

ANNUAL REPORT

MARYLAND PAROLE COMMISSION

FISCAL YEAR 2015



Larry Hogan, Governor

Boyd K. Rutherford, Lieutenant Governor

Stephen T. Moyer, Secretary

David R. Blumberg, Chairman



Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

Office of the Secretary

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STATE OF MARYLAND

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GOVERNOR

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DAVID N. BEZANSON
ASSISTANT SECRETARY
CAPITAL PROGRAMS

December 3, 2015

**The Honorable Larry Hogan
Governor of the State of Maryland
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401**

Dear Governor Hogan:

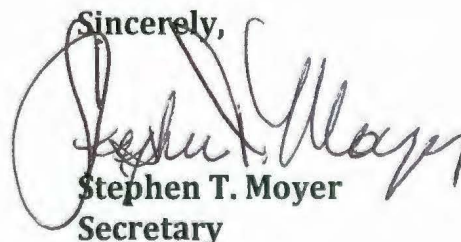
It is with great pleasure that I present you the Annual Report of the Maryland Parole Commission highlighting the agency's activities for Fiscal Year 2015. The report provides an overview of the agency to include a summary of the functioning units.

The Maryland Parole Commission works closely with its sister agencies such as the Division of Correction and the Division of Parole and Probation by sharing pertinent information to assist in the decision making process for parole grant and revocation hearings.

With the assistance of risk assessment instruments, the Commission strives to meet the departmental objectives of paroling the most suitable candidates as close to parole eligibility as possible without compromising public safety in the process.

Thank you for your continuous support.

Sincerely,



**Stephen T. Moyer
Secretary**



Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

Maryland Parole Commission

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MARYLAND PAROLE
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DAVID R. BLUMBERG
CHAIRMAN

December 3, 2015

**The Honorable Secretary Moyer
Maryland Department of Public Safety and
Correctional Service
300 Joppa Road, Suite 1000
Towson, Maryland 21286**

Dear Secretary Moyer:

It is with great pleasure that I present you the Maryland Parole Commission Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2015.

The report provides an overview of the agency, a summary of some of the administrative activities, and outlines each functioning unit with its responsibilities.

During this reporting period, the Commission was able to perform satisfactorily under each managing for results objective while still adjusting to the challenges of the new Offender Case Management System (OCMS).

Albeit a small agency, the dedicated staff at the Commission continuously strives to operate in an efficient and effective manner to meet the organizational objectives without jeopardizing the safety of the citizens of the State of Maryland.

The Commission will continue to exercise good judgement in conjunction with the other factors involved in the decision making process for the best possible parole outcomes.

Sincerely,

**David R. Blumberg
Chairman**

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Mission Statement

The Maryland Parole Commission aims to provide offenders with timely parole and revocation hearings, strives to promote safe communities by promptly processing retake warrants, uses sound judgement in conjunction with utilizing validated risk assessment tools during the decision making process, encourages victim input when applicable, maintains strong relationships with other criminal justice agencies, allows access to the general public, and releases those offenders who have the potential to become law abiding citizens.

Overview

Under Title 7 of the Correctional Services Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, the Maryland Parole Commission hears cases for parole release and revocation, and is authorized to parole inmates sentenced to a term of confinement of six months or more from any correctional institution in Maryland except the Patuxent Institution.

The Commission is authorized to issue warrants for the return of alleged violators to custody and revoke supervision upon finding that a violation of the conditions of parole or mandatory supervision release has occurred. The Commission also makes recommendations to the Governor regarding pardons, commutations of sentences, and parole of inmates sentenced to life imprisonment.

Currently, there are 10 commissioners including the Chairman, 11 hearing officers, and 48 other staff members employed at the Maryland Parole Commission.

Summary

- 07-01-14 Chief Administrator Tanya Smith met with upper level management of the Division of Correction (DOC) and the Division of Parole and Probation (DPP) to discuss policies and procedures regarding parole violators.
- 12-12-14 Chairman Blumberg and Administrator Kathleen Paul conducted training with the Frederick County DPP office.
- 03-23-15 Chairman Blumberg and Tanya Smith attended the 7th Public Safety Compact Graduation and were recognized for being instrumental in the program since its inception.
- 04-08-15 Kevin Kelly was appointed to the Commission.
- 04-30-15 Supervisors received training on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to ensure agency compliance.
- 05-11-15 Chairman Blumberg and Chief Administrator Tanya Smith met with the new DPSCS Executive Director of the Warrant Apprehension Unit to discuss to interstate warrant process.
- 05-13-15 Bernice Thomas spoke at the Montgomery County Public Defender's Office on the parole hearing and retake processes.
- 05-18-
05-21-15 Chairman Blumberg, Commissioner Jasper Clay, Hearing Officer Lorelei Brown, and Hearing Officer Rosa Hamlet, attended the Association of Paroling Authorities International (APAI) annual conference. During this conference, Chairman Blumberg was honored with the Ben Baer Award for being innovative and the longest serving active Chairman.
- 05-23-15 Chairman Blumberg conducted training with the Baltimore City State's Attorney Office.
- 05-28-15 Program Manager Ruth Ogle, Hearing Officer April Lunn, Administrative Officer Kathleen Paul, and Office Processing Clerk Rashard Barkley attended a Reentry Practitioner's Symposium in Sykesville, Maryland.
- 06-10-15 Sharon Trexler-Begosh was appointed to the Commission.

COMMISSION UNITS

Institutional Parole Associates

The Institutional Parole Associates (IPA) have an important role within the agency. They are assigned in each region because they are the liaison between the Commission and the Division of Correction. Their responsibilities include but are not limited to providing assistance to the Hearing Officers and Commissioners during parole and revocation hearings, conducting file review with offenders prior to the parole hearing, delivering parole decisions, explaining the appeal process, and ensuring that offenders are properly released when scheduled. This unit is also responsible for ensuring that attendees of open parole hearings are informed of the process and provided an opportunity to ask questions.

Pardon and Executive Clemency

This unit is responsible for reviewing and processing all pardon and executive clemency applications, reviewing and distributing all medical parole requests, and handling all Governor's correspondence.

- Pardon applications pending
- Medical parole releases processed
- Governor's correspondence

Parole Services

This unit is responsible for scheduling and docketing all parole grant hearings for DOC and Local Detention facilities to include parole in absentia cases where Maryland offenders are serving sentences in other States.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| • DOC hearings conducted | 7,128 |
| • Detention center hearings conducted | 1,586 |
| • Detention center hearings on site | 1,089 |
| • Detention center hearings on video | 497 |
| • Parole in absentia hearings | 14 |

Post Release

The warrant section is responsible for preparing and processing retake warrants, preparing subpoenas, notifying outside jurisdictions pending parole violations, and updating the appropriate data base for each case.

The revocation section is responsible for scheduling preliminary hearings and revocation hearings for offenders incarcerated at DOC as well as local detention facilities. It is also the responsibility of this unit to coordinate these hearings with private attorneys and/or public defenders.

- Warrants prepared 3,375
- Subpoenas prepared 441
- Revocation hearings conducted 3,472
- Preliminary hearings conducted 49
- Supervision revoked 1,464

Records

This unit is responsible for maintaining parole files on offenders currently incarcerated as well as those under supervision for five years after expiration. They are also responsible for retrieving and processing supervision reports from Division of Parole and Probation agents. All reports must be prioritized in accordance with the specificity of the request.

- Reports retrieved from the Division of Parole and Probation 8,811

Release

This unit is responsible for preparing parole release orders and coordinating releases for offenders granted parole from the Division of Correction and the 23 Local Detention Facilities. Prior to preparing release orders, staff must ensure that the offender is serving a parole eligible offense, have completed all pre-release contingencies, there are no outstanding warrants and/or detainers, and the offender's home plan has been approved.

- Division of Correction Releases 1,803
- Local Detention Facility Releases 591

Support Services

This unit is responsible for handling time keeping and personnel matters, securing hotel reservations, assigning vehicles, maintaining inventory, monitoring fleet usage and maintenance, completing injury reports, handling computer issues, maintaining key control, handling property transfers, and maintaining training schedules.

Secretarial

This unit is responsible for providing secretarial support to Commissioners, Hearing Officers, and Administrative staff. This unit is also responsible for coordinating video hearings (parole and revocation), processing parole decision appeals, monitoring cases placed on hold, distributing incoming mail, providing switchboard coverage, and entering information into the Offender Case Management System (OCMS).

- Incoming correspondence 28,829
- Incoming telephone calls 22,886

Victim Services

This unit is responsible for ensuring timely notification to victims and/or their representatives of hearings, decisions, and release dates. They are also responsible for scheduling/coordinating open parole hearings, advising victims and/or their representatives of their rights, and providing referrals for services.

- Victim notification letters sent victim or representatives 4,667

Definitions

- Administrative Reviews are not face-to-face hearings but rather "paper" reviews of offender files at the Commission office. These reviews are conducted at five-year intervals until an offender reaches parole eligibility and ensures that all essential documents and institutional adjustment summaries necessary for a parole hearing are obtained and placed in a case file.
- Commission Cases are heard by a panel of two Commissioners and include cases with a loss of life, life sentences, or life sentences with all but a fixed number of years suspended, and open parole hearings.
- Gubernatorial Commutation orders that the grantee shall suffer a lesser penalty for the offense than imposed by the court. The commutation of an offender's sentence is normally considered by the Parole Commission only upon demonstration of extraordinary circumstances.
- Gubernatorial Pardon absolves the grantee of guilt for his criminal act(s), and exempts the grantee from the resulting penalties, such as loss of voting privileges. Criteria for pardon consideration are set by the Governor and normally require the passage of a substantial period of time following the end of incarceration or any form of supervision before a pardon will be entertained.
- Hearing Officer Cases are non-Commissioner cases heard by Hearing Officers who make recommendations reviewed by Commissioners. If the reviewing Commissioner agrees with the Hearing Officer's recommendation, that recommendation becomes the Commission's decision. An offender may appeal this decision to a panel of two Commissioners. In instances where the reviewing Commissioner does not adopt the Hearing Officer's recommendation, an in-house appeal results and a panel of two Commissioners make a final decision that is not appealable by the offender.
- Interested Party is an individual who is not a "victim" but rather an individual who has "special interest" in the status of the offender as determined by the Commission's Victim Services Coordinator.
- Liaison Agent/Waiver (LAW) hearings are revocation hearings conducted by Commissioners on offenders who have "technical" violations and admit fault/guilt to the stated violations. These offenders waive the presence of an attorney or their agent of record. For these hearings, the Division of Parole and Probation LAW unit provides an agent to act as a liaison agent who testifies during for the entire docket as to the facts of the each case using information provided by the agent of record.
- Mandatory Supervision Release is the release of an offender from the Division of Correction due to diminution credits earned and awarded. The offenders are supervised by parole agents "as if on parole" and are subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission after release until the maximum expiration of their sentence. Any alleged violation of mandatory release supervision conditions may result in a revocation hearing.

- Open Parole Hearings are essentially the same as "regular" grant parole hearings except it has been opened to the public at the request of the victim or victim's representative who is permitted to speak at this hearing. Individuals must make a request in writing to attend these proceedings and the Commission determines who may or may not attend. Open hearings are conducted by two Commissioners.
- Parole is the discretionary and conditional release of an offender into the community by the Commission to continue serving the term of confinement under the supervision of an agent of the DPSCS Community Supervision Unit until the expiration of the full, undiminished term. If any conditions of parole are violated, the offender is subject to revocation and re-incarceration.
- Parole Eligibility is determined by sentence length and the specific crime(s) for which the offender is incarcerated.
- Parole Grant Hearing is an interview with the offender conducted by a Commission panel or Hearing Officer to elicit information from and about the offender. This interview along with information contained in the parole file form the basis of the Commission's decision.
- Preliminary Revocation Hearing is held before a Hearing Officer who determines if probable cause exists with respect to the stated violations. If probable cause is found, the offender is scheduled for a revocation hearing before a Commissioner. Alleged violators may elect to have or waive a preliminary revocation hearing.
- Public Safety Compact Agreement (PSCA) is an agreement between the offender and the Commission in which the offender is granted discretionary parole with the stipulation that he/she will receive services through the compact provided to those returning to Baltimore City.
- Revocation Hearings are conducted by Commissioners on those offenders who allegedly have violated the conditions of parole or mandatory supervision and are returned to the custody of the Division of Correction or a Local Detention Facility. The supervising agent, who initiated the retake warrant process testifies at this hearing and is subject to cross-examination. Offenders are represented by the Public Defender's Officer or a private attorney.
- Victim is an individual who suffers personal harm or death as a result of a crime. If the victim is deceased, disabled, or a minor, a designated family member or family friend may represent the victim.

Commissioner Biographies

Sharon Trexler-Begosh - appointed in June 2015; term will expire in December 2018. Commissioner Begosh graduated Magna Cum laude from the University of Maryland with a BA degree in Criminology. She was elected to the Phi Beta Kappa National Honor Society at that time due to her academic accomplishments. She began her career with the Maryland Division of Parole and Probation where she rose to the rank of Agent Senior. She was hired by the Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation as a founding member of the Pre-Trial Services Agency. During her tenure with Montgomery County she held various positions such as Pre-Trial Caseworker, Supervisor for the Drug Intervention Program and ultimately as Chief of the Pre-Trial Division. Mrs. Begosh retired from county service after 26 years.

David R. Blumberg, Chairman - appointed October 2003; appointed Chairman in July 2004; re-appointed in 2010; term will expire in December 2015. Chairman Blumberg received a BA degree in Political Science from Loyola College and a MS degree in Library Science from the University of Maryland. For twenty years, he was the Director of the Baltimore City Detention Center Enoch Pratt Library. He is the Chairman of the Board of the Hopkins Club and President of Santa Claus Anonymous. In May 2015, Chairman Blumberg was recognized by the Association of Paroling Authorities International (APAI) with the Ben Baer Award. This award was established to recognize and reward an individual who has demonstrated significant service in the field of parole or community corrections.

Jasper R. Clay - appointed March 2005; re-appointed in 2011; term will expire in December 2016. He possesses a BA degree in Psychology from Morgan State University. Commissioner Clay is a former Correctional Officer, Parole and Probation Agent and Area Administrator. He was a member of the Maryland Board of Parole and its successor, the Maryland Parole Commission, from 1969 until his (first) retirement in 1984. Thereafter, he was appointed to the U.S. Parole Commission in 1984, serving as its Vice Chairman from 1992 until his retirement in 1996. Commissioner Clay then served on the District of Columbia Parole Board from 1999 until 2002, was the Senior Advisor to the District of Columbia Correctional Trustee from 1997 through 2002, and was a member of the Patuxent Institution's Board of Review in 2004 and 2005.

John R. Greene – appointed to an interim term in July 2015; term will expire in December 2018. Before joining the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services team, Mr. Greene served as the Director of Safety and Security for the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH). In January 2013, he retired as an Assistant Bureau Chief of the Maryland State Police (MSP), with a

combined twenty-six years of law enforcement and military experience. While serving with the MSP, he has served in many leadership roles including Assistant Bureau Chief of the Criminal Investigations Bureau, Commander of the Drug Enforcement Division, and Commander of the International Affairs and the Administrative Hearing Sections. H has also served as the Director of Operations with a risk management counseling firm dedicated to assisting public safety department directors and commanders across the United States, Canada, and the Caribbean Islands with professional standard matters. Mr. Greene has earned Masters and Bachelor's degrees in Business Management.

Donna M. Hill – appointed to an interim term in September 2010; and re-appointed in March 2014; term will expire in December 2020. Commissioner Hill earned an AA degree in Paralegal Studies from the Prince George's Community College, a BA degree in Afro-American Studies from the University of Maryland, College Park, a MS degree in Counseling from the University of Maryland, College Park, and in September 2015, earned her certification as a Sherpa Executive Coach. She is an ordained minister, a former counselor, and a former school principal. Commissioner Hill is also a graduate of Leadership Prince George's. In addition, she had served as a member of the Prince George's Community College Foundation Board from 2010 – 2012. In 2011, she was appointed by the Maryland Parole Commission to briefly serve as a member of the Re-Entry Feasibility Committee governed by the Circuit Court of Prince George's County.

Kevin Kelly – appointed April 2015; term will expire in December 2021. Commissioner Kelly graduated from Frostburg State University and the University Of Baltimore School Of Law. For thirty-five years he maintained a private practice of law in Cumberland, Maryland. He served twenty-four years as a Delegate to the Maryland General Assembly representing Allegany County. During his entire General Assembly tenure, he served as a member of the House Judiciary Committee. As a member of the Assembly, he was the recipient of an array of awards and honors recognizing his many successful public safety accomplishments on behalf of the citizens of Maryland.

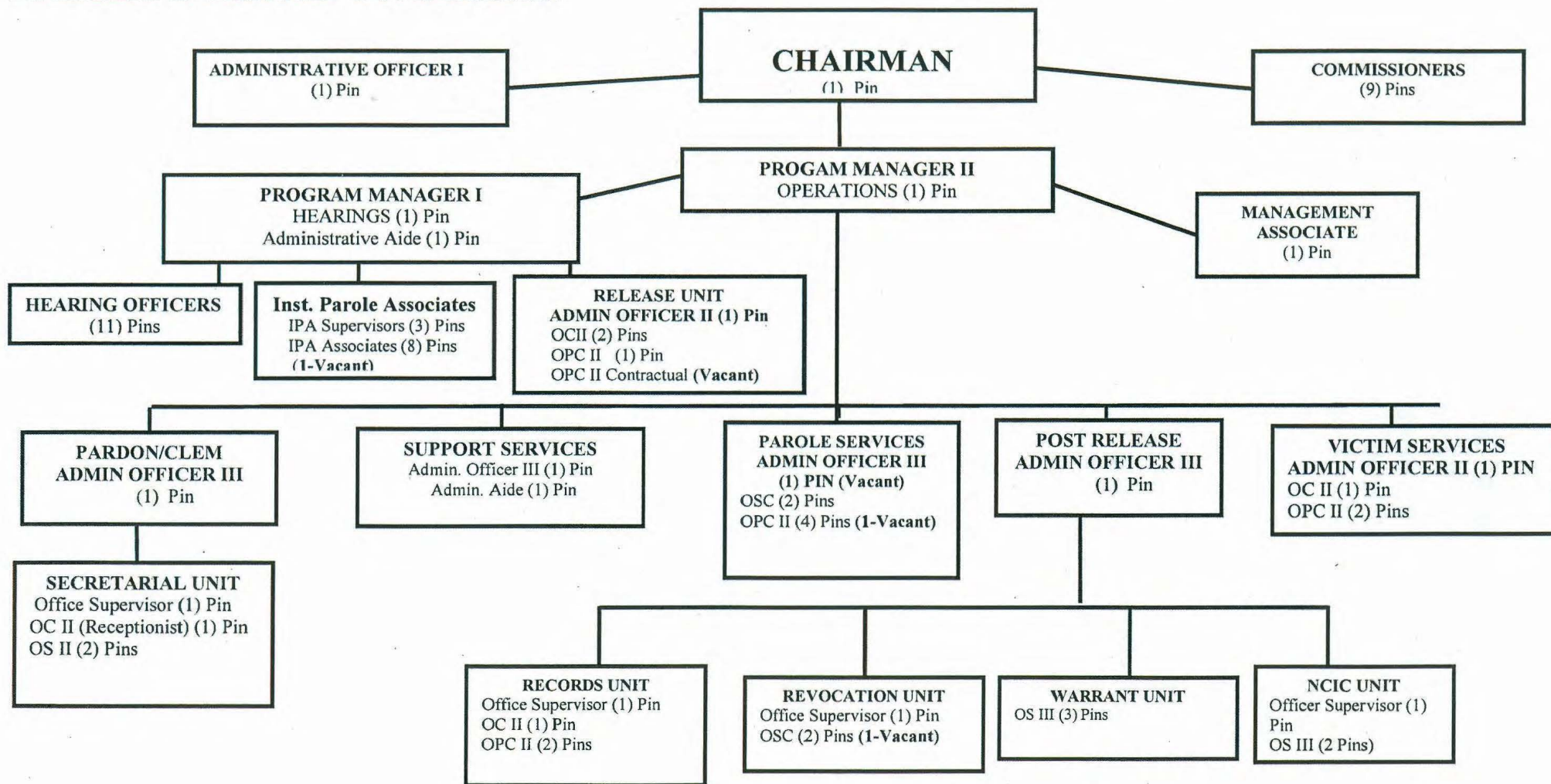
Mattie R. Meehan - appointed January 2010; term will expire in December 2015. Commissioner Meehan received a BA degree in Psychology from the University of Virginia and a MS degree in Social Work from Virginia Commonwealth University. As a clinical social worker, she has worked in the fields of maternal, child health, and child welfare. Prior to her appointment, she served as Social Work Director for the Child Advocacy Project of the Eastern Shore (CAPES). CAPES is a child advocacy organization that provides legal representation and placement for children in need of assistance proceedings within the nine Eastern Shore counties as well as Baltimore City and Baltimore County.

Christopher Reynolds - appointed to an interim term in April 2011; re-appointed in January 2012; term will expire in December 2017. Commissioner Reynolds has engaged in the private practice of law for almost 40 years in the District of Columbia and Maryland. He has been and still remains active in a number of civic and community groups serving in leadership positions and giving guidance on governance issues. When he is not working with the Parole Commission, he is a volunteer with the United States Tennis Association (USTA) nominating committee. He enjoys the challenges of working on parole matters.

Perry Sfikas - appointed September 2002; re-appointed in 2007 and 2012; term will expire in December 2017. Commissioner Sfikas is a retired Maryland State Senator. He graduated from George Washington University and received his law degree from the University of Baltimore Law School. He is admitted to the Pennsylvania and District of Columbia Bars. A lifelong resident of Baltimore City, Commissioner Sfikas has been active in multiple community task forces and associations, as well as the American Hellenic Education Progressive Association.

Sheila J. Sullivan – appointed to the Commission March 2012; term will expire in December 2015. Commissioner Sullivan graduated with a BA degree from the University of Maryland in 1985. She attended the University of Maryland Law School graduating in 1988. After passing the Maryland Bar, Commissioner Sullivan practiced with a private firm in Montgomery County for a year before joining the Maryland Office of the Public Defender as a staff attorney. Within the Public Defender's office, she handled numerous misdemeanor, felony and juvenile cases in the Prince George's County office before assuming the position of Manager of the Calvert County Office of the Public Defender in 2001. She later served as District Public Defender for Southern Maryland which includes Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties from 2005 to 2012.

MARYLAND PAROLE COMMISSION




12/4/15
Date

BUDGET EXPENDITURES - FISCAL YEAR 2015

Category	Expenditure	%of Expenditure
Communications	36,699.74	0.64%
Contractual Services	20,974.57	0.37%
Electricity	27,222.22	0.48%
Fleet Operations & Maintenance	8,099.08	0.14%
Replacement Equipment	9,546.57	0.17%
Supplies & Materials	28,525.89	0.50%
Travel	21,356.23	0.37%
New Equipment		0.00%
Salaries, Wages and Fringes Benefits	5,320,841.34	93.41%
Technical/Special Fees/Temp Staff	67,346.22	1.18%
Lease (Fixed Charges)	156,158.75	2.74%
	5,696,770.61	100.00%
 Total Expenditures		5,696,770.61
Less Salaries/Fees:		5,388,187.56
		308,583.05
 Less Lease (Fixed Charges):		156,158.75
 Controllable Expenditures:		152,424.30
 %of Expenditures:		2.7%

The remaining 2.7% of the expenditures is depicted below:

