



## MINUTES

DECEMBER 6, 2024

### PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OVERSIGHT BOARD MEETING

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1. Call to Order

A meeting of the Brazos County Public Defender's Office Oversight Board was held on Monday, December 6, 2024 at 2:00 p.m. in suite 332 of the Brazos County Administration Building, 200 South Texas Avenue, Bryan, Texas. The following members of the Board were present:

Judge Duane Peters;  
Judge Travis Bryan, III (retired), Presiding;  
Judge Willie Blackmon (retired), Absent;  
Commissioner Wanda J. Watson;  
Michele Esparza.

The attached sheet contains the names of officials and citizens that were in attendance.

The minutes were taken by Cheryl Coffman.

2. Approval of Minutes from the September 19, 2024 Public Defender's Oversight Board Meeting.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes for the meeting held on September 19, 2024.

Motion: Approve, Moved by Michele Esparaza, Seconded by Judge Duane Peters. Passed. 4-0. Ayes: Bryan, III, Esparaza, Peters, Watson. Absent: Blackmon.

3. Review and discuss the 2024 Third Quarter Progress Report.

Chief Public Defender Nathan Wood presented the Third Quarter Report to the Board. Mr. Wood noted the attorneys are continuing to meet with clients prior to the ten day requirement. Judge Bryan asked if they have had any jury trials to which Mr. Wood answered they have had two jury trials. Mr. Wood then discussed his intent to request a formal appellant position for the office. A copy of the report is attached.

4. Review and discuss the current attorney caseloads and dispositions.

Mr. Wood gave an overview on the number of active cases assigned to each attorney. He stated that TIDC has set the maximum of felony cases for each attorney at 130 and a maximum of 238 for misdemeanor cases. Judge Bryan requested the number of disposed cases be included on the next report. A copy of the report is attached.

5. Introduction of newest attorney and/or staff within the Public Defender's Office.

Mr. Wood introduced new misdemeanor defender Bryce Pringle and receptionist Victoria Delgado. The Board welcomed Mr. Pringle and Ms. Delgado to the Public Defender's office.

6. Update on TIDC budget awards for 2024-2025.

Mr. Wood explained the original grant from TIDC included ARPA funds that were not exhausted, but will roll over into the new grant. He added that he plans to resubmit his request for a Mental Health Division and a Juvenile Defender to TIDC.

7. Consideration of additional board members: citizen board member and mental health representative.

Mr. Wood said he would like to expand the board from five members to seven members, which would include a citizen member and a mental health representative. Ms. Esparza added she would like to suggest Fran Duane as a candidate. Mr. Wood stated he has several former clients he would like recommend for the citizen position. A motion was offered by Commissioner Watson to create two additional positions on the Public Defender's Oversight Board. The motion was seconded by Ms. Esparza and passed unanimously. The Board agreed they would like to speak to the candidates at the next board meeting.

Motion: Approve, Moved by Commissioner Wanda J. Watson, Seconded by Michele Esparza. Passed. 4-0. Ayes: Bryan, III, Esparza, Peters, Watson. Absent: Blackmon.

8. Announcement of interest items and possible future agenda topics.

Mr. Wood stated he would include the number of disposed cases as requested on his next report. He then announced a former client would like to address the Board regarding his experience with the Public Defender's Office at the next meeting.

#### Announcements

9. First Quarterly Meeting for the Public Defender's Office Oversight Board will be on March 7, 2025 at 2:00 PM.

10. Adjourn

DATE 12-3-2024AT 1:15 O'CLOCK P. MKAREN MCQUEEN  
BRAZOS COUNTY CLERKBy *Julie Ann Bowman*

**BRAZOS COUNTY  
BRYAN, TEXAS**

**NOTICE OF MEETING AND AGENDA**

**PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OVERSIGHT BOARD MEETING**

THIS NOTICE IS POSTED PURSUANT TO THE TEXAS OPEN MEETINGS  
ACT (TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 551)

MEETING DATE: December 6, 2024  
 MEETING TIME: 2:00 PM  
 MEETING PLACE: Brazos County Administration Building, 200 S. Texas  
 Avenue, Suite 332, Bryan, TX 77803

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1. Call to Order
  2. Approval of Minutes from the September 19, 2024 Public Defender's Oversight Board Meeting.
  3. Review and discuss the 2024 Third Quarter Progress Report.
  4. Review and discuss the current attorney caseloads and dispositions.
  5. Introduction of newest attorney and/or staff within the Public Defender's Office.
  6. Update on TIDC budget awards for 2024-2025.
  7. Consideration of additional board members: citizen board member and mental health representative.
  8. Announcement of interest items and possible future agenda topics.

Announcements

9. First Quarterly Meeting for the Public Defender's Office Oversight Board will be on March 7, 2025 at 2:00 PM.
10. Adjourn

The Brazos County Administration Building, 200 S. Texas Avenue, Suite 332, Bryan, TX 77803 is wheelchair accessible. Handicap parking spaces are available. Any request for sign interpretive services must be made two working days before the meeting. To make arrangements, please call (979) 361-4102.



**PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE OVERSIGHT BOARD MEETING**

December 6, 2024 at 2:00pm

**Name**

**Organization**

Bryce Pringle

PDO

Victoria Delgado

PDO

Keith Ritchie

PDO

Patrick Gendron

citizen

mara tume

attor

Natalie Huys

PDO

Cheryl Coffman

Comm. Court

**Progress Report for Grant PB-22-021: 2023 Brazos County Public Defenders Office  
Brazos County  
Final Report**

Change Reporting Period July 1 - September 30, 2024 (Year 3) (Final Report) ▾

Question	July 2024	August 2024	September 2024
<b>Public Defender Office</b>			
<b>Caseflow Measures</b>			
Report the average number of business days between appointment of Public Defender and the initial attorney interview.	7	8	5
Report the average number of days clients are in jail prior to resolution of the case for <b>Felonies</b> for the cases disposed each month. (Exclude any clients with MH competency proceedings initiated.)	102	49	50
Report the average number of days clients are in jail prior to resolution of the case for <b>Misdemeanors</b> for the cases disposed each month. (Exclude any clients with MH competency proceedings initiated.)	52	42	34
<b>Use</b>			
Report the number of <b>new Juvenile</b> appointments.	0	0	0
<b>Workload/Caseload Measures</b>			
Report the number of <b>new Misdemeanor</b> appointments.	44	41	24
Report the number of <b>new Felony</b> appointments.	20	20	14
Report the number of <b>new Appeals</b> filed.	1	1	0
Report the number of <b>Felony</b> cases disposed.	17	13	16
Report the number of <b>Misdemeanor</b> cases disposed.	30	44	31
Report the number of <b>Juvenile</b> cases disposed.	0	0	0
Report the average number of active <b>Felony</b> cases per attorney on the last day of the quarter.		53	
Report the average number of active <b>Misdemeanor</b> cases per attorney on the last day of the quarter.		67	
Report the average number of active <b>Juvenile</b> cases per attorney on the last day of the quarter.		0	
<b>Program Activities</b>			
Report the date the Oversight Board is setup		08/02/2022	
Report the date the Chief Defender is hired.		12/28/2022	

Report the date the office begins accepting appointments.		03/17/2023	
Report the date the case management system goes live.		03/17/2023	
Report the date the County indigent Defense Plans have been updated to reflect the use of the Public Defender		12/02/2022	
Report the number of <b>Felony</b> cases where charges were reduced or dismissed.	6	7	6
Report the number <b>Misdemeanor</b> cases where charges were reduced or dismissed.	10	13	12
Report the number of <b>Juvenile</b> cases where charges were reduced or dismissed.	0	0	0
Report the number of bench or jury trials (jury empaneled) for <b>Felonies</b> .	0	0	0
Report the number of bench or jury trials (jury empaneled) for <b>Misdemeanors</b> .	0	0	0
Report the number of bench or jury trials (jury empaneled) for <b>Juveniles</b> .	0	0	0
Report the number of <b>Misdemeanor</b> trials that resulted in a not guilty verdict	0	0	0
Report the number of <b>Felony</b> trials that resulted in a not guilty verdict.	0	0	0
Report the number of <b>Juvenile</b> trials that resulted in a not guilty verdict.	0	0	0
Report the number of <b>Misdemeanor</b> cases where an investigator assisted the attorney with investigation of the case for the cases disposed each month.	30	44	31
Report the number of <b>Felony</b> cases where an investigator assisted the attorney with investigation of the case for the cases disposed each month.	17	13	16
Report the number of <b>Juvenile</b> cases where an investigator assisted the attorney with investigation of the case for the cases disposed each month.	0	0	0
Report the number of dispositive motions filed for <b>Misdemeanor</b> cases.	0	0	0
Report the number of dispositive motions filed for <b>Felony</b> cases.	0	0	1
Report the number of bond reduction motions/hearings for <b>Misdemeanor</b> defendants.	0	0	0
Report the number of bond reduction motions/hearing for <b>Felony</b> defendants.	0	5	4
Report the number of detention and review hearings.	0	0	0
Report the number of Juveniles released at detention hearings.	0	0	0
Report the number of writs of habeas corpus filed for <b>Misdemeanors</b> .	0	0	0
Report the number of writs of habeas corpus filed for <b>Felonies</b> .	0	5	4

Report the number of post-conviction writs filed.

0

0

0

Describe any additional services provided to defendants (mental health attorneys, immigration consultations, social services, etc.)

we continue to consult myPadilla for our non-citizen clients. this amounted to 5 consultations during this quarter. we consult with a coordinate with MHMR multiple times a week. we have referred clients to social services through our caseworker several times this quarter as well.

Provide any additional details you feel are important about the trials this quarter.

no cases reached for trial this quarter despite several motions for speedy trial filed.

Report the date of the last Board meeting.

09/19/2024

Report the number of cases disposed each month by the public defender in which program social workers and/or caseworkers consulted with attorneys.

**Summary**

Explain any official allegations of misconduct. N/A

Provide any program highlights for the quarter.

We hired a new lawyer with 20 years of legal experience, most of that has been in criminal defense, including 8 prior years of work as a public defender.

Describe any challenges and the corrective actions taken or being taken.

Our case data is tracked by hand. We spent a good bit of time and effort improving the way we do that so that we can produce more reliable data about our cases.

Describe the activities planned for next quarter.

Fill one vacant attorney position.

Describe any staffing changes which occurred during the quarter or that are anticipated in the next quarter.

One attorney left our office, one attorney joined our office. We have one vacant position that we will fill next quarter. We will also add a receptionist in the next quarter.

If you wish to submit supporting documentation other than text notes entered above, click [here](#). If you have internet mail configured on your computer, a new message window should open up with the To: field filled in. Attach any desired documents and then send the message.



Current Active Caseload		Misdemeanor	Felony							
24062328	Nathan Wood	31	57							
24132364	Sarah Petrus Hemmestad	62	0							
19834000	Lane Thibodeaux	58	0							
00789772	Robbie McClung	45	59							
	Lyndsay DeMatteo	5	15							
	Bryce Pringle	0	0							
		201	131							
Caseload by Quarter 2024										
		Mar24 (F)	Mar24 (M)	Jun24 (F)	Jun24 (M)	Sep24 (F)	Sep24 (M)	Dec24 (F)	Dec24 (M)	
24062328	Nathan Wood	45	31	49	34	56	30	52	30	
24132364	Sarah Petrus Hemmestad	0	55	0	71	0	83	0	62	
19834000	Lane Thibodeaux	0	15	0	44	0	50	0	58	
00789772	Robbie McClung	11	9	40	28	55	40	59	44	
	Lyndsay DeMatteo							15	5	
	Bryce Pringle							0	0	
24124452	Yasmeen Aboellhasan	8	16	1	2	0	0	0	0	
24082124	Maritza Sifuentez	14	20	11	20	0	0	0	0	
Caseload by Quarter 2023										
		Mar24 (F)	Mar24 (M)	Jun24 (F)	Jun24 (M)	Sep24 (F)	Sep24 (M)	Dec24 (F)	Dec24 (M)	
24062328	Nathan Wood	4	6	21	20	23	16	35	23	
24132364	Sarah Petrus Hemmestad	0	0	1	15	0	22	0	23	
24124452	Yasmeen Aboellhasan	0	1	6	19	6	21	8	22	
24082124	Maritza Sifuentez	0	4	5	17	10	14	8	19	