read aloud the guidelines for public comment at this time.

Others in attendance were:

Kelley Stalder, SFMO
Gerald Corbell, Shelby County Sheriff
Tiffany Ryals, Shelby County Sheriff's Office
Allison Harbison, Shelby County Judge
Tom Bellmyer, Shelby County
Cody Copeland, Fort Worth Star-Telegram
Robert Burkel, Tarrant County
Joe Palmer, Tarrant County
Erich Morsbach, Bell County Sheriff's Office
Jody Krumnow, Falls County Sheriff's Office
Roselee Bailey, Bee County Sheriff's Office
Nan Terry
Christina Dail, Travis County
Cassandra Johnson
Darren Carol
Mallory Young
Dennis Wilson, ICS Jail Supplies
Arnitha Walters, Tarrant County
John [illegible]
Kathleen Pokluda, Williamson County Sheriff's Office
Shannon Herklotz, Tarrant County Sheriff's Office
Eric Goodman
Paul Barrows, Denton County

Dalila Reynoso, Texas Jail Project
Shane Sowell, Dallas County Sheriff's Office
Chad Stroud, Hunt County Sheriff's Office
Deborah Winters, Cooke County
Goldie Vanzandt, Texas Jail Project
Krish Gundu, Texas Jail Project
Pricilla Chavez, Willacy Texas Jail Project
Phillip Bosquez, Harris County Sheriff's Office
Rebecca Delaware, Tarrant County Social Justice Network
Erasmus Alarcon, Jim Hogg County Sheriff
Reyes Espinoza, Jim Hogg County Sheriff's Office
Elias Morales, Jim Hogg County Sheriff's Office
Nancy Salisbury, Willo
Tonya Mills, Harris County
Juan Carlos Guerra, Jim Hogg County Judge
D. Burrons, Recana
H. Guerrero, Liberty County Sheriff's Office
Killy Knox, Liberty County Sheriff's Office
Jay Knight, Liberty County Judge
Maxey Cerliano, Gregg County
Craig Marrington, Gregg County
Michael Starkey, Henderson County Sheriff's Office

III. Approval of Minutes

Chairman Stoudt asked if there was a motion to approve the minutes for the meeting conducted November 7, 2024. A motion was made by Dr. Porsa and seconded by Commissioner Lock and passed unanimously.

IV. Public Comment

Deborah Winters – Provided testimony regarding her son who passed away in the Kauffman County Jail in November 2023. She discussed the role of The Commission in the regulation of Texas County Jails, and the death in custody investigation process. She discussed LMHA accountability and urged sheriffs to speak to lawmakers regarding the mental health population and providing for them.

Pricilla Chavez – Provided testimony regarding her brother John Ray Zamora who passed away in custody. Ms. Chavez discussed her previous testimony given to The Commission. She discussed the death in custody investigation process and the information available regarding her brother's death.

Goldie Vanzandt – Identified as a member of the Texas Jail Project as an advocate for veterans. She discussed the agenda item regarding the veteran's re-entry search service. She discussed the possibility of a rule that would expedite veteran transfer to a state hospital.

Christopher Jenkins – Provided testimony regarding information and data in the jail system, and inefficiencies and their effect on jail overcrowding.

Citterece McGregor – Provided testimony regarding her son Kristopher McGregor who passed away in custody at the Harris County Jail and requested information.

Rev. Jacilet Griffin Lee – Provided testimony regarding her son Evan Griffin Lee who passed away in custody at the Harris County Jail. She discussed the jail's notification process and her displeasure with it. She discussed Texas County Jail inmates being housed out of state. She also discussed the Harris County Jail population and staffing.

Joe Palmer – Provided testimony regarding Mason Yancy who passed away in custody at the Tarrant County Sheriff's Office in December 2024. He discussed the Sandra Bland Act and the Commission's responsibilities regarding the appointment of an independent law enforcement agency to conduct custodial death investigations.

Robert Baker – Provided testimony regarding the custodial deaths at the Tarrant County Jail. He discussed issues his son experienced at the Tarrant County Jail in getting his medication. He discussed accountability regarding JPS and the Tarrant County Sheriff.

Becky Girard (sp) – Provided testimony regarding Tarrant County Sheriff Waybourn and the Sadra Bland Act. She discussed Sheriff Waybourn's comments regarding custodial death investigations. She discussed the Tarrant County deaths and the appointment of the Fort Worth Police Department to investigate them, and alleged issues of transparency in the assignment of licensees who perform these investigations.

Paul Barrows – Provided testimony regarding his son and his experiences with mental health issues and encounters with law enforcement, and diversion. He discussed the restoration process and deterioration while waiting for a court hearing. He urged individuals in law enforcement to speak to law makers and ask them to address the mental health population.

Cassandra Johnson – Provided testimony regarding her son who passed away at the Tarrant County Jail in July 2022. She discussed issues her son experienced receiving medical care at the Tarrant County Jail. She discussed the custodial death investigation process at the Tarrant County Jail.

Darren Yancey – Provided testimony regarding the death of his brother, Mason Yancey, at the Tarrant County Jail in December 2024. He discussed the circumstances of his brother’s death, and the custodial death investigation process at the Tarrant County Jail. He requested that the Texas Rangers be appointed to investigate his brother’s death.

Mallory Yancey – Provided testimony regarding the death of her brother, Mason Yancey, at the Tarrant County Jail. Discussed the custodial death investigation process at the Tarrant County jail. Discussed the cost of the legal defense of officers and staff of the Tarrant County jail.

Nan Terry – Provided testimony regarding custodial deaths at the Tarrant County Jail. She discussed detox protocols at the Tarrant County Jail. She discussed the custodial death investigation process, and independent law enforcement agency investigation, at the Tarrant County jail.

Dr. Audrey Nath – Provided testimony regarding preventable deaths at the Harris County jail and lack of transparency and data. She discussed deaths attributed to seizures at the Harris County Jail, which she advised are preventable. She discussed evidence-based guidelines for the treatment of prolonged seizures in jails, and an open records request to the Harris County Jail regarding existing medical protocols and treatment of seizures. Requested information on escalating her request for information on seizure protocols in Harris County jails.

Dalila Reynoso – Provided testimony regarding SB 1677 from the previous legislative session, the Continuity of care query, and the continuance of care at the jail. She urged the Commission to speak with lawmakers and request a system to provide care to individuals after they are released that is in place before they are released.

Sonja Burns – Provided testimony regarding the State Auditor’s report on the competency restoration services and discussed the Commission’s IDD Advisory Committee. She discussed the number of individuals on the list for competency restoration. She urged the commission to speak to legislators regarding this issue.

V. Old Business

A. Harris County – Notice of Non-Compliance and Remedial Order

Dr. Porsa recused himself from this agenda item.

Director Wood advised that Harris County is on the agenda due to previously issued notices of non-compliance and a remedial order and are subject to enhanced enforcement. Director Wood discussed the two notices of non-compliance issued since the previous meeting in November 2024, and the specific issues within them including failure to perform visual observation of inmates and not meeting the required staffing to inmate ratio.

Testimony was provided by Harris County Chief Philip Bosquez, and Tonya Mills, regarding the efforts that Harris County has made in efforts to regain compliance. Chief Bosquez reported improved staffing numbers. Chief Bosquez and Tonya Mills both discussed the expected impact of the newly opened felony courts in Harris County on the jail population. Chief Bosquez reported that the Harris County Jail has 38 openings at the jail now. He also reported 1,538 inmates being outsourced to other facilities, an average length of stay in the Harris County Jail at 185 days, 340 inmates awaiting transport to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, 350 inmates on the state hospital waitlist, and over 1,300 beds unused.

Director Mills discussed the impact of the new courts on the Harris County Jail population. She advised that during 2024 the Harris County courts observed a 1715 increase in admissions to the Harris County jail. Director Mills discussed working with the District Attorney and bureau chiefs to develop a strategic approach to reduce the average length of stay.

Commissioner Lock asked for clarification on the number of inmates that Harris County has outsourced, specifically regarding those inmates housed out of state. Chief Bosquez reported that the Harris County Jail has reduced the number of inmates housed in Mississippi by 60 and will continue to reduce this number as their staffing allows. Commissioner Lock clarified that his concerns regarding Texas county jail inmates housed out of state are due to the quality of, or lack thereof, equivalent minimum jail standards in those states. Commissioner Lock discussed Harris County's efforts to keep outsourced inmates within Texas, and Chief Bosquez provided information regarding the contracting process.

Director Wood recommended/requested permission for staff to engage with the Office of The Attorney General to enforce the in-place remedial order. Commissioner Lock made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Anthony. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Liberty County Jail – Notice of Non-compliance

Director Wood advised that Liberty County was in attendance regarding an in-place remedial order and previously issued notices of non-compliance. Director Wood advised commission members that their workbook includes a supplemental handout regarding Liberty County Jail and a notice of non-compliance which was completed on January 27-28, 2025, with photos, as part of the enhanced enforcement to which Liberty County is subject. Director Wood discussed the previously addressed issues discovered during inspection of the Liberty County Jail which include inadequate preventive maintenance, inadequate staffing, and inadequate face to face observations of inmates. He also advised that agency staff have provided Liberty County with counties that are available for contract assistance with housing Liberty County inmates and contact information for management companies to assist in operations.

Liberty County Jail Administrator Heather Guerrero was in attendance and provided

testimony. She advised that Liberty County currently has 18 vacancies for jailers, and that number is expected to decrease to 6 within a week. She also advised that the Liberty County Sheriff's Office training section has been involved with the jails training operations. She reported meeting the required staffing to inmate ratio during the previous few weeks, with an inmate population of 281 and 34 inmates awaiting transport to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, and one inmate awaiting a forensic bed. She reported that 30 inmates housed out of the county, with 3 of those inmates housed in Louisiana. Ms. Guerrero discussed maintenance issues and the efforts taken to address them. She discussed the impact understaffing had on maintenance, and how inadequate inmate supervision affected the condition of the facility. She also advised that Liberty County has addressed the condition of the doors and that they work properly now, and that the maintenance personnel are addressing the intercom issues at this time.

Director Wood discussed the recent inspection with Ms. Guerrero and identified overcrowding in certain cells. Ms. Guerrero advised that a cell had been closed for repairs and that rehousing those inmates during repairs caused the overcrowding, and that those inmates have been returned to their housing. She also reported the current inmate population as 281, the county jails max capacity. Director Wood identified the lack of a buffer regarding the inmate population, and Ms. Guerrero advised that Liberty County currently has one judge for both its courts and is expecting to move inmates out of the facility soon.

Director Wood identified an issue at Liberty County. Specifically, he discussed the lack of cooperation and communication in the criminal justice system at Liberty County, regarding the jail operating at maximum capacity and a judge ordering the return of inmates without buffer room, placing the facility beyond its capacity. He also discussed inoperable locks and the fire control panel with over 100 troubles. Ms. Guerrero advised that the fire alarm system in the facility is in the process of being replaced and they are waiting for parts. She advised that the facility is currently on 15-minute fire watches to compensate.

Dr. Porsa discussed his concerns regarding suicide screening at intake with late notifications to the magistrate, and missing documentation of suicide watch checks. Ms. Guerrero advised that a lack of training/inadequate training was the cause of these issues. Dr. Porsa advised that a lack of training or inadequate training should not be a reason why these issues occurred.

Liberty County Deputy Billy Knox advised that the county is working to get the issues resolved with the county judge. Liberty County Judge Jay Knight discussed the upcoming addition of an additional district judge, and the issues related to recruiting new staff members, and that the county is planning to increase jailer pay and have already approved overtime pay.

Director Wood discussed the advice of the Attorney General representative assigned to this case. Director Wood recommended/requested the commission continue to allow staff to continue the enforcement of the remedial order and continue to engage with the Office of the Attorney General. A motion to approve the recommendation was made by Dr. Porsa and seconded by Commissioner Anthony. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Shelby County – Non-Compliance and Remedial Order

Director Wood advised that Shelby County is on the agenda regarding their remedial order and status under enhanced enforcement. He advised that Shelby County was back in compliance as of this meeting. Shelby County representatives were in attendance to provide testimony. Shelby County representatives provided testimony regarding their efforts to regain and maintain

compliance with minimum jail standards. He discussed the issues with a jailer's license, and their tuberculosis plan. He also discussed their fire inspection.

Director Wood advised that Shelby County will remain under remedial order until they pass a second comprehensive inspection within the relevant time period, and that Commission staff is recommending that the remedial order remain in place until that time. No action taken.

D. Falls County – Non-compliance and Remedial Order

Director Wood advised that Falls County was on the agenda regarding a previously issued notice of non-compliance and remedial order. Director Wood advised that with the new Sheriff at Falls County, along with new executive staff, agency staff had been working with them to regain compliance.

Falls County representatives included Sheriff Jason Campbell, County Judge Jay Elliot and the Jail Administrator Jody Crumb, and Executive Chief Deputy Steve Smith. Representatives report full staffing at Falls County Jail, and a full command staff. They also reported that they have addressed all items of non-compliance and technical assistance at this time. Sheriff Campbell requested a staffing analysis from The Commission to improve how they meeting requirements.

Director Wood advised that Falls County Jail will continue to address areas of non-compliance, and that agency staff will assist in conducting a staffing analysis. No action taken.

VI. New Business

A. Jim Hogg Temporary Processing Facility 3-Year Review

Director Wood advised that Jim Hogg is on the agenda regarding the Temporary Processing Facility, approved as part of Operation Lone Star, and requires annual approval for use after three years.

Representatives of Jim Hogg County included County Judge Juan Carlos Guerra, Sheriff Erasmo Alarcon, Captain Elias Morales, and Chief Deputy Reyes Espinoza. Representatives provided testimony regarding the continued need for the temporary processing facility. They highlighted the number of counties served by the facility, and the unique challenges that the rural counties face.

Dr. Porsa requested and received clarification regarding the medical operations and policies of the temporary processing facility.

Director Wood advised that testimony clearly demonstrated a continuing need for the operation of the temporary facility, and that it is compliant with minimum jail standards, and recommended that the facility operation continue for another year. Sheriff Rowe made a motion to approve the recommendation, and Dr. Porsa seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Tarrant County – Automatic Sprinkler System, Deletion of Sprinklers; Gov. Code §511.0097

Director Wood advised that Tarrant County was on the agenda requesting the deletion of automatic sprinkler heads in a facility being renovated. The request was in accordance with statute, specifically §511.0097. Commission staff recommended to approve the request. The motion was made by Dr. Porsa and seconded by Commissioner Lock. The motion passed unanimously.

C. 2024 Agency Annual Report

Director Wood advised Commissioners that a copy of the 2024 TCJS Agency Annual Report could be found in their supplemental workbooks and provided a brief overview of the information contained in the report.

VII. Variances

A. Chambers County – 259.114(b)(2) Segregation, 259.114(d) Segregation, 259.135 Dormitories, 259.143(b) Furnishings for inmate housing areas, 259.143(d) Furnishings for inmate housing areas

Director Wood advised Commissioners of the variances that Chambers County was seeking during the construction of their new Criminal Justice Complex. Chambers County Sheriff Hawthorne provided testimony regarding their requests. He advised that the variances are required as they are approximately 22 months away from the completion of their new facilities. Sheriff Hawthorne advised that the variances would no longer be required after completion of their new facilities. A motion to approve the requests was made by Sheriff Rowe and seconded by Dr. Porsa. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Montgomery County – 259.135 Dormitories, 259.136 Dayrooms, 259.143 Furnishings for Inmate Housing Areas

Director Wood advised Commissioners of the variances that the Montgomery County Jail was requesting, and background on the new sheriff of Montgomery County. The Montgomery County Sheriff provided testimony regarding their population and how the addition of the variance beds they are requesting would aid in operations and maintaining compliance. Dr. Porsa requested clarification regarding the current capacity and Director Wood advised that the variance is related to the furnishings more so than the capacity as standards allowed the capacity change.

Director Wood discussed putting together a plan regarding the utilization of these variance beds based upon the actual need, and not install all new beds in one dormitory, and that facility staffing in direct supervision areas be addressed in a new operational plan. The Montgomery County Sheriff advised that they are already in the planning stages for a new facility.

Director Wood requested that staff be allowed to work with Montgomery County on a new

operational plan and approve the variance for a 12-month period. A motion to approve the recommendation was made by Sheriff Rowe and seconded by Dr. Porsa. The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Administrative Rules Advisory Committee

A. Rules for Adoption – None

Due to a scheduling conflict of the Administrative Rules Advisory Committee no rule was available for discussion at this meeting.

B. Rules for Public Comment – None

C. Public Petition for Change to Minimum Jail Standards

- a. Steve Dunbar – SCBA
- b. Adriana Leon – Victim Protection

Director Wood advised the Commissioners of the public petitions for changes to standards in their workbooks and requested permission to forward these items to the Administrative Rules Advisory Committee. Dr. Porsa made a motion to approve, and Commissioner Lock seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

D. Four-year Rule Review Chapter 275 Supervision of Inmates

No action taken.

E. Appointment of Administrative Rules Advisory Committee Member

Director Wood provided an update regarding the current vacancies on the Administrative Rules Advisory Committee: one member of the public and one county judge or commissioner from a county of 80,000 or more. Agency staff have started soliciting recommended individuals for these positions.

IX. IDD Advisory Committee

A. Appointment of IDD Advisory Committee Member

Director Wood advised that there were, at the time of this meeting, two vacancies on the IDD Advisory Committee and two nominations for these positions. Nichole Hawk from HHSC State Supported Living Centers (SSLC) was nominated for the HHSC SSLC position, and Richard Wills of Bailey County was nominated for the position of county sheriff of a county of 80,000 or less.

A motion to approve both nominations was made by Sheriff Rowe and seconded by Dr. Porsa. The motion passed unanimously.

X. Staff Report

A. Completed Jail Projects

Director Wood reported that the completed projects are listed in the commission meeting book provided to commission members.

B. Jail Planning and Construction List

The 4-page construction report is included in the packets.

C. Jails in Compliance/Noncompliance

Director Wood referred Commissioners to the list in their book.

D. Status of Remedial Orders

Director Wood referred Commissioners to the list in their book.

E. Status and Composition of Jail Population

Director Wood advised members that this information is provided in a one-page report in the commission members books.

F. Staff Training/Activities

Director Wood advised members that a list of training performed by staff members is provided in their book.

G. Financial Report/Budget

Director Wood directed all to the current budget expenditures for FY 2024 in their books.

H. LAR update

Director Wood provided a summary of the agency's LAR.

I. Inmate Complaint Report

Included in their book is the three-month report on complaints. Non-jurisdictional complaints continue to be prevalent.

J. State Auditor's Office Audit

Director Wood provided an update on the current State Auditor's Office audit of agency operations.

XI. Other Business

- **Commission-sponsored Events and Workshops**

- **Commission Staffing**

- **Off Duty Employment**

No events to report.

- **Miscellaneous Letters of Comment**

None

XII. Adjourn

By appropriate motion to adjourn by Sheriff Rowe, with a second by Commissioner Anthony, the meeting was adjourned at 11:32 AM.

XIII. Next Commission meeting is tentatively scheduled for:

- **May 1, 2025, Stephen F Austin Building Rm 17**
- **August 7, 2025, William P Clements Building Rm 103**

The Board may meet in Closed Session on any item listed above if authorized by the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Codd Ann. Ch. 551.

Persons with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who may need auxiliary aids or services, such as interpreters or persons who are deaf or hearing impaired, readers, large print or Braille, are requested to contact Carol Bernhard (512) 568-8029 two (2) working days prior to the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made.



Brandon Wood, Executive Director

Carol Bernhard, Secretary of the Commission